

Hibernia College Quality Framework

Policy for Academic Good Practice



1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish standards for the ethical conduct of academic work, to establish parameters for the detection and investigation of instances of academic impropriety, and to set penalties for those found to have engaged in academic impropriety.

1.2 Scope

- a. *To whom does the policy apply?*
 - i. This policy applies to students on all Hibernia College programmes.
 - ii. This policy applies to any individual acting in an academic capacity on behalf of Hibernia College.
- b. *In what situations does the policy apply?*
 - i. The policy applies where an individual is engaging in academic work and bears responsibility for upholding academic and ethical standards.
- c. *Who is responsible for implementing the policy?*
 - i. The Registrar is responsible for the oversight of the implementation of this policy on behalf of the Academic Board.
 - ii. All faculty, adjunct faculty, staff, and students are responsible for upholding the principles of this policy.
 - iii. Faculty are responsible for reporting suspected impropriety to the Director of Programme on which they work.
 - iv. All persons are responsible for reporting grave or repeated instances of suspected academic impropriety to the Registrar.

1.3 Definitions

a. *Academic good practice*

This refers to the process of completing academic work independently, honestly and in an appropriate academic style using good referencing and acknowledging all sources. Achieving good academic practices involves a student:

- i. Independently evaluating theoretical and practical dimensions of a particular discipline.
- ii. Engaging with and using high-quality research from their discipline.
- iii. Demonstrating an understanding of the thinking, writing, and practices of the leaders in the discipline (past and present).
- iv. Originating new ideas.

b. Academic impropriety

Academic impropriety is any form of cheating or other attempt to seek an unfair reward for the amount of genuine effort put into an assessment task or an advantage over other students. It includes, but is not limited to:

- i. Plagiarism: attempting to pass off others' effort, intellectual property, or any other work as their own by copying without consent or failing to use academic referencing conventions (deliberately or otherwise).
- ii. Self-plagiarism: attempting to submit their own work as genuine effort for more than one assessment task.
- iii. Unauthorised collusion: aiding, attempting to aid, obtaining aid from or attempting to obtain aid from another student or any other person to contribute to an assessment task (except where required for group assessment tasks) or any form of contract cheating.
- iv. Fabrication of data: making up results and recording or reporting them.
- v. Falsification of data: manipulating research, materials, equipment, or processes or changing or omitting data or results such that the research is not accurately represented in the research record.
- vi. Evading or attempting to evade assessment regulations.
- vii. Conducting research without ethical approval.

2 Context

2.1 Legal and Regulatory Context

a. Quality assurance guidelines

The policy is designed and implemented to comply with the provisions of the *QQI Core Statutory QA Guidelines*¹ in respect of research.

b. National Policy Statement on Ensuring Research Integrity in Ireland

Hibernia College endorses and adopts the *National Policy Statement on Ensuring Research Integrity in Ireland*².

2.2 International Effective Practice

Hibernia College also adopts and strives to comply with the *European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity*³.

¹ Quality and Qualifications Ireland (2016), *Core Statutory Quality Assurance (QA) Guidelines*, Sections 1.1; 4.3; 5.3. Available at: <https://www.qqi.ie/Downloads/Core%20Statutory%20Quality%20Assurance%20Guidelines.pdf> [Accessed 28/08/2018].

² Irish Universities Association (2014), *Ensuring Research Integrity in Ireland*. Available at: <https://www.iua.ie/publication/view/national-policy-statement-on-ensuring-research-integrity-in-ireland/> [Accessed 28/08/2018].

³ ALLEA (2017), *The European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity*, Revised edition. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/other/hi/h2020-ethics_code-of-conduct_en.pdf [Accessed 28/08/2018].

3 Policy Statements

3.1 Principles for Good Academic Practice

a. Critical skills and techniques

Good academic practice involves effective demonstration of:

- i. Time management
- ii. Reading
- iii. Listening
- iv. Note-taking
- v. Research
- vi. Critical inquiry and evaluation
- vii. Academic writing
- viii. Referencing
- ix. Citation
- x. Assessment techniques.

b. College responsibilities

Hibernia College provides:

- i. Clear training and information on, amongst other things, how to demonstrate critical skills and techniques.
- ii. Information on the meaning of academic impropriety and the consequence for breaches of good academic practice.

c. Staff and faculty responsibilities

- i. Where staff and faculty are operating in an academic capacity, they are cognisant of the need to uphold academic standards and good academic practice.

d. Student responsibilities

Students must:

- i. Ensure they participate in all course work and follow the guidance of staff.
- ii. Make themselves aware of the College policies and procedures and guidance on good practice, including those relating to all types of academic impropriety.
- iii. Engage with their programme in an independent and autonomous way, learning how to express themselves clearly, without replicating another's thought, but learning how to cite and reference properly in this process.

3.2 Principles for Ensuring Good Academic Practice and Investigating Academic Impropriety

a. Detection

- i. The College uses any legal means at its disposal to detect academic impropriety and other breaches of standards. This includes, but is not limited to, the use of text-matching software.

b. College responsibilities

- i. The College makes all codes of conduct and guidance for good academic practice available to students and individuals acting in an academic capacity for the College.
- ii. The College emphasises good academic conduct during orientation and at the point of assessment for all students.
- iii. The College deals with breaches of good academic practice by staff and faculty through the College's disciplinary procedures for staff and faculty.

c. Investigation

- i. The College investigates all allegations of student academic impropriety using the relevant procedure.
- ii. The investigation of academic impropriety is based on:
 - Natural justice
 - Fairness
 - Due process
 - Timeliness
 - Subsidiarity (that investigations will be carried out by those closest to the detection of the suspected impropriety).
- iii. The College reserves the right to suspend a student pending investigation when it is in receipt of an allegation of academic impropriety. In all such cases, the investigation is processed as a priority.
- iv. The College is not liable for any delay to programme completion as a result of where a reasonable and justifiable decision to suspend was acted on.
- v. Offences deemed to be grave, and all second instances, are referred to the Registrar for formal investigation immediately.

d. Student rights and responsibilities

- i. Students are responsible for their own conduct and are assumed to be capable of making informed decisions about their behaviour.
- ii. A student accused of academic impropriety is entitled to know the detail of the allegation made against them and is entitled to respond.

e. Non-adversarial

- i. Where appropriate and feasible, the College will seek to resolve any breach of good practice without the requirement to invoke formal disciplinary proceedings.
- ii. Procedures under this policy are not intended to be adversarial and the College recommends that where a student does participate in a meeting, that they do not engage legal representation during proceedings.
- iii. Where a student does seek to bring legal representation to any meeting, student must notify the College in writing of their intent within five working days as the legal representatives of the College will also be required to attend.
- iv. A student may opt to be accompanied by a friend or family member in a supportive capacity. However, where this person is a member of the legal profession, they cannot act in that capacity.

f. Reporting

- i. Instances of academic impropriety are reported to the Board of Examiners.
- ii. The Registrar reports annually to the Academic Board on academic impropriety and distinguishes between grave and other offences.

3.3 Penalties

Consequences for academic impropriety are proportionate to the offence and can include:

a. Automatic fail for an assessment task

A mark of 0% is applied to the relevant assessment task.

b. Repeat assessment task

The assessment task must be repeated in full.

c. Automatic fail for the module

A grade of 0% is applied to the relevant module.

d. Repeating the module

e. Agreed action plan

The College specifies an action plan for the student to work towards specific targets agreed with the student to correct or develop their academic conduct. This may include:

- i. Access to support resources, including academic and pastoral supports.
- ii. Provision of a College-appointed mentor.

f. Suspension from a programme

g. Expulsion from a programme

h. Withholding of a professional reference

i. Annotation of an academic transcript

j. Annotation of a European Diploma Supplement

k. Any other appropriate sanction made by a disciplinary hearing

Consequences a-e above can be applied by a Director of Programme; all other penalties must be decided by an Investigation and Disciplinary committee.

3.4 Principles for Expulsion Due to Academic Misconduct

The College considers expelling a student in very grave situations involving:

a. Health and safety

b. Repeated breaches of academic rules

c. Bringing the College or profession into disrepute

3.5 Membership of a Disciplinary Committee Considering a Case of Academic Impropriety

a. Criteria for membership

Members of a disciplinary committee considering a case of academic impropriety must have:

- i. Competence to make the decision or judgements required of the committee.
- ii. Independence from the matter being investigated.

b. Membership

- i. Normally, the chair of the committee is the Registrar, or where more practical, a senior academic external to the College, i.e., not a member of staff, faculty, adjunct faculty or the Board of Directors.
- ii. A gender balance should be maintained, where possible.
- iii. A panel of potential members is appointed by the Academic Board on a bi-annual basis.
- iv. A note-taker (not a member of the committee) will attend and prepare a formal record/ written minutes of the committee proceedings for approval by the chair and communication to relevant parties.

4 Document Control

Document Title	Policy for Academic Good Practice	
Author	Registrar	
Version Control	Version	Adoption Date
	V.1.0	28/06/2018
	V.1.1	29/11/2018
Expected Review Date	June 2021	
Related Policies	Policy for Assessment, Grading and Certification Student Charter	
Related Procedures	Procedure for Investigating Suspected Academic Impropriety in a Formal Examination Procedure for Investigating Suspected Academic Impropriety in Coursework	
Related Resources		