



Harlow College

HE/FE

Academic Misconduct Policy 2023/2025

Author: The Executive Team Member with Responsibility for Quality

Approved: 16 June 2023 – Standards & Curriculum Committee, updated Nov 2024

Review date June 2025

1. Introduction & Scope and Purpose

1.1 Academic misconduct including plagiarism jeopardises the quality of education and the value of qualifications. This guidance is intended to help prevent plagiarism by raising awareness, suggesting ways of reducing the risk of plagiarism and by outlining a procedure to deal with it, should it occur.

1.2 This document is intended for the shared use by academic staff and students providing advice and guidance on ways to reduce the likelihood of academic misconduct occurring and the procedure for dealing with it should it arise.

2. Definitions:

2.1 **Academic misconduct** is any action or attempted action that may result in creating an unfair **academic** advantage for oneself or an unfair **academic** advantage or disadvantage for any other member or members of the **academic** community.

2.2 Plagiarism is the presentation by a student as their own written work, of a body of material (written, oral or visual) which is wholly or partly the work of someone else.

2.3 Derivative work is work where students use one or two sources in a fairly mechanical way, rearranging the content, but still lifting ideas wholesale without reflection or considered thought and presenting it as their own work with little or no acknowledgement of the sources.

2.4 Collusion occurs from two or more individuals collaborating to produce a piece of work to be submitted for assessment and the work is presented as the work of one student alone.

2.5 Students should be aware that any work produced using Artificial Intelligence (AI), even only in part—by such tools, is not considered to be their own work. Therefore, as with any quote or material from another source, it must be clear that AI-generated text, image or graph included in a piece of work, has been copied from such software. The software must be credited in the body of the text and appropriately referenced in the bibliography. As with current practice, any assessments which is predominantly quotes will not get significant recognition. Therefore, students are advised not to use AI to produce substantive work. Where the College suspects the use of AI, students will be required to complete a further method of assessment. For further information on maintaining academic integrity see appendix 1 of this document.

2.6 Examples of plagiarism or derivative work include:

- Work copied from another student
- Work written by a parent or a friend
- Work taken from the Internet, newspapers, journals, handouts or discussion groups and not acknowledged. (Source texts taken from the Internet can be found using Google or jiscpas)
- Work produced through an Artificial Intelligence chatbot, without proper referencing (see 2.5 above).

3.0 Implementation:

- 3.1 When Professional concerns arise about work that is uncharacteristic of the student:
- There is a sudden increase in the quality of work
 - There has been poor attendance and yet work is submitted
 - There is a lack of drafted work
 - There is a lack of supporting notes
 - The language and content of the material does not reflect the student's normal performance

Academic/teaching staff will implement the procedure outlined in this policy.

- 3.2 **Student responsibilities** – students are responsible for reading this policy at induction and completing the section on pro-monitor to indicate that they have read, agreed and understand the policy. Students are responsible for ensuring all their work is their own, citing/referencing any authors that have contributed to their work. Harvard referencing is recommended at Level 3, but is mandatory for all Higher Education learners.
- 3.3 **Staff responsibilities**- Staff are responsible for the identification of misconduct or plagiarism through the assessment of student work. The College will ensure that staff are trained effectively. In dealing with cases of plagiarism, teams must ensure that they follow their awarding body guidance in line with our policy. Most Awarding bodies expect the centre to have its own policy and make reference to this in their documentation.
- 3.4 **Minor misconduct** - When tutors detect academic misconduct at an early stage in the drafting process they can give feedback and deal with it immediately. They may exercise the discretion to address the matter through tutorial advice and support for the student. The plagiarism case should be evidenced on the College's plagiarism log, via the Principalship Support team and a 'concern' log made on Pro-monitor to note any sanctions e.g. a Level 1 warning. Where, however, there is evidence of Misconduct/plagiarism in final work, where the student challenges the tutor, or has already received a minor misconduct warning, this is deemed serious misconduct.
- 3.5 **Serious misconduct** – In the case of serious misconduct, this process applies:
- Tutor/assessor identifies suspect work
 - The work and related materials are confiscated
 - The course team reviews the case and decides the level of misconduct, whether the work is plagiarised and to what degree, and the recommended penalty.
 - The team recommends a course of action to the Head of Academy (HOA) or Assistant Principal (AP)

- If the HOA/AP supports the recommendation, if in doubt the HOA/AP consults with the Director of Quality and refers it to the Head of Academy Committee, chaired by the VP for Quality and Curriculum for a final outcome. After which the student is informed of the action which will follow (this may include invoking the College's Student Disciplinary Procedure whereby a Level 1 or Level 2 sanction may be applied).
- HE student sanctions may result in work being capped at a Pass grade or result in the students having to re-take a unit or be assessed in an alternative way e.g. Viva or Vlog (refer to the HE Academic and Assessment Regulation on re-takes)
- The incident will be logged through the Principalship Support team onto the plagiarism log and Pro-monitor.

4.0 Management responsibilities

- 4.1 It is the responsibility of the Delivery Team AAM to ensure all cases of misconduct are reported to their HOA and the Principalship Support team as soon as possible.
- 4.2 It is the responsibility of the HOA and AP to monitor the level of misconduct activity within their area of responsibility and take action where there are areas of concern.
- 4.3 It is the responsibility of the appropriate AP to monitor and report oversight of the academic misconduct and disciplinary sanctions awarded to the college executive for scrutiny.

5.0 Risk reduction and awareness measures:

- 5.1 There are a variety of measures which can be used to reduce the risk of academic misconduct/plagiarism:

- Teach study skills including researching, referencing and note taking
- Teach students how to attribute material by listing sources, providing bibliographies and referencing thoroughly
- Require students to submit notes
- Require students to submit a draft. It is necessary to be clear about the type of feedback that can be given on drafts. Some qualifications require drafts to be submitted, but it is good practice to see work in progress.
- Ensure that the whole team is fully aware, and adhering to this policy.

- 5.2 **Awareness measures include:** will require considerable review and reinforcement:

- Identification at induction/term one
- Reinforcement in the course handbook
- At the point at which work is set
- In feedback

6.0 Monitor, Review and Evaluation

6.1 This policy will be reviewed and updated annually in line with, and in response to, the monitoring of misconduct cases reported to the central admin team.

7.0 Appeals Arising from Academic Offences

7.1 A student can make an appeal regarding an academic offence that has with upheld by following the Harlow College Academic Appeals policy and procedure. However, an appeal can only be made with respect to the procedures which led up to the decision being made. The student cannot appeal the outcome of the academic offence, only where the College fails to follow due process and this can be evidenced. There are no grounds for appeal on the basis of the following:

- New evidence (unless related to the procedure) not already disclosed
- Disputing the academic judgement of the academic staff and HOA/AP considering the case
- Disputing the competence of the staff involved

8.0 Associated Documents

- Harlow College Appeals process
- Harlow College Student Disciplinary process
- Harlow College Academic Assessment regulations
- Academic Board (HE) committee structure

TRACKING and REFERENCE INFORMATION

Date Approved: 16 June 2023-Standards & Curriculum Committee and updated 27 Nov 2024

Review Date: June 2025

Author/Responsibility: Executive Team Member with responsibility for Quality

Equality Impact Assessment: TBA

List of related policies, procedures and other documents:

IQA Handbook
Harlow College Academic Assessment Policy
Academic Appeals Policy
Academic Performance Policy
Student Disciplinary Procedure

Complaints: If you wish to submit a complaint about the application of this policy or the procedure of it, please send your request in accordance with the provisions of the Grievance Procedure.

Monitoring: The application of this policy and associated procedure will be monitored by The Executive Team Member with Responsibility for Quality.

Easy reading: To receive this policy/procedure in a different format, please contact HR Services.

Appendix 1

Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Maintaining Academic Integrity at Harlow College

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is becoming an integral part of education. At Harlow College we recognise the potential of AI to enhance learning experiences. This document outlines our approach to incorporating AI responsibly and ethically, ensuring that it upholds academic integrity while providing valuable educational opportunities.

We want to integrate AI to empower learners, personalise their learning experiences to ensure they receive the support they need and continue to prepare our students as digital citizens and know how they can engage with the use of AI in a responsible manner.

We want to equip our staff to support students to use generative AI tools effectively and appropriately in their learning experience.

We will adapt teaching and assessment to incorporate the ethical use of generative AI and support equal access.

We will work collaboratively to share best practice as the technology and its application in education evolves.

What is Academic Integrity?

Academic integrity encompasses the values of honesty, trust, fairness, and responsibility in all aspects of learning and education. It involves upholding ethical standards and respecting intellectual property.

Academic integrity breaches using AI may include -

1. **Plagiarism:**

Plagiarism is using someone else's words, ideas, or work without giving them credit. It can happen in written assignments, presentations, or even group projects. For example - A student copies a paragraph from a website or an AI tool such as Chat GPT and includes it in their essay without appropriate referencing. AI tools can be used in formative assessments but should not be used for summative assessment work unless fully referenced.

2. **Contract Cheating:**

Contract cheating is when a student gets someone else or something else (such as ChatGPT) to do their academic work on their behalf. For example - A student hires someone to write their essays or complete assignments for them or uses AI such as ChatGPT, to write their whole assignment/assessment piece.

If staff at Harlow College become aware of a breach of AI and academic integrity, they will use the [Academic Misconduct Policy HEFE.pdf \(harlow-college.ac.uk\)](#) to assess the situation and if required implement the academic misconduct policy.

As we embrace the opportunities presented by AI in education, Harlow College remains steadfast in our commitment to academic integrity. By integrating AI responsibly, we aim to enhance personalised learning, improve assessment processes, and foster ethical engagement with AI technologies. Our approach ensures that AI remains a valuable tool for student growth while upholding the values of honesty, trust, and fairness in education.

Here are some tips to help you use AI safely:

- Use it to enhance what you know, not to research a topic you don't – this will enable you to spot false information.
- Ask a real expert if you need to.
- Would you share the information on social media? If not, then it's not for AI either, this includes personal information, for example:
 - College and Student information
 - Commercially sensitive information (pricing, strategies, policies and processes)
 - Internal communications and minutes of meetings

We are all responsible for keeping College Information safe – please make sure you know how.

If you have any questions, please contact The Quality Team.