



P9 S8 C1 Academic Integrity Policy and Procedure



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Reviewed by:	Quality Assurance and Academic Governance Council (QAAGC)	
Effective From:	13/05/2020	
Reviewed:	30/06/2026	Renew Date: 30/06/2028
Version:	007	

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines for maintaining academic integrity across all areas of Forus Training's scope of training and education provision, including programmes which are approved for delivery by Blended Learning. It also addresses the consequences of academic misconduct for Learners and sets out procedures for Trainers and other staff in dealing with areas of potential malpractice, including plagiarism and the misuse of Generative Artificial Intelligence ("Gen AI", or "AI") resources by Learners. The policy has been informed by QQI's guidelines, including the following requirement that the Academic Integrity policy:

"... helps to educate staff and students about ethics and the importance of properly attributing their work to original sources, with resources available to understand the risks of engaging in academic malpractice, contract cheating and AI-generated written texts and products, especially for learners known to be vulnerable to such practices". (Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines for Providers of Blended and Fully Online Programmes, October 20-23, section 2.10)

Therefore, the underlying aim of this policy is to help support assessment procedures by demonstrating their validity and reliability in the fair assessment of Learners. This helps to uphold the value and credibility of the QQI awards offered through Forus Training, demonstrating ethical practices to help support national education and training standards.

KEY PRINCIPLES

Every Learner is expected to strive for academic integrity, and to undertake assessment tasks honestly and truthfully, avoiding plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty or impropriety. Therefore, Trainers and the wider team within Forus Training need to be aware of the risks arising from academic



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malpractice as:

- QQI as the regulatory body for further education and training (FET) awards in Ireland requires that all training providers uphold high standards of academic integrity in all areas of their operations. Since 2019, it has been against the law to facilitate cheating and QQI has continued to provide guidance and support for learners and training providers, see:
<https://www.qqi.ie/what-we-do/engagement-insights-and-knowledge-sharing/national-academic-integrity-network>
- The security and integrity of academic standards is an essential part of how our Learners, employers and funding agencies (plus Irish society as a whole), maintains trust and confidence in the Irish FET framework.
- Monitoring and maintaining academic standards will help to protect the professional reputation of Forus Training as a major QQI approved training provider. It also maintains the professional standing of our individual Trainers as adult educators, as well as assessors, support staff and management.

It is Forus Training's objective to reduce instances of academic malpractice and plagiarism through encouraging ethical practices and supporting assessment skills training across Trainers, Learners and assessors at all stages of the learning lifecycle. Where evidence of malpractice does occur, it is Forus Training's policy to deal with it fairly and efficiently.

Forus Training's approach to academic integrity is grounded in trust, openness, and partnership with Learners, rather than suspicion or surveillance. The purpose of this policy is educational: to help Learners understand what genuine engagement with their learning looks like and to support them in meeting that standard, with investigation and sanction reserved for cases where this trust has been breached.

PROVIDER RESPONSIBILITIES

The Head of Certification ensures that all Trainers are informed of the policies and procedures in relation to academic integrity, fully understanding the risks arising from academic malpractice and plagiarism as part of their induction process. It is also important that the Trainer communicates these policies and procedures to all learners at the introduction of each assessment task as part of a discussion on the individual module assessment brief. The importance of academic integrity and the risks arising from academic malpractice form part of this discussion, so it is important to emphasise the seriousness of the issue and the 'culture of consequence', reinforcing key messages throughout the teaching and learning



experience.

During each module's induction the Trainer should ensure that learners are made aware of the academic integrity guidance in their assessment briefs and the importance of the Learner Declaration Form in submitting assessment materials for grading. It can be expected that the use of generative AI tools in researching a subject area will figure as part of this briefing for learners.

Should a Learner submit drafts for review throughout the course, prior to final submission, the Trainer may address instances of suspected misuse of AI resources and plagiarism directly with the individual Learner. This will give the Learner an opportunity to address the issues prior to final submission and improve their research and referencing skills, where necessary. The Learner's work must be formally submitted prior to final grading by the Trainer and/ or assessor (along with a signed copy of the Learner Declaration Form). This is to ensure that all learners are aware that, on submission of assessment evidence, they are declaring that all sources used are acknowledged fully with references and a bibliography.

The Quality Assurance & Academic Governance Council (QAAGC) has the authority to oversee all academic matters within Forus Training, including providing independent oversight of Learner assessment. Therefore, academic integrity will be a standard agenda item for all QAAGC meetings to ensure that plagiarism and academic malpractice risks are actively addressed across the organisation.

ASSESSMENT DESIGN TO SUPPORT ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Forus Training recognises that the strongest protection against the misuse of generative AI is assessment design that requires genuine personal and intellectual engagement with the subject matter, rather than reliance on detection after the fact. Programme Leaders and Trainers, supported by the Programme Development and Design Lead, review assessment instruments at programme design stage and during periodic programme review to ensure they remain robust against the misuse of AI.

Where appropriate to the subject and learning outcomes, assessment design favours approaches that are less vulnerable to AI misuse, including: crediting the process of completing an assessment task as well as the final product, for example through staged submission with reflection on sources and approach; tasks



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that are personal, reflective, or grounded in the Learner's own practice placement or work experience; oral components (viva) used to verify understanding, either for all Learners or a representative sample, particularly where written submission is the primary assessment method; and assessment formats that combine multiple modes, such as a written submission supported by a practical skills demonstration.

Forus Training does not rely on a blanket prohibition of generative AI tools where their use would not be practicable to enforce. Where the use of AI is genuinely not appropriate for a given assessment task, this is stated clearly in the assessment brief, and the format of the assessment is designed to be secure and verifiable without reliance on AI-detection software alone.

Safeguards

IV

Internal verification is a quality assurance process used by Forus Training to ensure that assessments are fair, consistent, and aligned with the standards and criteria set out by the relevant awarding bodies or and regulatory organisations (including QQI and PHECC). It involves a systematic review of assessment decisions, materials, and processes by someone other than the assessor, often called the "internal verifier" or "IV."

EA

External authentication is a quality assurance process used by Forus Training to verify and confirm that internal assessments and qualifications meet the standards set by external bodies and accrediting organisations (QQI and PHECC). This process ensures that the assessments conducted within Forus Training are valid, reliable, and in line with the broader educational or industry standards, providing external oversight to validate the credibility and quality of the qualifications awarded. Refer to [P9 S16 External Authentication Policy](#) for more information.

Cross Moderation

P9S8C2 - ACCEPTABLE USE OF GENERATIVE AI TOOLS & RESOURCES

Forus Training recognises that Generative Artificial Intelligence ("Gen AI", or simply "AI") is having a significant impact on all areas of training and education. AI applies machine learning and natural language processing technologies to interact with text and visual data in answering questions set by the end-user.

The application of AI offers tremendous possibilities in education, recognising that Learners want the best



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training experience using all available learning tools. On a positive level, AI tools can help a Learner to research a subject, structure their thinking and develop ideas and further sources of information.

Ethical principles in relation to learning and academic work have not changed, including those relating to plagiarism so that the Learner cannot pass off the work of others (including AI resources) as their own. Therefore, it is important that Learners and Trainers are made aware of the proper use of AI in learning, as overreliance on AI may lead to instances of academic misconduct, both deliberate or unintentional on the part of the Learner.

Forus Training's policy is to provide guidance on the appropriate use of AI and good practice in its usage within the learning and assessment processes. It is the responsibility of the individual Trainer to explain to learners how to demonstrate acceptable use of AI within the following criteria:

- Academic integrity requires that a Learner demonstrates evidence of proper engagement with the learning process and use of learning resources (e.g., reading texts, books, journal articles, slide decks and engaging with audio and video content, etc.) during module delivery. This includes reflecting on the course's specific objectives and learning outcomes, plus demonstrating evidence of the Learner's own critical thinking in responding to particular assessment tasks.
- Trainers must coach Learners on aspects of their training that AI finds less easy to replicate, e.g., critical and creative thinking, soft skills (empathy and team building), as these are important aspects of learning that may be assessed during their course.
- The Trainer will outline what constitutes acceptable use of AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT) at the start of each module and also within each specific assessment brief, e.g., how to use AI to research ideas to respond to a written assignment task. It is important that the Learner does not simply rely on AI content to create a response to an assessment task as it is highly likely that such action will constitute academic malpractice.
- Learners should keep a record of notes and drafts arising from the use of AI resources and also the prompt question or phrases used to generate an AI response. In addition, the use of AI generated content must be referenced and attributed in the same way as any other source used in responding to an assessment task.
- Learners are encouraged to liaise with their Trainer to discuss any areas of doubt in relation to the use of AI resources as this will help ensure academic integrity is maintained throughout the



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learning and assessment process.

- In order to ensure academic integrity standards, Forus Training reserves the right to require that a Learner engages in a *viva* (oral discussion) of their assessment response if this is deemed to be appropriate by the Trainer and academic team.
- Trainers should ensure that learners are made aware of the limitations of AI, e.g., how the underlying datasets are constructed and how algorithms are designed to interact with these. Trainers should emphasise the importance of an academic work ethic in the learning process, including the use of higher order thinking to support the Learner's personal development in terms of knowledge, skills and competencies. Trainers are also required to explain to Learners the limitations of generative AI, including:
 - Accuracy – Generative AI tools do not assess whether the answer to a prompt question is correct or not. This is because AI generates what it thinks is the most likely string of words to answer that prompt. The response may be factually wrong, or it may omit information, make things up or misinterpret the user's input instructions and produce a misleading answer.
 - Bias and factual errors - AI tools are trained on data and other inputs created by humans so will reflect human biases. Unlike human intelligence, AI tools cannot reason with the material to create new knowledge so that AI cannot reliably distinguish between biased and unbiased material when using information to construct a response for the end user.
 - Timeliness – AI tools (including ChatGPT) are trained on data with cut-off dates, so inevitably information may be outdated, and AI answers may not reflect the latest information on a subject area.
 - Confidence is not correctness – AI tools are designed to produce fluent, well-structured, and convincing-sounding text regardless of whether the underlying content is accurate. Learners should not mistake the apparent quality or confidence of an AI response for evidence that it is correct, and should independently verify any factual claims before relying on them in assessed work.
 - Privacy and Security – Learners should be aware that AI resources may use personal information and other data, e.g., anything submitted to an AI platform may be harvested by it in further developing the AI tool.



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P9S8C2 - ACADEMIC MALPRACTICE & PLAGIARISM

Academic misconduct (usually referred to as academic malpractice) is defined by QQI as:

“ ... any attempt by. someone to seek unfair advantage in relation. to academic activity or which facilitates. others to gain an unfair advantage, or to profit”. National Academic Integrity Network, Academic Integrity: National Lexicon of Common Terms.

From a Learner's point of view, academic malpractice is defined as *wrongdoing* carried out by a Learner during the teaching, learning and assessment process. Below are examples of what is meant by malpractice: (*Note: this is not intended to be an exhaustive list*)

- Copying from another Learner in assessment situations.
- Collusion by working with other learners beyond what is allowed in the assessment brief. For example, speaking to other learners during an examination.
- Submitting an assessment where a large section of the content is the same as another learner from the same module (also referred to as collusion).
- Removal of assessment material from the assessment location without prior permission, e.g., taking examination papers from the examination event.
- Using electronic communication devices or other materials that are not permitted during the assessment, e.g., Forus Training does not allow mobile phones to be used in examination scenarios.
- Assisting other learners during any assessment, commonly known as cheating.
- Falsification of assessment evidence, e.g., when a Learner makes up, or fabricates results or evidence.
- Behaving in such a way as to undermine the integrity of assessment events, e.g., talking loudly or being disruptive during a skills demonstration or a theory examination.
- Impersonation, e.g., pretending to be somebody else or producing work for another Learner or carrying out an assessment on another Learner's behalf.
- Recklessness, e.g., putting other people at risk or engaging in unsafe practices during a test, such as not following health and safety rules.
- Self-plagiarism, e.g., where a Learner hands up an assessment paper that was previously submitted in another class (or pasting sections or paragraphs from previously submitted work into a new paper without referencing it as the Learner's own work).



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Plagiarism is a specific form of malpractice, covering a range of possible areas of academic malpractice.

The plagiarism spectrum includes:

- Accidental,
- Paraphrasing,
- Mosaic/Patchwork,
- Direct/Verbatim,
- Complete Plagiarism/Intellectual Theft.

Below are examples of what is meant by malpractice: - *(Note: this is not intended to be an exhaustive list)*

- Copying and pasting from the internet without proper referencing - this can be both deliberate or accidental (e.g., failing to note the source of a quote or piece of information included within an assessment). Google and other internet searches for information are part of everyday life but in an academic context all sources must be acknowledged and properly referenced.
- Copying or paraphrasing without acknowledging the source - failure to properly reference sources (including AI resources) can give rise to a charge of plagiarism. Potential sources include: textbooks, journals, the internet, class notes (or can also be from another person's assessment material). This could be any percentage of work that has not been referenced and has been copied from published work, the internet, other learners' work and/or other sources.
- Deliberate collusion - a learner works with others to present the same content as the Learner's own original work.
- Misrepresentation - passing off collaborative work as one's own, recycling assessments as new work, piecing together sections of others' work into a new whole, or submitting another Learner's work without their knowledge.
- Procuring work from a company or external source. This occurs when the Learner pays for assignment-writing or other cheating services and presents this material as the Learner's own work, using professional essay writing or similar paid-for services. This includes the Learner outsourcing the assessment work to content sourced through generative AI programmes (both free and paid-for AI tools).
- Accepting unwarranted support from others (e.g. parents, other professionals) in preparing continuous assessment elements which are then submitted as the Learner's own work.



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The submission of such plagiarised materials for assessment purposes is deemed to be in breach of academic integrity and is regarded as fraudulent behaviour. All suspected cases will be investigated and dealt with appropriately using the procedures outlined in this document. Suspected cases of plagiarism **will only be investigated when there is a declaration of authenticity** evidenced by a Learner Declaration Form which has been signed by the Learner. Any electronic assessment submitted is deemed as having been declared as authentic by the Learner.

If a Learner is discovered to have plagiarised content, they will normally get zero marks for the entire assessment. If the Learner persists in plagiarising, their work will not be submitted for external authentication and certification.

Forus Training implement the following steps to reduce/mitigate the risk of plagiarism;

- Forus Training ensures that all Trainers are informed of its policies and procedures in relation to plagiarism as part of promoting good academic standards and conduct.
- During induction, the Trainer is required to ensure that the learners are aware of the Academic Integrity Policy (including its provisions regarding plagiarism) and of the requirement for a Learner Declaration Form to be completed for each submission of assessment materials.
- Learners and assessors receive training in Harvard style referencing so that all sources can be fairly credited in Learner submissions.
- Learners receive guidance on study and academic writing skills and are shown the difference between collaboration with other learners and plagiarism.
- Assessment strategies (including the use of AI in research) are applied to help reduce the possibility of plagiarism.
- On final submission, the Learner submits their assessment work with the appropriate accompanying paperwork - i.e. the assessment brief and cover sheets along with the signed Learner Declaration Form.

There are several warning signs that may be clues to plagiarised material in a Learner's writing. These include the use of inconsistent writing styles within one piece, the use of phrasing or concepts that are more sophisticated than one might expect from the Learner (based on formative assessment tasks and earlier assignments from that particular Learner), or unusual repetitions of words or phrases. In addition,



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AI-generated content tends to use American-style spelling and phrasing which may indicate a lack of original work by the Learner. If this is detected in drafts or during the module delivery (i.e., before final submission of the assessment task for grading), then meeting with the Learner to discuss their knowledge of the topics discussed in the draft submission can confirm suspected plagiarism and this can be addressed directly between the Trainer and Learner before final submission.

Technological tools can also be used to identify evidence of plagiarism and the Head of Certification will work closely with Trainers in this regard:

- Using a search engine such as Google to look up an unusual turn of phrase from a Learner's assessment may help to identify whether an excerpt was plagiarised from an unattributed source on the internet.
- Using academic originality checking software (e.g., Turnitin, Urkund, or similar programmes). These run similarity checks against assessment materials submitted to a wide range of universities and educational institutions, producing a similarity score for a Learner's work and highlighting areas of possible plagiarism within the work. Latest software releases may include detection of AI-generated content as part of these originality checks.

These warning signs only serve to raise our awareness of situations where plagiarism may have occurred. Therefore, it is important that Forus Training operates procedures for responding to suspected plagiarism or other forms of academic malpractice, as outline below.

3. P9 S8 C3: STEP 1 INITIAL NOTIFICATION

1. In the event of suspected learner malpractice or plagiarism in assessment events for example, during an examination, this is dealt with promptly by the invigilator or assessor in accordance with our [P9 S9 C8 Examinations policy](#).
2. These instances must be recorded by the invigilator's report in the case of an examination or on the Learner Feedback Form which is completed when assessing Learner evidence. In the case of plagiarism, the detail of the suspected plagiarism needs to be recorded by the Trainer in the [Learner Feedback Form](#), along with the assessment result.
3. Detailed findings are outlined, for example: "it has been identified that information on pages 8 and 9 was taken directly from the website X at <https://XXX...>"
4. The plagiarised content within the Learner evidence is to be highlighted (each line) and the



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plagiarised source documented, so that it is clear to the Learner what has not been correctly cited. Forus Training also uses PlagiarismChecker software which generates a Similarity Report that can identify plagiarised content, including content that has been generated by AI. This report highlights areas of suspected plagiarism and uses a colour-coding system to categorise each area into the following sections: Identical, Changed Text, Likely AI Generated, and Highly Likely AI Generated. It is the responsibility of the Internal Assessor to review the areas of suspected plagiarism and determine their validity. Forus Training recognises that no AI-detection tool, including PlagiarismChecker, is capable of detecting the use of generative AI with full accuracy or consistency. Such tools can produce false positives, incorrectly identifying human-written work as AI-generated, and their results should never be treated as conclusive proof of misconduct in isolation. A similarity or AI-likelihood score generated by such software is one input into an investigation, not a determination of guilt. The Internal Assessor's professional judgement, informed by knowledge of the Learner's prior work and abilities, draft submissions, and any viva discussion, takes precedence over the output of any detection tool.

5. In all cases of alleged malpractice identified, these must be notified to the Academic Manager, QA Officer and the Head of Certification immediately. Notification must be in writing. In the case of plagiarism the Head of Certification sends the email template, [P9 S8 Plagiarism Notification](#) along with the Learner Feedback Form and annotated learner evidence to the Learner. This notification is to be given at the same time as the learner is receiving results along with the rest of the group of learners on the event. The Trainer is cc'd on this email.
6. An informal meeting is then arranged with the Learner, Head of Certification and Trainer (if possible) to discuss the plagiarised work.
7. The Learner is offered a period of time (7-10 working days) to reference/rewrite the work and resubmit. A resubmission administrative fee will apply.
8. If the Learner is not accepting of this offer or resubmits the work with plagiarism uncorrected then malpractice investigations should be completed as outlined below.

4. P9 S8 C4: STEP 2 APPOINTMENT OF INVESTIGATORS

1. The Head of Certification will decide who should undertake and oversee the investigation at all stages in consultation with the senior management team.
2. In certain cases, if required and in conjunction with the Head of Certification, an investigation



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may be undertaken by an external investigator or by internal audit.

3. It is recommended that at least two staff members are involved in the internal investigation which will include the Head of Certification and a trainer with appropriate subject matter and assessment experience.
4. The Head of Certification will commence the investigation process by getting the trainer/assessor/ invigilator to complete [P9 S8 Alleged Assessment System Malpractice Report](#).
5. If the alleged assessment system suspects malpractice from more than one learner, separate forms, per learner/per issue must be used.
6. Those involved in the investigation are required to complete the [P9 S8 Declaration regarding Conflict of Interest](#).
7. Any person who has a possible conflict of interest should not be involved in any investigation or subsequent making of judgements.

Conflict of interest

1. Conflict of interest means any issues that might unfairly influence, or appear to influence, the outcome of an investigation.
2. Possible conflict of interest relates to situations where personnel:
 - Have a personal relationship or family relationship with the learner being investigated.
 - Have a professional relationship that may be perceived to unfairly influence the investigation process.
3. The **Head of Certification** is responsible for ensuring that a conflict-of-interest does not arise and that all members of the investigation panel signed the declaration to that effect.
4. In cases where a conflict-of-interest is identified, alternative arrangements must be put in place.

Natural justice

1. Those responsible for conducting investigations shall establish the full facts and circumstances of any alleged assessment as to wrongdoing.
2. It should not be assumed that an allegation equates to proof of malpractice/plagiarism.
3. Any investigation into alleged malpractice/plagiarism shall have due regard to the principles of natural justice.
4. It is necessary that those responsible for managing the conduct of any investigation must ensure its adherence to these principles.



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5. This includes ensuring that;
 - All investigations do not disadvantage the person against whom the allegation is made and conducted within a reasonable time frame (it is expected that this should be completed as promptly and as efficiently as possible except in exceptional circumstances which may take a maximum of 40 working days from the date of the notification to the QA Officer, Academic Manager and Head of Certification of the alleged malpractice).
6. The Learner(s) in question is/are made aware of the allegation and is/are given the opportunity to respond within a timeframe of 7 days.
7. Care is taken to avoid conflict of interest.
8. The Learner (or learners) against whom an allegation is made should therefore:
 - Know that evidence exists to support that allegation.
 - Know that the possible consequences should an assessment as to malpractice be proven.
 - Have the opportunity to consider their response to the allegations (if required).
 - Have an opportunity to submit a written statement.
 - Have an opportunity to seek advice (as necessary) and supervise the supplementary statement (if required).
 - Be informed of the applicable Appeals procedure, should the decision be made against him or her through the [Recheck, Review and Appeals Policy and Procedure](#).
 - Be informed of the possibility that information relating to particular malpractice may be shared with all the relevant parties.

5. P9 S8 C5: CONDUCT OF INVESTIGATION RULES

1. All notified alleged assessment system malpractices must be investigated.
2. It is expected that the investigation should be completed as promptly as possible except in exceptional circumstances which may take up to a defined time frame of a maximum of 40 working days from the date of the notification to the Head of Certification of the alleged malpractice.
3. The Head of Certification shall be responsible for communicating in writing, to the learner to be investigated, in relation to the alleged assessment system of our practice(s).
4. The initial communication shall:
 - Provide notification that an allegation of assessment system malpractice has been received.



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- Advise that the centre procedures for managing assessment system malpractice provide full details on how the investigation will be conducted.
 - Emphasise that the investigation will be carried out in a discreet and confidential manner, except in exceptional circumstances.
5. Exceptional circumstances cannot guarantee this confidentiality as identity may be disclosed to:
- An Garda Síochána, fraud prevention agencies or other law enforcement agencies (to investigate or prevent crime including fraud).
 - The courts (in connection with court proceedings).
 - Other persons to whom for this training and/or awarding bodies are required by law to disclose identity.
6. Avoid implying that the conclusions have already been determined or that decisions have been made in respect of the application of corrective actions.
7. There is a notification of investigation letter template, [P9 S8 Notification Assessment System Malpractice](#), available on our *Learning Management System (LMS)*, with which to communicate the alleged assessment system malpractice to the Learner.

6. P9 S8 C6: STEP 3 THE INVESTIGATION

Establishing the facts in the investigation

1. The investigation team should endeavour to obtain all the relevant facts about the alleged assessment system malpractice.
2. This may be done through some or all of the steps outlined below:
 - a) Review of allegation details,
 - b) Interview(s) with those that are being investigated,
 - c) Interview with personnel and or management connected to the course, project or alleged malpractice,
 - d) Interview(s) with other relevant parties,
 - e) Witness statement(s) from the learner being investigated,



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- f) Written statement(s) from learners connected to the course/project where malpractice has been alleged,
- g) Witness statement(s) from personnel connected with the course/project where malpractice has been alleged,
- h) Statement(s) from other relevant parties,
- i) Review of recent assessment reports, for example invigilators reports.
- j) Review of previous learner records, to seek to establish whether there has been any previous malpractice investigations for this learner/learners,
- k) Other related records, e.g. disciplinary committee reports of previous history.

Confidentiality

- 1. Confidentiality is a key aspect in the conduct of an investigation into alleged malpractice, due to the risk of reputational damage to learners involved.
- 2. In order to ensure confidentiality is maintained before, during and after investigation, the following conditions should apply:
 - A. Material relating to any allegations, findings or conclusions must not be made known to any parties, either internally or externally or to the centre, beyond those key to the investigation.
 - B. It is not necessary to inform all learners being interviewed of the details of meetings with other parties, unless there is a specific relevant matter to be raised.
 - C. The name or other details of the Learner making the malpractice allegations should not be divulged to the learner/learners to be investigated without prior consent.
 - D. All material relating to the investigation must be held and stored in a secure manner.
 - E. Material relating to the given investigation should be stored together on a single file.
 - F. Each file should have a unique code to identify the investigation copies of the electronic material held within this file.

7. P9 S8 C7: STEP 4 THE INVESTIGATION REPORT



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Part 1: The Investigation Report

This report shall contain the following: [P9 S8 Alleged Assessment System Malpractice Report](#);

1. The number of learners affected are indicated.
2. How the alleged malpractice was identified and notified to the Head of Certification and Academic Manager.
3. The nature of the malpractice and the specific assessment procedure(s) or assessment rule(s) or assessment regulation(s) that have been allegedly breached as well as the award details.
4. Details of the scope of the investigation carried out.
5. The findings:
 - a) Details of the procedure, rule and / or regulation that is alleged to have been breached
 - b) Statement of the facts as described by all parties.
 - c) Details of any mitigating factors.
6. Any recommendations based on the findings.
7. Conclusion (whether the malpractice or plagiarism is substantiated or on substantiated).
8. While the investigation team are required to make recommendations based on the findings, the team should not adjudicate on the report findings.
9. The report will be signed and dated by the investigating team.
10. Any written statements, notes of it or interviews or other relevant documentation obtained as part of an investigation must be filed separately and securely as part of the investigation process.

Part 2: Report findings adjudication

1. The investigation report is submitted to the QA Officer and External Chair of the QAAGC.
2. The QA Officer and the Chair (External) of the Quality Assurance and Academic Governance Council adjudicates on the report findings and notifies the person(s) in writing as to whether the allegation has been substantiated or not.
3. Where the allegation is substantiated, the notification will include details of the appeal process in regard to the findings/consequences.
4. The QA Officer and the Chair (External) of the Quality Assurance and Academic Governance Council must complete the Findings Adjudication and Communications with Findings.

Part 3: Communicating the results



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1. The QA Officer is responsible for ensuring that the notification of the alleged assessment system malpractice investigation finding is communicated to the relevant learners within a defined timeframe - 10 working days from the date of receipt of the investigators report.
2. The finding of an investigation into an alleged assessment system malpractice maybe:
 - a) Unsubstantiated assessment system malpractice.
 - b) Substantiated assessment system malpractice.

Note: There is a letter template for this communication on our Learning Management System (LMS) named [P9 S8 Finding of the Alleged Malpractice Investigation](#).

3. If the assessment system malpractice is found to be unsubstantiated, the QA Officer will convey the findings of the investigation, in writing, and within the timeline specified, to the learner(s) involved.
4. A record of the investigation is kept on file.
5. Where the allegation is substantiated, the QA Officer will convey the findings of the investigation in writing and within the timeline specified, to the learner(s) involved, and should include details of the sanctions/consequences of the assessment system malpractice.
6. In addition, the notification to the person must also outline the Assessment System Malpractice Appeals Process and the timeline in regard to appealing their findings. P9 S37 Appeals of Assessment System Malpractice Application Form.

8. P9 S8 C8: STEP 5 SANCTIONS

Sanctions are dependent on:

- The severity of the malpractice.
- History of substantiated assessment malpractice by a Learner in the centre (if, for example, findings from a previous investigation have evidence of substantiated assessment malpractice against the learner in the Centre).
- Nature of assessment activity.

Examples Of Sanctions Which May Be Taken *(This list is not exhaustive):*

Written warning and assignment is marked as zero and submitted

It is envisaged that this will occur in the following instances (this list is not exhaustive):

- The Learner has not submitted draft material for feedback earlier in the assessment process



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which may have highlighted the issue.

- The Learner has submitted assessment evidence which has been plagiarised.
- The Learner has plagiarised an element of a module (e.g. research element of a project (10%).
- The Learner has used another learner's work.

What happens?

- The Learner is issued with a written warning by the Head of Certification.
- The assignment is marked as zero and submitted.
- The Learner is also notified that if the offence is repeated once within the Centre, further sanctions will be applied.

2. Evidence for the entire module marked as zero and submitted

It is envisaged that this will occur in the following instances (this list is not exhaustive):

- Unacceptable behaviour in assessment. This may include but is not limited to:
 - Unauthorised removal of assessment material from the assessment location.
 - Deliberate damage to or destroying of assessment related materials.
 - Use of electronic communication devices /technology or other unauthorised materials during the assessment.
 - Assisting other learners during the assessment.
 - Any form of communication with other learners (written, verbal, gestures, expressions, pointing, etc.) in an assessment event (e.g. examination).
 - Copying from another learner (both parties involved in the investigation) and Collusion by working collaboratively with other learners, beyond what is allowed.
 - Fabrication of results and/or evidence.
 - Falsification (faulty data collection methods).
 - A large element of assessment evidence is not the original work of the learner (copied from another learner, poor academic honesty in assessment evidence, etc.).
 - Behaving in such a way as to undermine the integrity of the assessment event or process.
 - Impersonation, by pretending to be someone else, in order to produce the work for another or arranging for another to take one's place in an assessment.
 - Engaging in unsafe practices in assessment.



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- Disruptive, violent and offensive behaviour in relation to assessment.
- Tampering or interfering with assessment materials or another learner's work.
- Submission for assessment of a piece of work that has been purchased/procured from another source, where the work is not the learner's own work.
- Self plagiarism, such as, handing in a paper previously submitted in another class or pasting sections or paragraphs from previously submitted work into a new paper without referencing this work.

What happens?

- Evidence from the Learner is marked as zero and submitted.

3. Results will not be submitted or will be cancelled (exceptional case)

It is envisaged that this will occur in the following instances (this list is not exhaustive):

- Unacceptable behaviour (see above)

What happens?

- Forus Training may withhold or cancel results and/or certificates if there is evidence to prove, or on the balance of probabilities, it is found that the results/certificate(s) issued to the learner are invalid.

In certain circumstances the following steps may be utilised to sanction a learner;

1. The Head of Certification must ensure that an appointment is set up between the Trainer and the Learner and a third party to discuss the learner evidence.
2. During this appointment, the Trainer must advise the Learner that the plagiarised content has resulted in the learner getting zero marks and a zero grade for their entire assessment.
3. The learner is advised of the Forus Training's policy for Late Submission of Coursework. ([See P9 S9 C4 Policy for Late Submission of Coursework](#))

*Depending on the degree of plagiarism evident in the learners' assessment, they may be given the opportunity to complete form [P9 S11 Student Application for Late Submission](#) and resubmit their final assessment along with the related €100 fee.

* If it has been determined that a significant portion of the content submitted by the learner is plagiarised, the Learner may be advised to repeat the course entirely in order to be eligible to resubmit their final assessment.



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4. The Trainer must communicate the outcome of this appointment to the Head of Certification via email at certification@forustraining.ie.
5. The final decision as to the outcome rests with the QA officer and Chair of QAAGC only.

Agriculture Skills Demonstrations Resubmission:

In the case where it has been deemed necessary for a learner on an agriculture programme to resubmit their skills demonstration, special permissions and arrangement should be made. In order to facilitate the resubmission of the skills demonstration, access to a farm may be required. If access to a farm is required that is not the learner's own farm, then Forus Training will contact a suitable farm and request consent and approval from the host farmer to supervise and allow the learner to complete the skills demonstration. A list of suitable dates and times will be ascertained from the farmer. These available dates will be communicated by email to the learner and the learner will be asked to choose a date from the list. Upon confirmation from the learner, an email will be sent to both the learner and the farmer with the agreed date. The skills demonstration will then be submitted in video format.

References:

QQI: *Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines For Providers of Blended and Fully Online Programmes*, V4, October 2023.

QQI/NAIN: *Academic Integrity: National Principles and Lexicon of Common Terms*, 2023.

Houghton, J. *Innovative Teaching with AI*, 2023, ISBN9781916238077

Lefevre, D & Shrier, D *Will AI replace the educator?* Imperial College Business School, London, 2023

San Jacinto College, Artificial Intelligence (AI): Limitations:

<https://sjcd.libguides.com/c.php?g=1358464&p=10031071>

See also:

[P9 S8 C2 How to Detect Plagiarism](#)



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Amendment History			
Amendment summary sheet			
Revision	Date	Amendment summary	Training Requirements
	16/12/2020	Suggested title change Academic Integrity Policy and Procedure approved by QAAGC	
001	26/1/2021	This policy extends to Blended Learning courses. Our online learners will not be disadvantaged.	
002	14/10/2021	Addition of the use of the Grammarly online plagiarism checker & P9 S8 C2 How to Detect Plagiarism	Circulated to staff.
003	07/03/2022	Reviewed and approved by QA Officer	Circulated to staff.
004	01/03/2023	Revised & updated to include reference to use of AI generative content	Staff briefing
005	DD/09/2024	Further revisions including generative AI considerations	Trainer & staff briefings Learner Induction procedures Assessment procedures
006	27/05/2025	Reference to Agriculture Skills Demo resubmissions added	
007	30/06/2026	Updated to reflect NAIN Guidelines	