



UK COLLEGE OF IT LTD.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY & PLAGIARISM POLICY

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Version	2.0
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Review cycle	At least annually and following material regulatory, academic or technological change
Policy owner	Quality Assurance / Academic Management
Applies to	All UK College of IT learners, tutors, assessors and relevant academic/administrative staff

1. Purpose and Commitment

UK College of IT Ltd. ("the College") is committed to maintaining high standards of academic integrity across all professional education and training programmes. Academic integrity is fundamental to the credibility of learner achievement, the reliability of assessment decisions and the reputation of the College and its qualifications or certificates.

The College expects every learner to complete learning and assessment honestly, responsibly and transparently. Learners must take responsibility for the authenticity of their work, acknowledge the sources and assistance they use, comply with assessment instructions and avoid any conduct that could give an unfair academic advantage.

This Policy establishes the College's expectations, defines academic misconduct, sets out responsibilities, explains prevention and detection measures, and provides a fair and proportionate process for investigating suspected academic misconduct.

2. Scope

This Policy applies to all learners enrolled on or participating in UK College of IT programmes, whether the programme is delivered fully online, through live digital teaching, through blended arrangements, or through another approved delivery model.

It applies to all assessed activities, including assignments, examinations, quizzes, presentations, projects, portfolios, reflective journals, practical tasks, capstone projects, research-based work and any other activity used to determine achievement.

The Policy also applies to academic and professional materials submitted for formative activities where the College has expressly identified academic-integrity requirements.

Where an awarding organisation, certification body, external partner or applicable qualification specification imposes additional academic-integrity requirements, those requirements will also apply. Where requirements differ, the College will follow the applicable contractual, regulatory or awarding-body requirement.

3. Definition of Academic Integrity

Academic integrity means acting honestly and responsibly in the creation, submission, assessment and communication of academic or professional work.

Academic integrity includes:

- producing work that genuinely represents the learner's own contribution;
- acknowledging ideas, quotations, data, images, sources and other intellectual contributions appropriately;
- following assessment instructions and permitted-material rules;
- accurately representing research, evidence, results and professional experience;
- declaring permitted assistance, including artificial-intelligence tools, where required;
- maintaining confidentiality and security of assessment materials;
- cooperating honestly with academic-integrity investigations; and
- avoiding conduct that provides an unfair advantage to the learner or disadvantages other learners.

4. Academic Misconduct

Academic misconduct is any behaviour that compromises, or could reasonably be expected to compromise, the authenticity, fairness or integrity of learning or assessment.

Academic misconduct may be intentional or, depending on the circumstances and programme rules, may result from serious negligence or disregard of published requirements. The College will consider the circumstances, evidence, learner understanding, intent and seriousness when determining an outcome.

5. Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the presentation of another person's words, ideas, arguments, structure, data, images, creative work or other intellectual contribution as the learner's own without appropriate acknowledgement.

Plagiarism can occur through direct copying, close paraphrasing, translation without acknowledgement, inappropriate reuse of previous work, or other forms of unattributed borrowing.

Examples include:

- copying text from books, websites, articles or course materials without quotation and attribution;
- paraphrasing a source without acknowledging the source;

- translating another person's work and submitting the translation as original work without attribution;
- using another person's structure, argument or distinctive ideas without acknowledgement;
- copying diagrams, tables, photographs, graphics or other protected content without appropriate acknowledgement or permission where required;
- submitting material generated by another person or service as the learner's own; and
- using AI-generated material as if it were independently produced learner work where such use is not permitted or is not disclosed as required.

6. Self-Plagiarism and Reuse of Previous Work

Submitting substantially the same work, or significant parts of previously assessed work, for more than one assessment without permission may constitute academic misconduct.

Reuse may be permitted where the assessment instructions expressly allow it or where the tutor/assessor has given prior permission. Where previous work is legitimately reused, the learner should clearly identify the reused material and comply with the assessment instructions.

7. Collusion

Collusion occurs where two or more learners work together in an unauthorised manner and submit work that is represented as independent work.

Collaboration is not automatically misconduct. Group work, peer discussion and permitted collaboration are legitimate where expressly allowed. The critical distinction is whether the learner has complied with the assessment instructions and accurately represented individual contributions.

Examples of potentially unauthorised collusion include sharing a completed assignment for copying, jointly producing individual submissions where independent work is required, or allowing another learner to submit substantial parts of one's work.

8. Contract Cheating and Outsourcing

Contract cheating includes arranging for another person or organisation to produce all or part of assessed work for submission as the learner's own.

This includes essay-writing services, paid assignment providers, impersonation services, unauthorised tutors completing assessed work, or other arrangements in which the learner presents another person's substantive work as their own.

Use of a proofreading, language-support or tutoring service may be acceptable where permitted, but such assistance must not cross the line into producing or materially rewriting assessed work.

9. Fabrication, Falsification and Misrepresentation

Academic misconduct includes fabricating or falsifying information, evidence, references, research results, attendance records, professional experience, certificates or other academic information.

Examples include inventing sources, creating data that was not collected, altering results to produce a preferred conclusion, falsely claiming participation in an activity, or providing misleading evidence in an academic-integrity investigation.

10. Examination and Assessment Misconduct

Depending on the assessment format, misconduct may include:

- using unauthorised notes, websites, devices or communication channels;
- obtaining or attempting to obtain assessment questions or answers through unauthorised means;
- sharing answers or assessment materials where prohibited;
- impersonating another learner or allowing another person to impersonate the learner;
- accessing another learner's account or assessment submission;
- manipulating digital assessment systems;
- communicating with other learners during a restricted assessment;
- submitting work after an unauthorised alteration of an assessment deadline or record; and
- any other conduct expressly prohibited in the assessment instructions.

11. Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Generative AI

The College recognises that AI tools can support learning, research, drafting and professional development. However, AI must not undermine the authenticity of assessed work.

Unless an individual assessment expressly states otherwise, learners remain responsible for ensuring that submitted work reflects their own knowledge, judgement and contribution.

Where AI use is permitted, learners may be required to:

- disclose which AI tool was used;
- explain how it was used;
- provide appropriate acknowledgement or citation;
- retain prompts, outputs or other evidence of use where requested;
- verify factual claims and references independently; and
- ensure that the final submission remains their own accountable work.

Where AI use is prohibited, using AI to generate substantive assessed content may constitute academic misconduct.

Submitting AI-generated material without the required acknowledgement may constitute plagiarism or another form of academic misconduct. Current UK assessment guidance also recognises unacknowledged or inappropriate AI use as a form of malpractice in relevant assessment contexts.

The College will not rely solely on an automated AI-detection score as proof of misconduct. Any concern should be considered alongside the assessment instructions, submitted work, available evidence, learner explanations and appropriate academic judgement.

12. Translation and Language Tools

Translation tools, grammar assistants, spelling tools and language-support software may be permitted for some assessments, particularly where language proficiency is not itself the learning outcome. However, the assessment instructions determine what assistance is allowed.

Where a tool materially generates, restructures or rewrites content rather than merely correcting surface-level language errors, its use may be subject to the AI and academic-integrity requirements.

13. Referencing and Source Acknowledgement

Learners must use the referencing method specified by the programme or assessment instructions.

Sources should be acknowledged for direct quotations, paraphrased ideas, data, statistics, images, tables, frameworks and other intellectual contributions.

Where no specific referencing style is prescribed, learners should use a consistent recognised academic referencing approach and provide sufficient information for the source to be identified.

Poor referencing may be treated as an educational issue where it is minor and clearly unintentional. Repeated, substantial or deliberate unattributed use may constitute academic misconduct.

14. Learner Responsibilities

Learners are responsible for reading and understanding assessment instructions before submission.

Learners must:

- submit authentic work;
- retain appropriate evidence of their research and development process where relevant;
- acknowledge sources and permitted assistance;
- comply with AI and technology instructions;
- protect their learning-platform credentials;
- not share assessed work with others where prohibited;
- seek clarification before submission if an assessment rule is unclear; and
- cooperate honestly if an academic-integrity concern is raised.

15. Tutor and Assessor Responsibilities

Tutors and assessors should explain relevant academic-integrity expectations, provide reasonable guidance on referencing and permitted assistance, and apply assessment requirements consistently.

Where a concern arises, staff should document the basis for the concern and refer it through the College's academic-integrity process rather than making unsupported accusations.

Assessors should not impose informal academic penalties outside the approved assessment and quality-assurance framework unless the programme rules expressly permit a minor educational correction.

16. Prevention and Education

The College seeks to prevent misconduct through education rather than relying only on sanctions.

Prevention measures may include:

- learner induction and academic-integrity guidance;
- assessment instructions stating permitted and prohibited assistance;
- referencing guidance;
- guidance on responsible AI use;
- assessment design that supports authentic demonstration of learning;
- staged submissions or progress evidence where appropriate;

- tutor feedback and learner support;
- reasonable use of plagiarism/similarity-checking tools; and
- periodic review of assessment risks.

17. Detection and Evidence

The College may use proportionate methods to identify potential academic misconduct, including similarity-checking software, comparison of submissions, assessment history, oral clarification, review of references, examination controls, authorship checks and other appropriate evidence.

Similarity reports are indicators rather than automatic proof of plagiarism. A high similarity percentage may arise from legitimate quotations, references, templates or commonly used terminology. Conversely, low similarity does not automatically prove originality.

Where AI or authorship concerns arise, the College may consider a combination of evidence, including drafts, source materials, learner explanations, oral discussion and consistency with demonstrated learning.

18. Reporting Suspected Misconduct

Suspected academic misconduct should be reported to the designated academic or quality-assurance contact.

A report should, where possible, identify:

- the learner and programme;
- the assessment involved;
- the nature of the concern;
- the evidence available;
- relevant assessment instructions; and
- any immediate action already taken.

19. Preliminary Review

A preliminary review may be conducted to determine whether there is a credible academic-integrity concern and whether the matter should proceed to formal investigation.

Minor educational issues may be resolved through guidance where permitted and where the matter does not materially compromise assessment integrity.

Where the concern is potentially serious, repeated or material, the matter should proceed to formal investigation.

20. Formal Investigation Procedure

The College will seek to investigate concerns fairly, consistently and proportionately.

Where appropriate, the process will normally include:

1. identification of the concern;

2. preservation and review of relevant evidence;
3. notification to the learner of the allegation;
4. provision of sufficient information about the concern to allow the learner to respond;
5. opportunity for the learner to provide an explanation and supporting evidence;
6. impartial consideration of the evidence;
7. determination of whether misconduct occurred;
8. decision on proportionate outcome; and
9. communication of the outcome and any appeal rights.

21. Learner Right to Respond

No significant academic-integrity sanction should normally be imposed without giving the learner a reasonable opportunity to respond to the allegation, subject to circumstances where an immediate protective or administrative measure is necessary.

The learner may explain the circumstances, provide drafts or source materials, clarify collaboration or AI use, identify relevant assessment instructions and provide other evidence.

22. Standard of Decision-Making

The College will make decisions on the basis of the available evidence and applicable programme requirements. The decision-maker should consider the reliability and relevance of evidence rather than relying on a single automated indicator.

Where there is insufficient evidence to establish misconduct, the College may close the matter, provide educational guidance or take another proportionate step.

23. Factors Considered

When determining an outcome, the College may consider:

- seriousness and extent of the conduct;
- whether the conduct appears intentional, reckless or accidental;
- learner level and prior experience;
- whether the relevant rule was clearly communicated;
- whether there is a previous academic-integrity history;
- effect on assessment integrity;
- cooperation during the investigation;
- evidence of genuine misunderstanding;
- any relevant accessibility or support circumstances; and
- requirements of an awarding or certification body.

24. Possible Outcomes and Sanctions

Depending on the circumstances and applicable programme rules, outcomes may include:

- no further action;
- academic-integrity education or formal guidance;
- requirement to correct referencing or complete a learning activity;
- resubmission where permitted;
- mark reduction or cancellation for the affected assessment;
- failure of the affected assessment;
- requirement to retake an assessment;
- formal warning;
- suspension from a programme or assessment activity;
- withdrawal or termination of enrolment in serious cases; or
- referral to an awarding organisation or competent body where required.

Sanctions should be proportionate and consistently applied.

25. Aggravating Circumstances

Aggravating factors may include deliberate deception, contract cheating, impersonation, repeated misconduct, organised collaboration, falsification of evidence, interference with an investigation, or conduct intended to obtain a significant unfair advantage.

26. Mitigating Circumstances

Relevant mitigating factors may include genuine misunderstanding of a rule, limited prior academic experience, documented circumstances affecting the learner's ability to comply, or evidence of prompt cooperation and remediation.

Mitigating circumstances do not automatically excuse misconduct, but they may influence the outcome.

27. Multiple or Repeated Offences

Repeated academic misconduct may result in progressively more serious outcomes, subject to fairness and the applicable programme framework.

Records of previous cases may be considered where relevant and lawful.

28. Confidentiality and Data Protection

Academic-integrity investigations will be handled confidentially and personal information will be processed in accordance with the College's Privacy Policy and applicable data-protection law.

Information will be shared only with individuals who need it for assessment, quality assurance, investigation, safeguarding, legal compliance or other legitimate purposes.

29. Record Keeping

The College will maintain appropriate records of reported cases, evidence, decisions, sanctions and appeals. Records will be retained securely for an appropriate period in accordance with the College's data-retention arrangements and any applicable awarding or legal requirements.

Records should be sufficient to demonstrate that cases were handled consistently and fairly without retaining unnecessary personal information.

30. Appeals

Where an academic-integrity decision carries a right of appeal, the learner may appeal in accordance with the Assessment & Appeals Policy.

An appeal should normally identify a procedural error, material new evidence, significant inconsistency or other recognised ground under the applicable assessment framework. Disagreement with a properly reasoned academic decision alone may not constitute sufficient grounds.

31. External and Awarding-Body Requirements

Where a programme is linked to an awarding organisation, professional body or external certification arrangement, the College will comply with the relevant malpractice, maladministration and academic-integrity requirements.

Ofqual guidance identifies plagiarism and inappropriate or unacknowledged AI use as examples of assessment malpractice in regulated assessment contexts and expects appropriate procedures for prevention and investigation. These principles are used here as a quality benchmark where applicable, but this Policy does not imply that UK College of IT is an Ofqual-regulated awarding organisation unless separately stated. ☐cite☐turn0search1☐turn0search2☐

32. Academic Integrity and Quality Assurance

Academic integrity forms part of the College's wider Quality Assurance framework.

Academic-integrity data may be reviewed in aggregate to identify assessment risks, training needs, recurring problems, weaknesses in instructions or opportunities to improve programme design.

Significant findings may lead to actions such as revising assessment instructions, strengthening tutor training, changing assessment design, improving learner induction or updating guidance on AI and referencing.

33. Staff Training

Relevant tutors, assessors and academic/quality staff should receive appropriate guidance on recognising, recording and handling suspected academic misconduct.

Training should cover plagiarism, collusion, contract cheating, AI use, evidence evaluation, procedural fairness, confidentiality and escalation routes.

34. False or Malicious Allegations

Concerns should be raised in good faith. Knowingly making a false or malicious allegation may itself be addressed under the relevant conduct or disciplinary procedures.

However, a concern that is not substantiated will not automatically be treated as malicious.

35. Non-Retaliation

No learner or staff member should be disadvantaged for raising an academic-integrity concern in good faith or for participating honestly in an investigation.

36. Policy Review

This Policy will be reviewed at least annually and sooner where there are significant changes in assessment practice, AI technology, applicable law, awarding-body requirements or the College's programme portfolio.

Version changes should be documented and communicated through the College's document-control process.

37. Contact and Reporting

Academic Integrity / Quality Assurance Contact: info@ukcollegeofit.uk

Academic Management Contact: info@ukcollegeofit.uk

General Enquiries: info@ukcollegeofit.uk

Where a learner is unsure whether a particular activity is permitted, the learner should seek clarification from the tutor or programme team before submitting assessed work.

Appendix A – Examples of Conduct

Conduct	Example	Typical classification
Plagiarism	Copying or closely paraphrasing a source without acknowledgement.	Potential academic misconduct
Self-plagiarism	Reusing substantial assessed work without permission.	Potential academic misconduct
Collusion	Unauthorised collaboration on individually assessed work.	Potential academic misconduct
Contract cheating	Another person/service produces assessed work for submission.	Serious academic misconduct
Fabrication	Inventing data, sources or evidence.	Serious academic misconduct
Falsification	Changing or misrepresenting evidence or records.	Serious academic misconduct
Unauthorised AI use	Using AI contrary to assessment rules or required disclosure.	Potential/serious misconduct depending on circumstances
Impersonation	Another person completes an assessment on behalf of the learner.	Serious academic misconduct
Assessment material sharing	Sharing restricted assessment questions or answers.	Potential/serious misconduct

Appendix B – Learner Academic Integrity Declaration

I confirm that, to the best of my knowledge, the work I submit for assessment is my own work, that I have acknowledged sources and assistance as required, and that I have complied with the assessment instructions relating to collaboration, artificial intelligence and other digital tools. I understand that the College may investigate concerns about the authenticity or integrity of submitted work.

Learner name: _____

Programme: _____

Assessment: _____

Signature / electronic confirmation: _____

Date: _____

Appendix C – Suggested Academic Integrity Case Record

Case reference: _____

Learner name / ID: _____

Programme: _____

Assessment: _____

Date concern identified: _____

Person reporting concern: _____

Nature of allegation: _____

Assessment rules provided to learner: _____

Evidence reviewed: _____

Learner response: _____

Decision: _____

Factors considered: _____

Outcome / sanction: _____

Appeal rights: _____

Date communicated: _____

Reviewer / decision-maker: _____

Quality-assurance follow-up required: _____