

# Developing an Academic Integrity Policy and Academic Misconduct Procedures in an era of Generative Artificial Intelligence: Five Tips for Success.

Mary-Claire Kennedy, Fionn McGrath and Silvia Benini

University of Limerick, maryclaire.kennedy@ul.ie

## Abstract.

The widespread availability of Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) technologies has brought academic integrity into sharper focus for Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). The ease with which AI-generated content can be produced has heightened the risk of academic misconduct and forces HEIs to re-examine academic integrity policies and academic misconduct procedures as they seek to adapt to this technological advancement. Long-established threats to academic integrity such as contract cheating, plagiarism and collusion continue to present a challenge. This paper seeks to provide tips for policy makers and educational leaders within HEIs to develop or update academic integrity policies and academic misconduct procedures in light of the ubiquity of GenAI. The tips are presented across five broad domains: (1) Policy writing as a shared activity; (2) Institutional co-operation and collaboration; (3) National discussion and benchmarking; (4) Policy implementation: Strategising for optimal uptake; (5) Planning for an uncertain future. The tips, which are designed to be a practical roadmap regardless of the size or location of the HEI, are based on pedagogical and organisation theory as well as referencing national and international guidance. The pace of change wrought by GenAI is likely to have an ongoing and significant impact on education for many years to come. It is anticipated that guidance for reflecting and acting on this issue will therefore remain of interest to educationalists into the future.

**Keywords:** Academic Integrity; Generative Artificial Intelligence; Policy.



All Ireland Journal of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education (AISHE-J)  
Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 3.0



# 1. Introduction.

Higher Education Institutions (HEI) have a responsibility to provide the appropriate learning and assessment environment to support graduates in gaining the necessary knowledge and skills to work competently and effectively within their chosen profession. Academic governance structures, which encompass academic standards and quality, are core to developing and sustaining an environment that can consistently produce competent and skilled graduates (Advance HE, 2018; Middlehurst, 2011). Academic integrity is a key component of academic quality and has been a longstanding concern of HEIs. The discourse on academic integrity has undergone significant evolution in recent years, transitioning from a predominantly punitive focus on misconduct and sanctions to a more constructive emphasis on the promotion and maintenance of integrity. This is evidenced by the values for academic integrity espoused by the International Center for Academic Integrity (ICAI); these are trust, responsibility, honesty, courage, fairness and respect (ICAI, 2021). The values, which are applicable to all stakeholders within a HEI including students, academics, professional support staff and researchers, indicate that academic integrity is a collective responsibility.

The European Network for Academic Integrity (ENAI) define academic integrity as: "*Compliance with ethical and professional principles, standards and practices and consistent system of values, that serves as guidance for making decisions and taking actions in education, research and scholarship*"(NAIN, 2021b). At the other end of the spectrum, academic misconduct can be defined as: "*Morally culpable behaviours perpetrated by individuals or institutions that transgress ethical standards held in common between other individuals and/ or groups in institutions of education, research, or scholarship.*" These definitions have been adopted by the National Academic Integrity Network (NAIN) and subsequently by our home institution. Established in 2019 by Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI), NAIN is a network which is composed of representatives from public and private higher and further education institutions, students and student representatives from the Union of Students Ireland. The network has published a series of non-statutory guidelines relating to academic integrity and procedures for managing academic misconduct (NAIN, 2021a, 2021b, 2023a, 2023b).

The NAIN guidelines provide a helpful starting point for the development of academic integrity policies and academic misconduct procedures within HEIs. One of the main responsibilities of academic integrity policy developers within each HEI is to utilise this national guidance to inform

their own policies, thereby bridging the gap between national guidance and localised rules and regulations. There is a considerable literature base on the good practices that underpin policy development and implementation which provides a useful starting point for those charged with this task (Viennet & Pont, 2017). This is far from a simple process since the management and

governance arrangements, culture, resources, and processes for policy development and implementation are unique to every institution. National guidelines will therefore need to be adapted to meet the local needs. Furthermore, institutional policy development is usually an incremental process with a number of discrete steps including problem identification and policy formulation and decision-making, legitimisation, implementation, evaluation and policy maintenance, succession or termination (Viennet & Pont, 2017). In this case, the initial recognition of the problem is one which is quite evident in the case of academic integrity in the era of Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI). Indeed, the emergence of GenAI is arguably the most significant threat to academic integrity in many decades (Kumar, Eaton, Mindzak, & Morrison, 2024). However, other threats remain, such as plagiarism, collusion, exam cheating and increasingly sophisticated contract cheating services continue to present a challenge to educators and policy makers (Rahimi, Jones, & Bailey, 2024). While individual academic institutions will undoubtedly have existing comprehensive policies and processes to manage academic misconduct, the emergence of new technologies and practices, means it is necessary to reconsider the existing definitions of academic integrity and academic misconduct within the University and update the procedures for managing academic misconduct accordingly.

The aim of this article is to provide those responsible for overseeing academic integrity in HEIs with a series of tips to guide the development of academic integrity policies and academic misconduct procedures and practical strategies to optimise institution-wide engagement in an era of GenAI.

## **2. Stages of policy and procedure development.**

There are several stages to the development of robust policy and procedures. These stages are informed by local institutional guidance on policy development, national and international guidance specific to academic integrity and published literature on the subject (NAIN, 2021a; Sefcik & Yorke, 2022). Table 1 provides an overview of the various stages of the policy cycle that were followed in our institution and the evidence that was utilised or gathered to support each stage (Freeman, 2020).

**Table 1: Overview of policy and procedure development and evidence underpinning each stage in the process.**

<b>Dimension of Policy/Procedure Development</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Evidence Supporting Step in Policy Development</b>
<b>Agenda setting and problem identification</b>	<p>Recognising the ever-increasing threats posed to academic integrity, including GenAI, an institutional decision was made to develop an Academic Integrity Unit consisting of an Academic Integrity Lead and two Educational Developers was established in 2023.</p> <p>The development of an academic integrity policy and procedure was identified as a key performance indicator for the Academic Integrity Unit.</p>	<p>A formal organisational structure to champion academic integrity and to oversee the development and implementation of academic integrity policy and procedures has been identified by NAIN as an important aspect of upholding academic integrity within HEIs (NAIN, 2021a).</p>
<b>Formulation</b>	<p>Appointment of Policy Working Group (PWG), agreement on Terms of Reference (ToRs) and timeframe for delivery of project.</p>	<p>The formation of a PWG is a requirement of policy development process in our institution. Defining ToRs at the outset established clear parameters for the PWG.</p>
	<p>Mapping of perceptions and experiences of existing university approach to academic misconduct and views on possible improvement on the current system.</p>	<p>Consultation with stakeholders across UL and receipt of feedback from academics ensures that current challenges are acknowledged and addressed.</p>
	<p>Meetings of the PWG over the course of a six-month period. The Chair implemented feedback received from the PWG between meetings.</p>	<p>Principles of co-production adopted during PWG discussions (Boyle &amp; Harris, 2009).</p>
	<p>Feedback on policy and procedures sought from external reviewer.</p>	<p>External review is a common feature of quality assurance practices in higher education (QQI, 2024).</p>

<b>Implementation and Evaluation</b>	Development of implementation plan including mapping of key stakeholders to ensure efficient and effective implementation	An implementation and communication plan is a requirement of the policy development process within our institution. The communication strategy involved a mapping of stakeholders which is based on an adaptation of the 4M framework ((a) micro (individual); (b) meso (departmental); (c) macro (institutional); and (d) mega (community)) (Kenny & Eaton, 2022).
	Ongoing education, training and support of stakeholders both on the policy and procedures and academic integrity more broadly.	NAIN emphasise the role of education and training in the prevention of academic misconduct (NAIN, 2021a). Appointment of Academic Integrity Champions to support education and awareness building on a Faculty or School/Department level (please see Section 3.4 for more information on this role).

### 3. Discussion.

Although the policy development process would appear to be systematic and linear, it is a largely iterative and recursive one, heavily influenced by engagement with and feedback from internal and external stakeholders. The following tips have been identified as good practice measures for policy makers to observe when seeking to develop or augment their own institutional academic integrity policy and procedures:

1. Policy writing as a shared activity.
2. Institutional co-operation and collaboration.
3. National Discussion and benchmarking.
4. Policy implementation: Strategizing for optimal uptake.
5. Planning for an uncertain future.

### **3.1 Policy writing as a shared activity: Applying the principles of co-production.**

While policy development might be overseen by one individual or unit, it is an activity which is best undertaken as a group exercise with shared responsibility and ownership. Representatives from stakeholder groups that will be affected by the policy and procedures must first be identified followed by meaningful collaboration with these representatives.

#### ***Stakeholder involvement.***

Developing an academic integrity policy which provides a clear framework to University stakeholders, while also being suitably flexible to accommodate the diverse range of academic disciplines operating in the institution, necessitates a pragmatic approach. The inclusion of a wide range of voices from the University in any activities relating to policy formation ensures that the perspectives of stakeholders are fairly represented. The formation of an Academic Integrity Policy Working Group (PWG) with representation from stakeholders from across the University is an essential first step. Representation from each Faculty, undergraduate and postgraduate student bodies, the student and records team (Academic Registry), the main staff trade union, the University's disciplinary system, the research community (such as the research integrity officer), the University library and representatives from the teaching and learning centre will ensure that the interests and perspectives of these University groups are considered. Regular updates should be provided to the wider community in the institution to ensure that they are aware of the work and progress of the PWG. While every effort should be made to ensure representation from a wide cross section of the University community, inevitably it is not possible to capture the views of each stakeholder group, as this would lead to an unwieldy and unmanageable PWG. For example in the case of our PWG, in retrospect, it would have been beneficial to invite a greater number of representatives from the student body, educational technologists from the staff community or members of the disability support services. These groups will be specifically targeted in future reviews of the policy and procedures.

#### ***Principles for policy development and collaboration.***

Universities, much like any large organisation, can have hierarchical power dynamics influenced by staff grade, number of years working in the institution and pre-existing professional relationships (Marshall, 2018). It was critical that the PWG would provide a suitable environment for all members to voice their opinions freely and openly, without concern that their views would not be valued. Two steps were taken to ensure that a common understanding existed between all parties in the PWG. Firstly, the Terms of Reference were circulated to the PWG in advance and published on an internal University website to ensure there was wider institutional awareness of the operations of the PWG. This sought to outline the roles and responsibilities of

the PWG but also the agreed ways or working and interacting with each other highlighting the equal status of all members of the PWG. Secondly, in the first meeting of the PWG, the Chair communicated to members that principles of co-production would be the basis for policy development to ensure a collegial experience for all members. This is informed by the co-design approach that is commonly adopted in healthcare, through public-patient involvement, or in business and commerce, through engagement with consumers (Boyle & Harris, 2009; Oertzen, Odekerken-Schröder, Brax, & Mager, 2018). Table 2, summarises the principles of coproduction and how these were incorporated into the PWG operations.

**Table 2: Principles of co-production employed during policy and procedure development (Boyle & Harris, 2009).**

<b>Principle</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Application to Policy and Procedure Development</b>
<b>Creation of an Exploratory Space</b>	This is where all stakeholders come together to create new knowledge.	The first meeting of the PWG facilitated discussion and debate between committee members. This allowed all stakeholder representatives to outline their experiences and perspectives on academic integrity and academic misconduct in the institution.
<b>Collaborative Process</b>	All stakeholders share their various perspectives with a view to reaching desirable outcomes.	PWG members were invited to submit written comments to documentations circulated several weeks in advance of each PWG meeting. Further opportunities for feedback were provided within meetings.
<b>Power Sharing</b>	A sharing of power between all stakeholders based on recognising different areas of expertise and resulting in shared ownership of decisions.	At the outset, the PWG Chair communicated that the philosophy underpinning the work of the PWG would be 'No decision about me, without me'. This is a phrase borrowed from the healthcare context and captures the important role that patients have in decision making in relation to their own healthcare. Similarly, within the PWG a decision would not be reached without seeking the view of all parties.
<b>Enhancement of Knowledge</b>	Recognising, understanding and utilising various sources of expertise.	The decisions of the PWG were presented to senior leadership in the institution as well as at Faculty level Teaching, Learning and Assessment Committees throughout the process of policy and procedure development. This was not only to gain perspectives from specific disciplines but to determine the potential acceptability of the policy and procedures across the institution.
<b>Relationship of Equals</b>	Relationships that are based on mutual respect.	All contributions during PWGs were given equal consideration. The different viewpoints of each stakeholder is given equal weighting recognising the differing perspectives that will be present across the institution.

<b>Non-Linear</b>	A journey with ups and downs.	Policy and procedure development was an iterative process. Feedback from the PWG was integrated by the Chair between each meeting. Any outstanding points of discord were raised at the subsequent meeting for discussion..
<b>A Continuum of Practice</b>	Supporting policy implementation and driving standards.	A plan for implementation of the academic integrity policy and academic misconduct procedures was developed. This ensures that there is a clear roadmap for implementation that is known to all stakeholders. Furthermore, this ensure that the progress of implementation can be robustly monitored and addressed if necessary.

### 3.2 Institutional co-operation and collaboration.

Before making any large-scale institutional changes, it is important to gain an understanding of current practices and processes as well as any adaptations that have been made to meet a local need within a Faculty or Department. This will inform the nature of any changes that are required to policies and procedures and any issues that are likely to lead to poor uptake of these changes.

#### *Understanding current academic integrity and academic misconduct practices.*

Prior to convening the PWG, it was necessary to gain a clear understanding of stakeholder perspectives of academic integrity within the University. The annual student survey included questions relating to academic integrity; therefore, to avoid survey fatigue among students, the results of this survey were taken into account, removing the need to conduct another survey. Four workshops were arranged for each of the Faculties in the University to gain feedback from staff involved in teaching, learning and assessment. The workshops were not recorded and were relatively unstructured to encourage an open dialogue. There were three key questions posed to participants during the discussion:

1. What have been your experiences of academic integrity with your student groups?
2. What are your views on the use of GenAI by students to complete assessments?
3. What do you think is an equitable and transparent system for managing breaches of academic integrity?

However, attendees were invited to explore topics outside of these questions. This was to encourage staff to openly share their experiences of academic integrity and academic misconduct and their views on any future processes that would be acceptable to staff. Common themes included:

- Departmental and Faculty level approaches to handling cases of academic misconduct and concerns unique to certain academic disciplines.
- Perceptions of current academic regulations relating to academic misconduct.
- Concerns about the management of GenAI in assessment, including detection and management in the context of the current academic regulations.
- Redesigning assessment in light of the advancement of GenAI.
- Managing academic misconduct concerns in groupwork assessments.

A key issue with this stage of policy development was the relatively poor attendance at some of the workshops, indeed several academic departments were not represented by any individual at the workshops. This may have been associated with the in-person nature of these meetings and offering these workshops during lunchtime. A hybrid or entirely virtual attendance option

may have enhanced engagement while offering several workshops for each Faculty may have encouraged engagement from a greater number of colleagues. Furthermore, the discussions often became fixated on GenAI, the perceived major threat to academic misconduct. This left little time to explore other forms of academic misconduct or facilitate robust discussions on the desired attributes of the new academic integrity policy and procedures. It may have been beneficial to circulate an online cross-campus survey to supplement or clarify obtained during Faculty workshops which may also have boosted engagement by a broader spectrum of staff.

#### ***Leveraging expertise.***

The University community has a diverse range of disciplinary knowledge that will be of benefit when developing policy, procedures or guidelines to accommodate the changes to teaching, learning and assessment practices arising from GenAI. To better mobilise this knowledge base, a community of practice (CoP) focused on GenAI was established. This included staff from across the University including academics, researchers and professional support staff recognising the diverse types of activities within the institution. The primary aim of the AI CoP was to create a shared understanding of the possibilities of GenAI in higher education. It also provided a safe and friendly environment for exchange of ideas and a platform to share successes in the integration of GenAI in teaching, learning and assessment (Wenger & Snyder, 2000). The conversations and questions raised by the CoP provided a valuable understanding to the PWG of the practical challenges that GenAI had presented to the integrity of assessment and sought to address this in the academic integrity policy and misconduct procedures.

### **3.3 (Inter)National discussion, benchmarking and external review.**

While University stakeholder involvement is an important feature of policy development, it is helpful also to utilise networks and communities outside of the institution to share experiences and discuss problems. These networks and communities may exist on a formal or informal basis or may need to be established.

#### ***National Community of Practice for Academic Integrity Leads and Integrating with established European Networks.***

A NAIN subgroup composed of Academic Integrity Leads, or equivalent representatives, from NAIN member institutions meet monthly. The informal nature of these discussion offers a supportive community of practice to members to explore their perspectives, experiences and challenges, particularly relating to policy development and implementation, a challenge common to all Academic Integrity Leads. While it is acknowledged that each institution will have nuances in organisational culture and governance, there are a common set of principles and expectations across institutions. This somewhat accidental CoP has been particularly powerful support for problem-solving, offering practical advice and in providing peer-to-peer support for individuals in roles that are often entirely new to HEIs.

The European Network for Academic Integrity Working Groups also offer an excellent opportunity to discuss common challenges in relation to academic integrity (European Network for Academic Integrity, 2024). While such groups provide a useful forum to explore such challenges, their ability to provide solutions that are workable on a local or national level are sometimes limited given the heterogenous educational context and national contexts of members. Nonetheless, they are exceptionally powerful tools for networking between individuals with common concerns and ambitions and as a mechanism for the development of top-level guidance.

### ***Benchmarking against similar institutions.***

Benchmarking is widely recognised as a critical measure for quality improvement and enhancing performance (Tasopoulou & Tsiotras, 2017). A requirement of the policy development process within our institution is to benchmark against a minimum of two institutions. Ideally, institutions should be matched according to several key criteria that are relevant to the policy or procedure under development; these might include number of students, student/staff ratio, nature and range of academic disciplines within the institution, sociodemographic features of the student base etc. The process of selecting appropriate institutions against whom to benchmark was not without complexity. At the time of policy development, relatively few HEIs had reached the point of implementation of their policies. Nonetheless, it was a useful exercise as it highlighted different interpretations of the NAIN guidance due to the size of the University or the underpinning pedagogical stance of the academic disciplines within the institution. The paper-based process of benchmarking, combined with the informal conversations offered by the Academic Integrity Leads CoP offered multiple lenses against which differences in policies and procedures could be appraised. At points of review of the policy and procedures in the future, it may be helpful to reconsider alternative HEIs as comparators for benchmarking.

### ***External review.***

External review is a common feature of quality assurance processes in higher education and can include review of teaching, learning and assessment practices of a module or programme or wider review of institutional policies and processes. While external review of institutional policies in the initial development or implementation stages is not a formal requirement of the development process in our institution, it is widely recognised that academic integrity is a complex and rapidly moving landscape at present. Therefore, multiple perspectives both within and external to an institution will minimise obvious oversights. An academic in a senior leadership role in another institution was therefore approached to conduct a review of the proposed policy and procedures. It is proposed that an academic with this level of experience is best placed to provide a robust objective review of a policy and mirrors the approach that is

taken for review of teaching and assessment activities at a programmatic level. While it is undoubtedly enormously helpful to gain insights from a party removed from the policy development process, the views expressed are those of one person who themselves have a specific organisational culture and institutional norms. Perhaps a panel of such individuals, identified within the existing NAIN (or nationally equivalent) structures or equivalent national body and supported by a formalised review process, may provide a more formal route to external review.

### **3.4 Policy implementation: Strategizing for optimal uptake.**

We propose that effective policy implementation can be achieved by focusing on three specific areas:

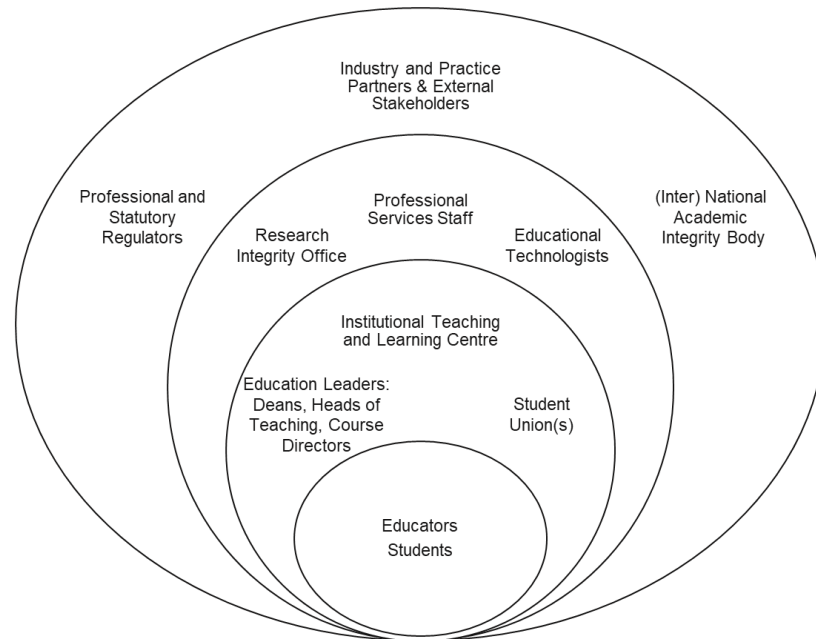
#### ***Peer-to-peer support to institute change.***

Successful enforcement of academic integrity centres around the development of a policy that is responsive to institutional needs, can be easily implemented and is acceptable to stakeholders. The appointment of Faculty based Academic Integrity Champions is an essential feature of our policy which seeks to ensure that the policy gains acceptance and supports implementation within individual Schools and Faculties. Academic Integrity Champions, a title specific to our institution, are educators who possess expertise and experience in the academic disciplines represented in the Faculty. Their role is to advise educators on discipline-specific queries that might arise relating to academic integrity, and where necessary direct educators to the appropriate resources or supports within the institution. This peer-to-peer support structure is not new to our institution, a similar role existing for research integrity. Furthermore, Academic Integrity Champions have been long recognised as conduits for effective communication and implementation of policy and procedures (Bretag & Mahmud, 2016).

#### ***Developing awareness of policy and procedures together with ethical considerations around GenAI.***

A mapping of internal and external stakeholders was undertaken to ensure that communication around the policy and procedure was optimised. The mapping, presented in Figure 1, is adapted from the 4M framework ((a) micro (individual); (b) meso (departmental); (c) macro (institutional); and (d) mega (community) (Kenny & Eaton, 2022).

**Figure 1: Internal and external stakeholder mapping for effective implementation of academic integrity policy and procedures.**



Educators and students are at the centre of the stakeholder map as the primary parties who are affected by an academic integrity policy or procedures. Education interventions should seek to target these populations to ensure that all parties are aware of the institutional expectations relating to academic integrity. In particular, clear communication is essential around the institutional handling of unauthorised use of GenAI while also equipping these groups with strategies for safe and effective use of the technology (Wang, Dang, Wu, & Mac, 2024). As Thorne stated (2024), *'students may (and do) misuse GenAI to generate plagiarized content without understanding—or even substantively addressing—the subject matter, undermining the integrity of assessments and devaluing the educational process. Additionally, students may become dependent on these systems, relying on pre-generated answers and texts rather than building their own composition skills as writers'*. In order to tackle and mitigate this issue and enhance familiarity with academic integrity and misconduct around GenAI tools, students, faculty and administrators need to develop awareness and competencies that encourage them to use GenAI to support learning and teaching rather than as a substitute for their academic work. In this sense, it is essential that university students and staff possess AI literacy as the skill of knowing how to apply AI concepts in different contexts, encompasses the ability to know and understand AI; to use and apply AI; to evaluate and create with AI; to know and consider AI ethics (Leung, Chu, Pong, Ng, & Qiao, 2022). AI has the potential to augment human intelligence with digital automation and, in this context, AI literacy allows learners to engage in higher-order thinking activities by knowing and using AI with concepts and practices

while critically evaluating AI technologies, communicating and collaborate effectively and ethically with AI (Dai et al., 2020; Long & Magerko, 2020). The critical element is still at the centre of AI literacy adding a specific layer/competence which is the Critical AI literacy. This literacy can be described as the “*know what*” and “*know how*” of GenAI tools. Critical AI literacy is an extension of existing critical thinking and digital literacies that seeks to help students develop a critical awareness of GenAI models, how they work, why their content should not be treated as a single source of truth and what their potential social, intellectual and environmental implications.

Those who occupy educational leadership roles such as programme leads, course directors, Heads of Department and Deans of Faculties are instrumental in promoting academic integrity policy and procedures amongst colleagues. Similarly, centres of teaching and learning can endorse good practices relating to academic integrity in assessment design in the supports and information offered to colleagues. The student representative bodies or student unions, similarly, can positively influence student engagement with University policies and processes. Professional services staff and educational technologists provide support to educators and students. Their awareness and support of institutional policy and procedures ensures seamless implementation and enhances the likelihood of success. The research integrity office, who have a distinct and separate function to the academic integrity office in our institution, have considerable experience in the formation and implementation of policy relating to research integrity. It is essential too that there is alignment between academic integrity and research integrity in terms of acceptable practices and uses of GenAI. This reflects a cohesive institutional approach and reduces the risk of unacceptable use across the institution.

External stakeholders, occupy the outermost level although this does not diminish the relative importance of these players, rather, it reflects that they are not directly impacted by institutional policy and procedures. Professional and statutory regulators and external entities, such as employers or practice partners, may have expectations or requirements in terms of academic integrity policies and procedures. Similarly, these bodies may influence or define the extent to which AI-literacy becomes embedded as core component of university education.

In all instances, stakeholders can further inform academic policy and procedures through the provision of feedback or in the case of external stakeholders issuing new guidance or requirements that would necessitate revision of institutional policy.

***Devolving responsibility to leverage GenAI tools for research, teaching, learning, and assessment.***

By and large what we have been discussing in relation to policy and procedural design and implementation is institution wide, however an important point to keep in mind is that the universities are complex organisation, with a wide and heterogenous selection of course offerings, research programs and staff expertise. This of course does not diminish the need for robust policy, quite the opposite in fact. However, it is important to distinguish between the design and implementation of policy and the actual practise of embedding GenAI tools within classes, programs and research. The specificity and idiosyncrasy of nominal university activities, means that while they will undoubtedly benefit from robust conceptions of misconduct and procedures for managing breaches, responsibility for decisions related to the incorporation of specific tools or systems must be devolved to the relevant Faculties, Departments, and educators to leverage GenAI tools for research, teaching, learning, and assessment. This means considering a decentralised approach for the integration of GenAI into teaching and learning while nonetheless remaining institutionally committed to key elements such as training and support (provide adequate training and resources to ensure everyone is familiar and can use these tools), ethical guidelines (establish clear guidelines on the ethical use of GenAI tools), agency (giving Faculties, Departments and Educators the autonomy of exploring AI tools to foster innovation and creativity while tailoring their use to their contexts and to meet their needs).

### **3.5 Planning for an uncertain future.**

While GenAI is the most current and urgent challenge, it is important to remain cognisant that this technology represents only the most recent of a number of previous challenges to academic integrity. For instance, the emergence of the internet and social media spurred the development of essay mills and online contract cheating, while during the COVID19 pandemic the rapid switch to online and blended learning environments, which brought with it difficulties in relation to remote assessment, perhaps with proctoring being the most notable. However, Sarah Eaton has noted, that scaled and systematic student misconduct has been a persistent problem, and importantly, not one necessarily linked to technology. For instance, she points to widespread essay sharing or so called '*Frat Files*' being reported for decades (Eaton, 2022). As such, it is important to highlight that these issues remain active challenges and further that new and complex issues will undoubtedly emerge in the future. Thus, we advocate specific steps, to ensure that an effective implementation of policy does not impede the monitoring of its use and allows for flexibility in planning for the future. They are organised as follows:

- 1) Monitoring implementation and gaining feedback: It is essential that, once approved, the policy remain relevant and consistent with the University's mission and objectives. While distributing the policy across our institution, a monitoring system has been put in place to track

the implementation of the policy, its effectiveness and the compliance of the staff with the new guidelines. Policy compliance can be monitored by recording issues arising from implementation, gathering feedback and by monitoring decisions taken under the policy. Feedback can be gained from internal and external stakeholders, gathered informally or formally, from Academic Integrity Champions and those in senior leadership roles. Any feedback mechanism should be user-friendly with the option to be anonymised. The critical reflections of the Academic Integrity Unit, or institutional equivalent, will also be instrumental to the review process, given their expertise on the subject but also owing to their role in horizon scanning and staying abreast of developments in the field. If/when a change in policy and procedure is mooted, it is essential the the changed policy and procedures remain effective and relevant to all stakeholders and minimise the introduction of unnecessary complexity to the system. Faculties, departments, educators, administrators and students need to be made aware of any change to policy and procedures when they occur.

2) Audit process: The main objective of the audit is to assess the overall effectiveness of the compliance practices and policy. In other words, questioning how well the information have been disseminated to ensure that Faculties, Departments, educators and students are complying with all rules and regulations. The Academic Integrity Unit will oversee a formal audit of cases of academic misconduct as recorded in the case management system. This formal process will ensure that trends or inconsistencies between Faculties can be identified and investigated in further detail if required. Systematic audit of cases will assist in the planning of targeted educational interventions for both staff and students.

3) Readiness to respond to emerging challenges: It is essential that those charged with the development of policy or guidance respond rapidly and robustly to emergent challenges to avoid an information vacuum from developing within an institution which may lead to divergent practices. As the challenges associated GenAI became apparent, our university opted to publish an interim statement to guide educators and students on recent developments in academic integrity and to signpost to resources available within the University of Limerick and beyond to further support teaching and assessment activities (UL Academic Integrity Unit, 2024b). It also offered a broad guidance to educators on the management of GenAI as it relates to assessment. Similarly, a set of guiding GenAI principles for the institution, students, academics, researchers and professional support staff was simultaneously developed to complement the academic integrity policy (UL Academic Integrity Unit, 2024a). A key lesson from these two measures, is that timely, coherent and pragmatic guidance is essential to provide effective support to stakeholders.

## 4. Conclusion.

In his latest publication, Thorne (2024) stated 'how can instructional (and language learning practices) co-evolve with GenAI to articulate preferred futures that moderate problems (e.g., academic integrity) while also amplifying affordances for personalized learning, dialogic interaction, and editorial assistance and feedback. It is imperative to collectively forge these likely multiple futures as education co-evolves with emerging technologies.'

Educational leadership and policy developers in the higher education sector are currently facing the common challenge of reviewing and revising academic integrity policies and academic misconduct procedures in light of the widespread availability of Gen AI. It is essential that policy developers have a clear understanding of the organisational culture and practices of the institution. A policy that fails to reflect the practices that are common and acceptable within the institution will not succeed. The notion of a top-down hierarchy of procedures and rules pertaining primarily to academic misconduct is an unhelpful starting point in fostering a sense of pride in upholding academic integrity. Therefore, while it is the role of policy makers to develop and implement academic integrity policies, it is the role of all stakeholders to actively incorporate them into their academic praxis.

Given the incredible pace of change, both the specifically technological and the consequent elliptical institutional transformation; the challenge of remaining contextually sensitive is augmented by the necessity of any new policy to remain open to subsequent alteration. This flexibility must itself retain a certain plasticity; such that required pre-designated temporal reviews may not be sufficiently frequent to insulate policies from sudden shocks or changes arising from new technological innovations, institutional outcries or national or international legislative decrees. Reflexive engagement with policy then, must be sensitive to the plurality of avenues from which concerns may arise. These issues will continue to challenge all policies which attempt to wrestle with something as dynamic as the rapidly expanding range of GenAI tools, and the problem itself must remain conscious of the importance of the local institutional context. Nonetheless, there are some abstract guidelines available to shape policy responses when the speed of change challenges the coherence of any theoretical approach to policy evaluation.

### **DECLARATION ON THE USE OF AI IN THE WRITING PROCESS**

The authors of this manuscript declare that no GenAI or AI assisted technologies were used in any stage of the writing of this work.

## 5. References.

- Advance HE. (2018). *Governance Briefing Note: Academic Governance and Quality*.  
Available: [https://s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/assets.creode.advancehe-document-manager/documents/lfhe/04\\_Academic\\_Governance\\_and\\_Quality\\_1579603972.pdf](https://s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/assets.creode.advancehe-document-manager/documents/lfhe/04_Academic_Governance_and_Quality_1579603972.pdf)
- Boyle, D., & Harris, M. (2009). *The Challenge of Co-production*. London: New Economics Foundation, 56(18).
- Bretag, T., & Mahmud, S. (2016). A conceptual framework for implementing exemplary academic integrity policy in Australian higher education. In T. Bretag (Ed.) *Handbook of Academic Integrity* (pp. 463-480). Singapore: Springer Singapore.
- Dai, Y., Chai, C., Lin, P.-Y., Jong, M., Guo, Y., & Qin, J. (2020). Promoting students' wellbeing by developing their readiness for the Artificial Intelligence Age. *Sustainability*, 12, 6597. doi:10.3390/su12166597
- Eaton, S. E. (Writer) & J. Chuang (Director). (2022). Academic Integrity 101 - Paper Mills, Academic Sweat Shops, Frat Files & More! In *Psych Explained*: Spotify.
- European Network for Academic Integrity. (2024). *ENAI Working Groups*.  
Available: <https://www.academicintegrity.eu/wp/working-groups/>
- Freeman, B. (2020). Policy Cycle in Higher Education, Theories of. In P. N. Teixeira & J. C. Shin (Eds.). *The International Encyclopedia of Higher Education Systems and Institutions* (pp. 2245-2251). Dordrecht: Springer Netherlands.
- ICAI. (2021). *International Centre for Academic Integrity. The Fundamental Values of Academic Integrity*. Available:  
[https://academicintegrity.org/images/pdfs/20019\\_ICAIhttps://academicintegrity.org/images/pdfs/20019\\_ICAI-Fundamental-Values\\_R12.pdfFundamental-Values\\_R12.pdf](https://academicintegrity.org/images/pdfs/20019_ICAIhttps://academicintegrity.org/images/pdfs/20019_ICAI-Fundamental-Values_R12.pdfFundamental-Values_R12.pdf)
- Kenny, N., & Eaton, S. E. (2022). Academic Integrity through a SoTL lens and 4M framework: An institutional self-study. In S. E. Eaton & J. Christensen Hughes (Eds.), *Academic Integrity in Canada: An Enduring and Essential Challenge* (pp. 573-592). Cham: Springer International Publishing.
- Kumar, R., Eaton, S. E., Mindzak, M., & Morrison, R. (2024). Academic integrity and Artificial Intelligence: An overview. In S. E. Eaton (Ed.). *Second Handbook of Academic Integrity* (pp. 1583-1596). Cham: Springer Nature Switzerland.
- Leung, J. K. L., Chu, S. K. W., Pong, T. C., Ng, D. T. K., & Qiao, S. (2022). Developing a framework for blended design-based learning in a first-year multidisciplinary design course. *IEEE Transactions on Education*, 65(2), 210-219. doi:10.1109/TE.2021.3112852
- Long, D., & Magerko, B. (2020). *What is AI Literacy? Competencies and Design Considerations*. Paper presented at the Proceedings of the 2020 CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems, Honolulu, HI, USA. <https://doi.org/10.1145/3313831.3376727>

- Marshall, S. J. (2018). *Shaping the University of the Future*. Springer, 10, 978-981.
- Middlehurst, R. (2011). Academic Governance: What does it mean? In *Getting to Grips with Academic Standards, Quality and the Student Experience; Resources for UK Higher Education Institutions*: Leadership Foundation.
- NAIN. (2021a). *Academic Integrity Guidelines*. Available: <https://www.qqi.ie/sites/default/files/2021-11/academic-integrity-guidelines.pdf>
- NAIN. (2021b). *National Principles and Lexicon of Common Terms*. Available: <https://www.qqi.ie/sites/default/files/2021-11/academic-integrity-national-principles-and-lexicon-of-common-terms.pdf>
- NAIN. (2023a). *Framework for Academic Misconduct Investigation and Case Management*. Available: [Framework for Academic Misconduct Investigation](#)
- NAIN. (2023b). *Generative Artificial Intelligence: Guidelines for Educators*. Available: [NAIN Generative AI Guidelines for Educators 2023.pdf](#)
- Oertzen, A.-S., Odekerken-Schröder, G., Brax, S. A., & Mager, B. (2018). Co-creating services—conceptual clarification, forms and outcomes. *Journal of Service Management*, 29(4), 641-679.
- QQI. (2024). *Quality Assurance of Education and Training*. Available: <https://www.qqi.ie/what-we-do/quality-assurance-of-education-and-training>
- Rahimi, R., Jones, J., & Bailey, C. (2024). Exploring contract cheating in further education: student engagement and academic integrity challenges. *Ethics and Education*, 19(1), 38-58. doi:10.1080/17449642.2023.2299193
- Sefcik, L., & Yorke, J. (2022). *Academic Integrity and Decision-making: An Integrated Approach*. Available: <https://www.teqsa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2022-10/academic-integrity-anddecision-making-integrated-approach-curtin.pdf>
- Tasopoulou, K., & Tsiotras, G. (2017). Benchmarking towards excellence in higher education. *Benchmarking: An International Journal*, 24(3), 617-634. doi:10.1108/BIJ-03-2016-0036
- Thorne, S. L. (2024). Generative artificial intelligence, co-evolution, and language education. *The Modern Language Journal*, 108(2), 567-572. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1111/modl.12932>
- UL Academic Integrity Unit. (2024a). *Generative Artificial Intelligence Principles for the University, Staff, Researchers and Students*. Available: <https://www.ul.ie/provost/functionsprocesses/academic-integrity-unit/generative-artificial-intelligence-principles>
- UL Academic Integrity Unit. (2024b). *University of Limerick: Interim Statement on Academic Integrity and Academic Misconduct*. University of Limerick

- Viennet, R., & Pont, B. (2017). *Education Policy Implementation: A Literature Review and proposed Framework*. OECD Retrieved from [https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/education-policy-implementation\\_fc467a64-en.html](https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/education-policy-implementation_fc467a64-en.html)
- Wang, H., Dang, A., Wu, Z., & Mac, S. (2024). Generative AI in higher education: Seeing ChatGPT through universities' policies, resources, and guidelines. *Computers and Education: Artificial Intelligence*, 7. doi:10.1016/j.caeai.2024.100326
- Wenger, E. C., & Snyder, W. M. (2000). Communities of practice: The organizational frontier. *Harvard Business Review*, 78(1), 139-146.