Newcastle University

National Professional Qualifications (NPQs)

Academic Integrity Policy

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Academic Integrity Policy

Introduction

Newcastle University has a Student Charter which sets out the University's expectations for the standards of conduct of its students. These academic values are essential to the integrity of an academic community and therefore NPQ participants are expected to:

- Maintain high standards of academic conduct and honesty when completing assessments.
- Familiarise themselves with and applying the guidance provided on good academic practice, including the avoidance of plagiarism and other academic misconduct (for example, the purchasing or inclusion of unacknowledged content).
- Ensure that submitted work is the participant's own and that they acknowledge appropriately any use made of the work from other sources.

University NPQ academic integrity investigations use the civil standard of proof. This means that during any University investigation, the authorised person making the determination will need to assess the evidence available to them and make a reasoned judgement as to whether, on the balance of probabilities, Academic Misconduct has taken place. The University is duty-bound to investigate any allegation of Academic Misconduct made against a student and will take disciplinary action where it decides, on the balance of probabilities, that Academic Misconduct has taken place.

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is an underlying principle of research and academic practice. Through the work and approach to learning participants are expected to **demonstrate their development as an independent learner and critical thinker,** including maintaining good academic practice. This involves completing the assessment honestly and ethically, having respect for the work of others and recognising **the responsibility to ensure fair assessment.**

Poor academic practice or misconduct such as plagiarism, collusion, fabrication, or falsification, undermine the advancement of knowledge and innovation that are at the core of the University's vision.

The overarching purpose of assessment is to **demonstrate understanding and ability to analyse and apply knowledge** gained through the NPQ programme to the assessors. NPQ participants who submit someone's or something's work as their own, whether this is copying, getting someone else to write an assessment on their behalf or claiming authorship of machine generated (AI) content (including text, code and creative works) means that they are not demonstrating their own skills and learning. As well as limiting opportunities to develop as a learner, it is highly unethical.

1. All NPQ assessments must be completed in compliance with our [Assessment Policy](#)
2. Participants are required to confirm that the submission is entirely their own work. This confirmation is situated on the Moodle system where the assessment is submitted. Should this not be possible at the time of submission, Newcastle University staff will work with the participant to ensure it is secured. Any results released before this has been achieved will be clearly marked **conditional**.
3. Newcastle University will use Turnitin software in order to identify **plagiarism** (see definition below). NPQ submissions will risk failing if plagiarism is detected in the submission. Plagiarism is defined as the use of the work of others without acknowledgement. This covers not just using words, but also, for example, concepts, ideas, data, designs, images, computer programmes, music. Therefore, even if a participant expresses someone else's ideas in their own words, the source of the idea must still be acknowledged. Wording that

forms part of the proforma (and not a participant's answer), cited text, and NPQ framework statements will not be counted as plagiarism.

4. Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) may also raise concern if detected in the submission. If there is a suspicion that work has been submitted for assessment that is not the participant's own work, including text, images or code, partially or wholly generated by AI, their work will be considered within our *Academic Misconduct Procedure* and the assessment team reserves the right to run work through an AI checker as part of an investigation into academic misconduct.

5. In cases of academic misconduct, the Academic Misconduct Procedure will be implemented (see below for details).

6. Any concerns or issues regarding the Assessment, should be addressed to Newcastle University via npqassessment@newcastle.ac.uk

Academic Misconduct Procedure

There are two levels at which Academic Misconduct decisions relating to NPQ Assessment may be considered:

Level 1: Local Resolution: Reports of academic misconduct are considered locally in the first instance. The Lead Moderator will investigate the reported Academic Misconduct and decide on appropriate action.

Reports of Academic Misconduct will be considered and determined by the Lead moderator for NPQ Assessment. They will notify the participant of the reported Academic Misconduct in writing and will provide them with relevant evidence. They will invite the participant to provide a written statement in response to the report made against them and may also invite the participant to an interview to discuss the reported Academic Misconduct, which may involve questions to establish understanding of the work that has been submitted.

Notes will be taken of any meetings the participant is asked to attend; these are not word for word and meetings will not normally be recorded. Participants will be provided with a copy of the notes of any meetings that they attend. Participants are entitled to respond to the details of the report, engage with the investigation and be present (in person or virtually) at any interview or hearing to which they are invited. However, if they fail to engage or attend, the University and NIoT may proceed in their absence. The University and NIoT will ensure that the process is accessible to the participant and accommodates any specific needs which they identify.

The Lead Moderator will consider all the evidence available to them and decide on an appropriate outcome, which may include the NPQ submission failing if misconduct is found. The participant will be informed, in writing, of the outcome of the case and will be given details of how to appeal any decisions the participant is dissatisfied with.

The content of the work reported as Academic Misconduct may be submitted to a checking tool, for example where the report relates to plagiarism or to text generated by Artificial Intelligence.

Should it be proven to a reasonable level of certainty that all or some of the submission has been produced using methods which amount to academic misconduct, the submission will fail, and the participant will have one more opportunity to submit in the next window, unless this is already their second attempt.

Level 2: Appeals Panel: Where the findings of the Level 1 investigation are disputed by the participant, they may submit an appeal to the Appeals Panel, using our appeals process.

If the lead moderator for any reason feels that the appeals panel should be convened to consider the case they can elevate the investigation from level 1.

Academic misconduct procedure steps:

First Marker

- Identifies through Turnitin report that plagiarism is suspected, or has reason to suspect that AI has been used to generate some or all of the answer
- Flags with lead assessor and requests submission be moderated
- Completes marking of submission, including feedback which identifies which part(s) of the script appears not to be the participant's own work

Lead Assessor

- Checks Turnitin report/checks for AI generation using agreed process
- Moderates submission as usual, adding to feedback regarding non-original content
- Flags with lead moderator regarding academic misconduct

Lead Moderator

- Reviews evidence regarding misconduct
- Contacts participant via email to arrange conversation/email discussion regarding evidence, as participant prefers
- Makes decision regarding outcome based on discussion with participant, and in consultation with Lead Assessor. This can include referring to Appeals Panel.