

Loughborough College Group

Plagiarism and Collusion Policy

1. Scope and Purpose

Plagiarism, cheating, collusion and attempting to obtain an unfair academic advantage are forms of unacceptable academic misconduct. This policy defines what the College means by plagiarism, gives examples of the categories of other forms of unacceptable academic misconduct outside examinations, gives guidance to staff to help prevent the occurrence of such misconduct, determines the procedures to be adopted in suspected cases and indicates the academic penalties which may be appropriate in proven cases. In establishing this policy, the College is seeking to maintain the integrity of its academic awards and procedures and to give any students affected a fair opportunity to respond to any allegation of academic misconduct.

Each case will be determined on its own facts and merits. Accordingly, it may be necessary to adjust the procedures to allow a proper investigation or to ensure fairness to the student concerned in any case. It may be necessary for the College to seek legal advice in specific cases. The procedures in this policy are not contractual in nature and there is no right to compensation for any amendment to the procedures. The policy is for use outside public examinations, where the examining boards' own procedures will apply. It includes college-assessed work which contributes towards external examination marks.

2. Policy Statement

Loughborough College Group take allegations of plagiarism and collusion extremely seriously since such acts:

- Threaten the credibility, integrity, and standards of awards if students gain credit for work which is not their own, or which does not demonstrate their own learning
- Cast doubt on a student's commitment and responsibility to their learning as well as their personal integrity.
- Represent an unfair advantage over those students who do not plagiarise or collude;
- Represent a serious attack on the values of academic integrity, values that are fundamental to universities and many other institutions.

For these reasons, suspected plagiarism, collusion, or contract cheating, at any point of a student's course, and whether discovered before or after certification, will be investigated and dealt with appropriately and proportionately by the college.

This policy applies to all students registered on college courses.

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Plagiarism is the presentation of someone else's work, words, images, ideas, opinions, or discoveries, whether published or not, as one's own, or alternatively appropriating the artwork, images or computer-generated work of others, without properly acknowledging the source, with or without their permission. Plagiarism by students can occur in examinations but is most likely to occur outside sat, unseen exams, i.e., in coursework, assignments, portfolios, essays and dissertations. Examples of plagiarism in such a context would include:

- Directly copying from written physical or pictorial, including AI generated content without crediting the source;
- Paraphrasing someone else's work or AI generated text, without crediting the source;
- Examples of other forms of academic misconduct (such as cheating, collusion and attempting to obtain an unfair academic advantage) would include:
- Getting someone else to produce part or all of the work submitted;
- Colluding with one or more student(s) to produce a piece of work and submitting it individually as one's own;
- Copying the work of another student, with or without their permission;
- Knowingly allowing another student to copy one's own work;
- Resubmitting one's own previously graded work;
- Using forbidden notes, books or AI tools in producing assigned work or tests;
- Fabrication of results (including experiments, research, interviews, observations). The use of the word "academic" in the title seeks to define the scope of policy as it relates to the delivery and assessment of the curriculum. It is intended to include vocational courses and all assessed programmes

Key definition: Collusion refers to working with someone else to produce work that you or they submit for an assessment that is claimed to be the work on one person only. This might involve interacting (in person, by phone, email, messaging, social media, or any other way) with another student to complete the assessment task, such as by sharing answers or parts of answers. It can also involve attempting to collude with another student, even if no collusion happens in the end.

All students are encouraged to improve their academic work by learning from others and some students will also have reasonable adjustments for a disability or specific learning difficulty that provides them with specialised help. It is important to distinguish this from collusion.

When determining whether a piece of work is the result of collusion, considerations will be made about whether the submitted assessment is the product of the student's own intellectual efforts, following a learning process, or whether they have tried to obtain an advantage dishonestly by submitting work that is partly or wholly done by someone else.

In some modules, group work or the sharing of sources is allowed and will be made clear by the module organiser in the assessment briefing. Unless explicitly told that working together on assessments is allowed, it is not permitted.

3. Responsibilities and Duties – staff and students

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Module organisers must use their assessment briefs to set out what level of collaboration is permitted and what is not permitted.

Students must ensure that they do not undertake any activity linked to plagiarism or collusion.

4. Policy Procedure

Should plagiarism and collusion be suspected, an internal investigation will be conducted which will likely involve the student(s) concerned and the teacher/assessor. This may also include liaison with the relevant awarding body. This may lead to sanctions from the college and/or the awarding body.

5. Impact Assessments

- This policy/procedure has been assessed for its impact on equal opportunities and will be informed by the aim to eliminate all forms of discrimination in all strands of the equal opportunities' legislation.
- This policy/procedure has been assessed for potential risk on data subjects due to the processing of personally identifiable information. All processing has been reviewed and is in line with all current Data protection laws and appropriate safeguards implemented to ensure that the policy has privacy by design as its underlying approach.
- This policy has been impact assessed where appropriate for Safeguarding, Health and Safety and Sustainability Factors to ensure that all potential risks are identified and mitigated, and that the policy supports a safe, inclusive, and environmentally responsible learning and working environment.

6. Location and Access to the Policy/Procedure

This document can be found on:

- The Loughborough College Group's Website
- The Loughborough College Group's SharePoint

7. Linked Policies and Procedures

- Student Behaviour Policy
- FE Assessment, Marking and Feedback Policy
- FE Plagiarism Policy
- FE Academic Appeals Policy
- AI policy (JCQ)
- FE Malpractice and Maladministration Policy

8. Change log

Date	Version	Details of change	Review / Revision by	
			Name	Title

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13.08.25	1.0	Updated to incorporate Loughborough College Group	Stacey Adams	Head of Quality

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