National Academic Integrity Network Meeting

15th April 2021, 10:30am to 1.00pm
Microsoft Team Meeting

Attendees:
1. HEI members: AIT: Frances O’Connell; Catherine O’Donoghue, Cora McCormack; CCT College: Marie O’Neill; MTU Cork: Des Walsh; Violeta Morari Jim O’Mahony; Eva Juhl DBS: Lori Johnston, Grant Goodwin; DCU: Fiona O’Riordan, Gillian Lake; DkIT: Brendan Ryder; GMIT: Carmel Brennan, Hugh McBride; Griffith College: Aisling McManus; Hibernia College: Aisling Reast, Aoife Lynam; IBAT: Brid Lane; ICD Business School: Jason Healy; ICHAS: Denis Ryan; LIT: Pat Donohue; LYIT: Simon Stephens; MIC UL: Patrick Connolly; MIE TCD: Seán Delaney; MU: Susan Gottlober; IT Sligo: Gavin Clinch, RCSI: Fiona Mitchell; TUD: Kenneth Carroll; UCC: Siobhan Cusack, UCD: Joyce Senior, Sue Rackard; UL: Angelica Risquez; WIT: Terry O’Brien
Student representatives: NCISU: Dajana Sinik; TCDSU: Megan O’Connor; USI: Kevin McStravock DCU SU: Lucien Waugh Daly
Agencies representing HEIs: HECA: Patricia O’Sullivan; IUA: Nora Trench Bowles; NFRI: Jennifer Brennan
NAIN Steering Committee: Chair: Billy Kelly; WG#1: Frances O’Connell; WG#2: Violeta Morari; WG#3: Kevin McStravock
QQI Executive: Sue Hackett (NAIN Coordinator); Bryan Maguire; Karena Maguire; Grainne Mooney (WG#3 Convenor); Sarah O’Connell (NAIN Administrator); Deirdre Stritch (QQI Academic Integrity Lead & Regulation); Yvonne Agnew (Regulation)

Apologies: NCI, St Angela’s NUIG, TCD, IADT, IT Carlow, NUIG, MTU Kerry, THEA

1. Opening by Chair and Review of Previous Minutes
The Chair welcomed the new NAIN members – Angelica Risquez (UL); Paula Seth (PCHEI); Kathy Bradley (SAI); Jim O’Mahony and Eva Juhl (MTU Cork).
Members were asked for comments on the note of the previous meeting and this was approved.
The Chair informed members that the WG#1 Chair Yvonne Kavanagh is currently on sick leave. In her absence, the WG#1 Deputy Chair has stepped into cover her absence – Frances O’Connell. The Chair handed over to the WG#1 Chair for an update from WG#1.

2. Update from WG#1
The Chair of WG#1 gave an update on WG1. WG1 have been working on finalising
1) the advisory Academic Integrity Guidelines:
2) Academic Integrity: National Principles including a Lexicon of Common Terms

Post the February plenary meeting, the draft Guidelines were shared with external stakeholder and non-NAIN members. Eighteen, out of 81 stakeholders contacted, responded with observations or acknowledgements. WG#1 considered these comments and incorporated them into the document. A working document specifies the comments and which were used to update, amend or expand the AIGs.
The NAIN Chair asked the membership for any comments and to approve the Guidelines as circulated prior to the meeting. The Guidelines were approved by the membership. The Guidelines will now be sent to the designers with a view to e-publication in June.

The Chair reported on the current work of WG#1. It is currently working towards a conceptual framework for implementing exemplary academic integrity policy. The group broke down the framework for addressing academic misconduct into three main areas:

- Lifecycle identification Group led by Brendan Ryder
- Policy intervention points Group led by Aisling Reast
- Supporting Templates for staff Group led by Fiona O’Riordan

An update on work accomplished will be given in the June 17th plenary meeting.

E-proctoring

QQI are supporting WG#1 in looking into online remote proctoring to produce a report which may inform the production of guidelines:

- a landscape review of a balanced perspective on e-proctoring;
- what is happening/ has been developed nationally
- advice and recommendations going forward.

A researcher will be contracted to carry out this piece of work to be carried out from June – August.

3. Update from Working Group 2

The NAIN Chair welcomed Violeta Morari (MTU Cork campus and a founding member of WG#2) who has recently taken over from David Croke as chair of WG#2.

The new Chair invited NAIN members to consider joining WG#2, and to email her at academicintegrity@qqi.ie to let her know of their interest.

WG#2 2021 initiatives are as follows:

- Continue to address the detection of instances of Contract Cheating, following on from the aggregated data obtained from the 2020 Registrar Questionnaire exercise;
- Develop consensus guidelines for handling academic misconduct data within HEIs;
- Develop an inventory of current Academic Integrity activities and initiatives across member HEIs;
- Finalise a National Survey of HEI staff and implement it to identify levels of understanding and confidence amongst professional and academic staff in relation to academic integrity.

4. Update from Working Group 3

The current outgoing Chair, Kevin McStravock, provided the updated on WG#3. WG3 hosted 3 Student Focus Groups April, and a summary of the findings is to be collated.

As outlined in the PPTs, some key findings were

- administration of assessment when deadlines for assessed assignments are bundled in a short time period, exacerbates student stress and also the temptation to succumb to cheating services;
- students do not set out to cheat – circumstances may lead them to this as a last resort and many students reported that they and their peers do not where to go for help in their institution;
- the institutional messaging is mainly about the penalties (which they know) rather than about what they are doing to support students in not engaging with this type of service;
- international students are vulnerable if English is not their first language – there is a significant culture shift often required too to comply with the academic conventions as well as managing the level of academic language and skills required to succeed;
- the bombardment on social media with offers of help from what look like friendly companies or groups;
- input from institutions educating students about academic integrity should be ongoing, not just at induction;
- staff also need to be educated on what academic integrity and how they can work to mitigate the risk in for example, assessment design and delivery;
- the institutions needs to work with the students to reduce or erase this problem rather than seeing students as the potential criminal abettor.

5. Update on QQI Regulatory Activities

Deirdre Stritch provided the updated on QQI regulatory activities. The first QQI Alert email containing websites that offer essay writing services/exam help went out to NAIN members in March. These Alerts are also sent to other key staff, e.g., Registrars, senior management, in HEIs and related agencies.
It was highlighted that it is very important that these alerts are shared by the NAIN members with the broader academic community in their institutions to ensure there is an awareness of them and to stimulate thinking on what can be done to support students and protect their students and the institution’s reputation.
A second QQI Alert will be issued by QQI shortly.

6. Student Sharing of Staff IP with Third Parties

Nora Trench Bowles (IUA NAIN member) raised this as a point of concern in the IUA as this matter has been flagged by a number of their member universities. The IUA registrars and quality committee members have agreed that it would be useful to have a sectoral approach on this.
Following discussions at the meeting, it was agreed that the best approach would be to handle identification of this type of malpractice as an institutional disciplinary matter.

This will be discussed by the NAIN Steering Committee to consider how best to address it.

8 Enhancement Activities for 2021

Two NAIN webinars will take place in May, intended to provide enhancement opportunities for staff and institutions, provided by Professor Cath Ellis (UNSW) and Professor Philip Dawson (CRADLE, Deakin University).
NAIN members were invited to share the invitation across their institutions and with any other interested networks, and to attend themselves if time allowed. A short synopsis of each webinar was provided.
The 2021 National Academic Integrity week will take place during the week of 20th October 2021. The main theme is:
Designing, Managing and Delivering Assessment to Uphold Academic Integrity
Sub-theme: staff / student partnerships in upholding academic integrity and preventing academic misconduct

Ideas for contributions from members should be sent by email to academicintegrity@qqi.ie, addressed to the NAIN Coordinator.

9 NFETL funding allocation
The NAIN Chair reported that the NFETL had allocated some funding to the network for 2021 (8.5k) on foot of an application submitted in 2020. The NAIN must submit in writing what it is they are going to do with the funding by the start of June. The Chair will advise members once the Steering Committee has discussed it in more detail.

10 AOB and Confirmation of Remaining Dates for 2021
Upcoming dates for your diary:
   Cath Ellis webinar: May 7th – 9.00-10.30
   Phillip Dawson webinar: May 20th – 9.30-10.30
   NAIN plenary meeting: June 17th 10.30-13.00

The ENAI conference June 7th – 11th was mentioned, Registration is through the ENAI website at Academicintegrity.eu. Please note that NAIN staff members can register as ENAI members for the EUR 100 rate.