Academic Integrity:
a student perspective

National Academic Integrity Network

Presenter:
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QQI

Working Groups

#1

- Establish common definitions & lexicon

- Agree principles of Academic Integrity

- Collate current approaches to prevention, detection and sanctioning

#2

- Establish nature and extent of academic misconduct

- Develop prevention strategies

- Identify areas for enhancement activities

#3

- **Develop student communications plan to raise awareness of academic integrity**

- **Develop communications to support recommendations and activities of other working groups**

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Gaining the Student Perspective:
key messages from the Student Focus Groups

- Three focus groups held mid - April.

- 15-18 participants per focus group.

- Participation across all types of institution .

- Representation across all target groups.

- Facilitated by WG#3 student members – peer led.

The Student Perspective

What does the phrase 'academic integrity' mean to you?

Answers reflected the following points:

- Being truthful, honest, moral and giving the correct credit to wherever or whoever you got your information from.
- It requires you to respect academia/ the intellectual property of others and to take responsibility for your own learning

- **This type of behaviour will uphold**
- - academic integrity and therefore ensure excellence in the standards of an institution;
- - the standards and ethics that academics abide by to ensure the most transparent experience;
- - keeping the playing field level for everyone to ensure;
- - an approach to ensure there is no cheating in assignment writing in 3rd level education.

The Student Perspective

What does the phrase 'contract cheating' mean to you?

Some general points as to what students said they would like to see in their institutions::

1 More advice on where to go on campus to get support

2 Continuous and constructive supports for all students,

3 An approach to dealing with advertising of contract cheating services on campuses

4 Spreading of module assignment deadliness

5 More training for lecturers

6 Intercultural training for staff

7 Training for students at induction and ongoing

8 Appropriate language support for non-English 1st language users;

9 Consistent and timely application of policies regarding proven academic misconduct.

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The Student Perspective

Have you or anyone you know ever been approached by 'an essay mill'?

Students said they get *'bombarded on social media'* with offers of help and it is easy for the unsuspecting student to get tied up with these if they don't understand what / who these 'people' are.

'Every tweet about struggling with an essay gets replies from bots offering help with assignments.'

In one SFG, students raised the issue of incongruent assessment approaches which do not reflect real world tasks as one key reason why a student may succumb to using cheating services.

The Student Perspective

What further info would you like to know more about these topics?
If you were stressed do you know where you could go for help?

Many students said

- *'Everything gets lost in the high number of emails'* - there is a need to communicate in different ways.

- The issue is not whether or not they know about their institution's regulations but knowing where they can access help.

- No student sets out with malice ... more understanding from institutions about what constitutes academic integrity and how they can support students is needed.

- Librarians and counsellors are key sources of support in my institution.

The Student Perspective

What have we learnt?

Student understanding of academic integrity is mostly limited to plagiarism.

Students liked the WG#3 2020 campaign #myownwork but felt the campaign hadn t reached everyone .

Action by institutions must involve addressing the reasons students might fall prey to essay mills / succumb to another form of cheating.

Student awareness of institutional academic supports is key.

Institutional staff need to have a consistent approach to academic integrity.

Moving Forward

Thank You!