ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY

Policy Owner: Head Office
Oversight Committee: Examinations & Standards Committee
Approval Body: Grand Council
Applies to: All learners, candidates, centres, teachers, examiners, assessors and staff
Review Cycle: Annual, or following regulatory or technological change

1. Purpose

This policy sets out how International Performing Arts & Theatre Limited (I-PATH) protects the integrity, authenticity and credibility of all assessed academic work contributing to its qualifications.

It ensures that:

- assessment outcomes accurately reflect learner attainment
- malpractice, including misuse of artificial intelligence, is prevented and addressed
- public confidence in I-PATH qualifications is maintained
- regulatory expectations under the Ofqual General Conditions of Recognition are met

2. Scope of Academic Work

This policy applies to all forms of non-performance academic evidence, including:

- written assignments and projects
- research reports
- reflective evaluations
- lesson plans and teaching materials
- recorded academic podcasts or audio submissions
- digital or mixed-media academic submissions

Academic work currently forms part of assessment in the following qualifications (this list may expand):

Qualifications including academic work

- **Vocational Graded Examinations**
  - Intermediate
  - Advanced Foundation
  - Advanced 1
  - Advanced 2

  (written project *or* recorded academic podcast)
- **Level 3 Learning Support Certificate**
- **Level 4 Teaching Diploma in Performing Arts**
- **Level 6 Teaching Diploma in Performing Arts**
- **Level 4 Professional Diploma in Performing Arts**

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- **Level 6 Professional Diploma in Performing Arts**
- **Diploma in Choreography** (currently unregulated)

3. Academic Integrity: Definition

Academic integrity means that all submitted work:

- is authentically produced by the learner
- accurately represents the learner's own understanding and ability
- complies with published assessment requirements
- transparently acknowledges sources, influences and assistance
- is free from deception, misrepresentation or unfair advantage

4. Responsibilities

4.1 Learners

Learners must:

- submit work that is entirely their own unless collaboration is explicitly permitted
- ensure all sources are acknowledged appropriately
- comply with all rules on assessment conduct and submission
- declare the use of any permitted tools or support
- avoid actions that could compromise assessment validity

4.2 Centres and Teachers

Centres and teachers are responsible for:

- educating learners on academic integrity expectations
- ensuring learners understand AI and technology rules
- authenticating learner work prior to submission
- reporting suspected misconduct promptly and confidentially
- cooperating fully with investigations

4.3 Examiners and Assessors

Examiners must:

- assess work strictly against published criteria
- remain vigilant to indicators of inauthentic work
- escalate concerns to Head Office immediately
- refrain from informal resolution or independent sanctions

4.4 I-PATH Governance

I-PATH ensures:

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- clear separation between investigation and decision-making
- consistent application of sanctions
- secure evidence handling and record-keeping
- escalation of systemic risks to governance committees

5. Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Technology Use

5.1 Core Principle

Assessment evidence must represent the learner's own intellectual effort.
AI tools must not be used in a way that replaces, obscures or misrepresents learner authorship.

5.2 Permitted Use (Unless Otherwise Stated)

AI tools *may* be used for:

- preliminary research or idea generation
- spelling, grammar or proofreading support
- structuring or planning assistance

Provided that:

- the final submission is written or created by the learner
- AI output is not copied verbatim
- use is transparently declared where required

5.3 Prohibited Use

The following constitutes academic misconduct:

- submitting AI-generated text, audio or content as original learner work
- paraphrasing AI output to disguise authorship
- using AI to complete all or substantial parts of an assignment
- using AI to fabricate references, data or experience
- using AI to impersonate learner voice in podcasts or recordings

5.4 Declaration of AI Use

Where academic work is submitted, learners may be required to:

- complete an Academic Integrity Declaration
- disclose any AI tools used and how they were used

Failure to declare AI use where required may itself constitute misconduct.

6. Academic Misconduct

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Academic misconduct includes (but is not limited to):

- plagiarism (including unattributed AI content)
- self-plagiarism without disclosure
- falsification or fabrication of evidence
- misrepresentation of authorship or contribution
- collusion where not permitted
- contract cheating or use of paid assignment services
- deliberate misuse of technology to gain unfair advantage
- failure to comply with assessment instructions

Both acts and omissions may constitute misconduct.
Genuine mistakes without intent may be addressed through education rather than sanction.

7. Identification and Reporting of Academic Misconduct

Concerns relating to potential academic misconduct may arise from a range of sources and through different means. I-PATH recognises that safeguarding academic integrity is a shared responsibility across the organisation, centres, examiners and learners.

7.1 How concerns may be identified

Potential academic misconduct may be:

- identified by an I-PATH Examiner during assessment or marking
- identified by I-PATH Head Office through quality assurance checks, moderation activity, or review of submitted work
- raised by a teacher or centre in relation to learner submissions
- raised by a peer or third party who becomes aware of potential malpractice
- identified through plagiarism detection, AI detection, or other authenticity checks, where applicable

Concerns may arise before, during, or after assessment.

7.2 Reporting requirements

Where academic misconduct is suspected, concerns must:

- be reported in writing
- include available supporting evidence or a clear description of the concern
- be submitted confidentially to I-PATH Head Office

All reports are treated sensitively and handled in accordance with data protection and confidentiality requirements.

Anonymous reports may be considered where sufficient, credible evidence is provided to allow meaningful review.

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7.3 Initial handling and escalation

Upon receipt of a report, I-PATH Head Office will:

- log the concern securely
- undertake an initial review to determine whether the matter falls within the scope of this policy
- refer the matter, where appropriate, to the Examinations & Standards Committee for consideration and determination

Where I-PATH considers that:

- additional technical advice is required, or
- the matter raises concerns about standards, comparability, or regulatory risk

I-PATH may escalate the matter to the relevant awarding organisation for guidance, support or joint review.

Escalation does not imply wrongdoing but supports robust, transparent and defensible decision-making.

7.4 Protection of good-faith reporting

Individuals who raise concerns in good faith will not be disadvantaged or penalised as a result of doing so.

Malicious or vexatious allegations may be addressed separately in line with relevant procedures.

8. Preliminary Review

Upon receipt:

- acknowledgement is issued within 10 working days
- a preliminary review determines whether:
    - the matter falls within this policy
    - further investigation is required
    - alternative action (e.g. guidance) is appropriate

Urgent protective action may be taken to safeguard assessment integrity.

9. Investigation

Where required:

- an impartial investigating officer is appointed
- conflicts of interest are declared and managed
- evidence is gathered and secured
- relevant parties may be interviewed
- the standard of proof applied is balance of probabilities

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A formal investigation report is produced.

10. Decisions and Sanctions

The Examinations & Standards Committee determines outcomes, which may include:

- no further action
- requirement to resubmit or re-assess
- adjustment or withdrawal of results
- disqualification from the qualification
- notification to awarding organisations or regulators
- escalation to the Grand Council where staff or systemic issues arise

Sanctions are proportionate, consistent and documented.

11. Appeals and Complaints

There is no automatic right of appeal against a finding of academic misconduct.

Procedural concerns may be raised through the Complaints Procedure.
Academic appeals relating to marks or grades must follow the Appeals Policy.

12. Records and Reporting

I-PATH:

- retains misconduct records for eight years
- maintains secure and confidential files
- presents anonymised annual summaries to the Grand Council
- uses trend data to inform risk management and training

13. Related Policies

This policy should be read alongside:

- Malpractice and Maladministration Policy
- Assessment Policy
- Appeals Policy
- Reasonable Adjustments & Special Considerations Policy
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

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