

Academic Integrity Policy and Guidelines for students

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Effective date	Aug 2025
Date for review	August 2026
Policy owner	Head of Quality
Reference points	QAA Guidance on Academic Integrity QAA Academic Integrity Charter (signed by NHAM) Office for Students Regulatory Framework (Conditions B4, C1, E6) BIMM University Academic Integrity Framework
Audience/handling notes	Academic, Students, Staff, External, Public
Dissemination and implementation plan	This policy is published on NHAM's public website and referenced in both the Staff and Student Handbooks. Staff receive training on its content and application; students receive guidance on academic integrity, correct referencing, and acceptable use of generative AI at induction and throughout their studies.
Linked Policies, Procedures and Forms	Student Handbook, Assessment Policy, Academic Appeals Policy, Student Code of Conduct, Student Disciplinary Policy, Staff Guidelines on the Use of Generative AI.
Date approved	August 2025

1 Introduction

The Notting Hill Academy of Music (NHAM) is committed to the highest standards of academic integrity. Academic integrity is fundamental to maintaining the quality and value of NHAM's awards and to ensuring that all students are assessed fairly and equitably.

This policy sets out NHAM's expectations of students in producing original work, acknowledging the ideas and contributions of others, and avoiding any practice that may give an unfair advantage in assessment. NHAM recognises that the creative industries often involve collaboration; however, all assessment submissions must reflect the level of individual contribution required by the assessment brief.

2 Purpose and Scope

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Define what constitutes academic integrity and academic misconduct;
- Ensure students understand how to produce work that meets professional and academic standards;
- Outline acceptable and unacceptable use of generative AI tools;
- Provide a fair and transparent framework for investigating and addressing breaches;
- Ensure compliance with the QAA Academic Integrity Charter and OfS regulatory requirements.

This policy applies to all students enrolled on NHAM programmes at FHEQ Level 4. It covers all assessed work, whether submitted electronically, in hard copy, or presented in performance or practical formats.

3 Definitions

Academic misconduct includes, but is not limited to:

- Plagiarism: using another's work, ideas, or words without proper acknowledgement;
- Cheating: using unauthorised materials or assistance in an examination or assessment;
- Collusion: unauthorised collaboration or failure to follow group work regulations;
- Impersonation: completing work or sitting an assessment on behalf of another person;
- Fabrication: inventing or falsifying data or results;
- Auto-plagiarism: reusing one's own previously assessed work without acknowledgement;
- Improper use of Generative AI: submitting AI-generated work as one's own without disclosure.

Poor academic practice refers to incorrect or incomplete referencing that falls short of misconduct but requires remedial action

4 Generative AI (GenAI) Guidance

NHAM supports the responsible use of GenAI as a learning and creative support tool, provided its use is transparent, ethical, and does not undermine assessment integrity.

Acceptable uses include:

- Brainstorming and idea generation;
- Structuring drafts;
- Accessibility support;
- Code assistance or data analysis (where permitted in the brief).
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Unacceptable uses include:

- Submitting GenAI-generated content as your own work;
- Using GenAI to rewrite entire assignments;
- Entering NHAM teaching materials into public AI tools;
- Failing to verify, fact-check, or critically evaluate AI outputs.
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Where GenAI is used, students may be required to provide a declaration of use with their submission. The student handbook details NHAM guidance for use of Generative AI.

5 Levels of Academic Misconduct

Minor Offence: first, small-scale incident, often due to misunderstanding.

Penalty: Written warning, guidance, and capped resubmission.

Moderate Offence: first offence with deliberate elements or repeated minor offence.

Penalty: Fail the affected module, capped resubmission, or module retake.

Serious Offence: substantial or repeated misconduct (e.g., impersonation, purchasing work).

Penalty: Module failure, repeat of level, or withdrawal.

Gross Misconduct: extreme breach of trust (e.g., theft, fraud, violence linked to misconduct).

Penalty: Immediate suspension or exclusion, revocation of award.

The severity category is determined by the Programme Leader, taking into account intent, scale, prior record, and impact on academic standards.

6 Procedures

1. **Detection:** any member of staff who suspects misconduct must report it to the Programme Leader.
2. **Preliminary review:** the Programme Leader determines if the matter should proceed to a formal hearing.
3. **Hearing Panel:** chaired by two trained staff members (academic and student services) with the student invited to respond.
4. **Outcome:** panel concludes whether misconduct occurred and determines the penalty.
5. **Record:** all findings are recorded in the student's file.

7 Appeals

Students may appeal a decision under the NHAM Academic Appeals Policy. Appeals must be based on procedural error, new evidence, or disproportionality of penalty.

8 Responsibilities

Students: maintain academic integrity, follow referencing guidelines, declare use of GenAI where required.

Programme Lecturers/Leaders: ensure students and staff are aware of this policy, lead investigations.

Markers/Assessors: identify and report suspected misconduct.

Head of Quality: monitors implementation and compliance.

9 Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years to ensure continued alignment with the QAA Academic Integrity Charter, OfS regulatory expectations, and sector best practice. Improvements will be informed by feedback from students, staff, and external examiners.

10 Guidelines for Students

At the Notting Hill Academy of Music (NHAM), we take academic integrity seriously. It's not just about avoiding plagiarism or cheating, it's about developing the professional habits, respect for intellectual property, and critical thinking skills that will serve you for life in the music industry and beyond.

By following these guidelines, you help to protect your own reputation, the value of your qualification, and the credibility of NHAM as a higher education provider.

1. Always Submit Your Own Original Work

All work you submit for assessment must be your own. This means it should be created by you, using your own words, ideas, performances, or designs, except where you are working as part of an authorised group project.

If you use someone else's ideas, data, or creative work (including lyrics, compositions, or design elements), you must credit them using NHAM's Harvard Referencing Guide.

Example:

- If you use statistics from an industry report, say where they came from.
- If you quote an artist or industry figure in an essay, put their words in quotation marks and include the source.



2. Reference All Sources Properly

Referencing is not just about avoiding plagiarism, it's about showing the research and influences behind your work.

When to reference:

- When you quote someone else's exact words.
- When you summarise or paraphrase someone else's ideas.
- When you use an image, piece of music, film clip, or other creative work that's not your own.
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How to reference:

NHAM uses the Harvard system. Full details are in your Student Handbook and online. If you're unsure, ask your tutor before you submit.

3. Group Work and Collaboration

Collaboration is part of the creative industries, but for assessment purposes you must follow the rules set in your module brief.

- If the project is marked as a group, make sure everyone's contribution is acknowledged.
- If it's an individual piece, do not let others contribute work that you pass off as your own.

4. Using Generative AI (GenAI)

NHAM supports the **responsible and transparent use** of tools like ChatGPT, Gemini, or Microsoft Copilot, but there are clear boundaries.

You may use GenAI to:

- Brainstorm ideas or structures.
- Check grammar or clarity in your own writing.
- Explore alternative explanations of a concept you don't understand.

You must not use GenAI to:

- Write or rewrite all or part of your assignment.
- Create entire pieces of work you then submit as your own.
- Generate references or citations without checking them (AI citations are often fake).
- Upload NHAM teaching materials into public AI tools.
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If you do use GenAI in a permitted way, you may be asked to submit a declaration describing how you used it.

5. Keep Evidence of Your Work

Always save your drafts, notes, and research. If there's ever a question about your work's authenticity, having a record of your process will help you demonstrate that it's yours.

6. Avoid Common Pitfalls

Some breaches of academic integrity happen because students didn't know they were breaking the rules. Here's what to watch out for:

- Copying without credit: even short sentences or small sections need proper attribution.
- Paraphrasing too closely: changing a few words doesn't make it your own.
- Self-plagiarism: you can't re-submit work you've already handed in for another assignment without permission.
- Working too closely with others: if the brief says "individual work", that means no joint writing, editing, or producing.
- Cutting and pasting from ChatGPT: markers/assessors have been trained to know what to look for. Whilst GenAI can do a good job of addressing the brief on the surface, we're likely to spot that work is not your own as we get to know your communication style.



7. What Happens if You Break the Rules

Breaches of academic integrity are taken seriously. Depending on the severity, penalties can include:

- A requirement to redo the work with a capped mark.
- Failing a module.
- Repeating the academic year.
- In extreme cases, exclusion from the course.

You have the right to appeal if you think a decision was wrong, but it's always better to avoid the situation in the first place.

8. Where to Get Help

If you're unsure about referencing, paraphrasing, or using GenAI appropriately:

- Ask your module tutor or Programme Leader.
- Use NHAM's Referencing Guide in your Student Handbook.
- Book a session with Student Services for academic skills support.

Remember: If in doubt, check before you submit. It's far better to ask a question than risk committing academic misconduct.