



Academic Misconduct Policy

Upholding fairness, professionalism, and integrity in all student assessments.

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1. Purpose and Scope

At the International College of Musical Theatre (ICMT), integrity is central to your training. This policy is not here to police you, but to protect the honesty, fairness, and professionalism that underpin conservatoire-style education. Whether you are writing an essay, performing a monologue, presenting choreography, or working in rehearsal, your assessments must genuinely reflect your own talent, effort, and understanding.

Our Commitment to You

We will always:

- Clearly explain what counts as academic misconduct, so you are never left guessing.
- Provide practical guidance and proactive support to help you maintain integrity.
- Ensure that any allegations of misconduct are handled fairly, transparently, and with respect.
- Uphold your right to respond, to appeal, and to receive support throughout the process.

Why Integrity Matters

In musical theatre and the wider performing arts, trust and authenticity are essential. Misconduct doesn't just harm your own credibility; it also undermines fairness, damages trust within the community, and risks the reputation of your peers and the ICMT itself. Integrity ensures that your achievements are entirely your own and that your qualification holds lasting value.

Core Principles

- **Integrity First:** Every assessment must truthfully reflect your own work and ideas.
- **Fairness Always:** Every student deserves equal opportunity, with no unfair advantages.
- **Support Before Sanctions:** Prevention and education come first; disciplinary action is a last resort.
- **Professionalism at Heart:** Standards of honesty here mirror the expectations of the professional theatre industry you are preparing to enter.

At the ICMT, integrity is non-negotiable; it is the foundation of your training, your performances, and your professional career.

2. Who This Policy Applies To

This policy applies to every student enrolled at the International College of Musical Theatre (ICMT). It sets out clear expectations for honesty and professionalism across all assessments, regardless of your background or previous experience.

Assessments Covered

This policy applies to all forms of assessment, including:

- **Written Work:** Essays, reflective journals, portfolios, dissertations, exam scripts.
- **Performance Work:** Solo performances, ensemble pieces, assessed rehearsals, showcases, public performances.
- **Practical Tasks:** Choreographic projects, musical theatre projects, workshops, presentations.
- **Digital Submissions:** Recorded video or audio work, online presentations, or virtual performances.
- **Collaborative Projects:** Group assessments, shared choreography, or ensemble devising.
- **Exams and Tests:** Whether written, practical, timed, or untimed.

Assessment Conditions

This policy applies in all circumstances, whether the assessment is:

- Completed individually or in a group.
- Performed live or submitted digitally.
- Informal (such as in-class tasks) or formally graded.
- Conducted in person or remotely.

Your Responsibility

You are personally responsible for ensuring that any work you submit or perform under your name is genuinely your own contribution. Support, coaching, or collaboration may form part of your training, but the outcome must truthfully represent your understanding, effort, and skills.

Exclusions

This policy does not cover:

- Misconduct by staff, which is handled under separate procedures.
- Cases where external awarding bodies require a different process, in which case their regulations will take priority.

Why This Policy Matters

By following this policy, you help protect the credibility of your qualification and the fairness of the training environment. Integrity in assessment reflects not only on you as an individual but also on the reputation of the ICMT and the wider professional community you will soon join.

3. What Counts as Academic Misconduct

Academic misconduct is any behaviour that gives you, or someone else, an unfair advantage in an assessment. It means presenting work, ideas, or performances that are not genuinely your own, or helping others to do so.

At the ICMT, misconduct is taken seriously because it undermines fairness, damages trust, and threatens the professional standards central to conservatoire-style training.

Clear Definition

Academic misconduct includes (but is not limited to):

- Using or presenting someone else's work as your own.
- Working with others in ways that are not permitted.
- Falsifying rehearsal logs, data, or records.
- Using unauthorised materials, technology, or devices in an assessment.
- Paying or arranging for others (including online services or artificial intelligence tools) to create your work.

What Isn't Misconduct

Not every mistake is misconduct. For example:

- Incorrect referencing.
- Misunderstanding how to cite a source.
- Minor formatting errors.

These are usually treated as poor academic practice. In such cases, you will receive feedback and guidance rather than penalties, especially in your early stages of study.

Simple Test for Students

Ask yourself: Does this assessment honestly represent my own thinking, effort, and creative process?

- If the answer is "yes," you are safe.
- If the answer is "no," you may be at risk of misconduct.

Standard of Evidence

If misconduct is suspected, decisions are made on the balance of probabilities. This means the panel or tutor considers whether it is more likely than not that misconduct occurred. You will always have the opportunity to explain your perspective before any decision is made.

4. Types of Academic Misconduct

Academic misconduct can take many forms. The following categories set out what is not acceptable. Each applies equally to written, practical, and performance-based work, whether completed individually or in groups. Examples are included to show how misconduct may arise in a conservatoire setting.

Plagiarism

Presenting someone else's words, ideas, or creative material as your own without proper credit.

Examples:

- Copying text from books, websites, or another student's essay without referencing.
- Using choreography, staging, or musical arrangements created by someone else without acknowledgement.
- Submitting your own previous work for assessment without permission (self-plagiarism).

Collusion

Working secretly with others on tasks that are meant to be completed individually, or letting someone else present your work as theirs.

Examples:

- Sharing essays, rehearsal notes, or recordings with a peer who submits them as their own.
- Co-creating material for a solo performance and presenting it as independent work.

Contract Cheating

Arranging for someone else to complete your work, whether paid or unpaid.

Examples:

- Buying or downloading essays, scripts, or musical arrangements online.
- Asking another person to choreograph or write reflective notes on your behalf.

Unauthorised Use of AI

Submitting work generated by artificial intelligence tools (e.g. ChatGPT, CoPilot, music or choreography generators) without clear permission and acknowledgement.

Examples:

- Using AI to draft essays or reflections and presenting them as your own.
- Submitting choreography, lyrics, or performance notes generated by AI as original work.

Impersonation

Pretending to be someone else, or allowing another person to take your place in an assessment.

Examples:

- Having someone sit an exam or perform in a filmed assessment for you.
- Using another student's login to submit coursework.

Falsification

Inventing or altering records or data connected with assessments.

Examples:

- Fabricating rehearsal logs, attendance sheets, or feedback forms.
- Making up data for a project or changing tutor feedback.

Unauthorised Help

Receiving support that goes beyond what is permitted, so that the final work no longer reflects your own effort.

Examples:

- A peer or coach rewriting your essay.
- A director choreographing a large part of your assessed performance without disclosure.

Assessment Misconduct

Breaking the rules of the assessment environment.

Examples:

- Using notes or devices not permitted in an exam, test, or practical assessment.
- Talking to peers during a timed assessment.
- Interfering with technical equipment or props to gain an unfair advantage.

Each suspected misconduct case is considered individually, taking into account intent, seriousness, and impact. Sanctions are applied fairly and proportionately, and your right to respond is always protected.

5. How to Avoid Academic Misconduct

Avoiding academic misconduct is about building good habits and making clear, honest choices. We expect you to take responsibility for ensuring that your assessments reflect your own learning, creativity, and effort.

Understanding Assessment Expectations

- **Attend assessment briefings:** Tutors explain what is expected for each task; don't miss these.
- **Read instructions carefully:** Check all guidelines for what is and isn't allowed.
- **Ask if unsure:** If you're unclear about referencing, collaboration, or use of resources, ask your tutor. Never assume.

Properly Acknowledging Sources

- **Always credit the work of others:** This includes text, ideas, choreography, staging, songs, and scripts.
- **Follow referencing guidance:** Use the system required for your programme.
- **Keep clear notes:** Track your research and rehearsal process so you can reference accurately.

Building Strong Academic Habits

- **Start early:** Last-minute pressure increases the temptation to cut corners.
- **Separate your own ideas from those inspired by others:** Organise your notes clearly.
- **Be transparent in collaboration:** Know exactly what counts as your own contribution in group tasks.

Using External Support Appropriately

- **Clarify what kind of help is permitted:** Tutors, peers, and coaches can give feedback, but not do the work for you.
- **Keep external editing limited:** Proofreading for grammar or spelling is fine; rewriting your work is not.
- **Acknowledge contributions:** If significant help was allowed, declare it in your submission or reflection.

Responsible Use of Generative AI

- **Confirm whether AI is permitted:** Always check with your tutor first.
- **Disclose any use:** If allowed, be clear about how AI supported your work.
- **Never rely on AI without checking accuracy and originality.**

Seeking Support Early

- **Speak up if you're struggling:** Tutors and support staff are there to help before minor issues become big ones.
- **Remember:** Asking for help is a sign of professionalism, not weakness.

Respecting Assessment Conditions

- **Know the rules:** Understand exactly what is permitted in exams, rehearsals, or performances.
- **Follow instructions:** Whether written in the brief or given by invigilators, these rules are in place to ensure fairness.
- **Prepare thoroughly:** Good preparation reduces stress and the risk of errors.

By following these steps, you protect not only your own reputation but also the fairness and integrity of the ICMT community.

6. What Happens If You're Accused of Academic Misconduct?

Being accused of academic misconduct can be stressful. This section outlines what happens if concerns are raised, your rights, and how the process is managed. The aim is always fairness, transparency, and support.

Notification and Initial Meeting

- You will receive a written notification explaining the concern, the assessment involved, and the specific allegation.
- You will be invited to an initial meeting with a member of staff to talk through the issue.
- You will be given a copy of this policy, so you understand the process thoroughly.

Your Right to Respond

- You will have the chance to explain your side of the story, provide evidence, or clarify misunderstandings.
- You can bring a supporter with you (such as a fellow student, a friend, or a member of staff). This person can offer emotional support but cannot speak on your behalf.
- You will always be treated respectfully, and no decision will be made without considering your response.

How Cases Are Considered

In the first stage, the College will look at:

- The details of the alleged misconduct.

- Any evidence available (for example: similarity reports, witness statements, or rehearsal records).
- Your explanation and any supporting evidence you provide.
- Whether the issue might be poor academic practice rather than misconduct.
- Any relevant academic history.

Possible Outcomes of the Initial Stage

After the initial meeting, one of three things will happen:

- No case to answer:** The concern is dismissed, and no record is kept.
- Poor academic practice:** The issue is judged to be a minor mistake; you will receive feedback and support, but no sanction.
- Suspected misconduct:** The matter will be referred to an Academic Misconduct Panel for formal investigation.

Your Rights Throughout

At every stage, you have the right to:

- Be treated fairly, confidentially, and with respect.
- Know exactly what is being alleged and what evidence is being considered.
- Access pastoral and academic support if you feel anxious or confused.
- See and respond to the evidence before any decision is made.
- Appeal any final decision if you believe it is unfair.

7. The Investigation Process

If your case is referred to an Academic Misconduct Panel, it means the allegation requires formal review. The panel's role is to look at the evidence fairly, listen to your explanation, and make a balanced decision.

When a Panel Is Convened

A panel may be set up if:

- The allegation involves serious or repeated misconduct.
- The facts are disputed, and the initial meeting did not resolve them.
- The suspected misconduct could affect progression, a final grade, or an award.
- You request a formal review of the decision.

You will receive written confirmation if your case is being referred to a panel, including details of the allegation and next steps.

Who Sits on the Panel

- Three members of staff who are not directly involved in your case.
- At least one member with experience in performance-based assessment.
- A note-taker will be present but does not take part in the decision.

This structure is designed to ensure fairness, impartiality, and relevant expertise.

Before the Hearing

You will be notified of the hearing date at least five working days in advance and provided with:

- A written summary of the allegation.
- All evidence is to be considered (for example, marked work, recordings, similarity reports, and witness statements).
- Instructions on how to respond.

You may:

- Submit a written statement and any supporting evidence.
- Bring a supporter (such as a peer, friend, or member of staff, not a legal representative).
- Request reasonable adjustments if you have a disability or other support needs.
- Ask for clarification about the process.

During the Hearing

The panel hearing will follow a clear structure:

- You will be introduced to the panel members.
- The allegation and evidence will be presented.
- You will be invited to respond in your own words.
- Panel members may ask questions to clarify points.
- You will have the opportunity to comment on anything raised.

If you cannot attend due to valid reasons (e.g. illness or bereavement), the hearing will be rescheduled. If you fail to attend without explanation, the panel may proceed in your absence.

How Decisions Are Made

The panel will decide on the balance of probabilities, meaning it must be more likely than not that misconduct occurred. They will consider:

- The strength of the evidence.
- Your explanation and any mitigating factors.

- Whether the misconduct was intentional or accidental.
- Whether this is a first or repeat incident.

After the Hearing

The panel will reach one of three outcomes:

- a) No misconduct found.
- b) Poor academic practice identified.
- c) Academic misconduct confirmed (with a sanction applied, see Section 8).

You will receive the decision in writing within 10 working days, including reasons, any sanctions applied, and information on your right to appeal.

Confidentiality and Records

- All panel proceedings are confidential.
- If misconduct is confirmed, a record will be kept in your student file for internal purposes only.
- If no misconduct is found, no record is kept.

8. Outcomes and Sanctions

If academic misconduct is confirmed, the ICMT will apply sanctions that are fair, proportionate, and designed to protect the value of your qualification. The goal is not simply to punish, but to maintain integrity, ensure fairness for all students, and help you learn from the experience.

How Sanctions Are Determined

When deciding on a sanction, the Academic Misconduct Panel will consider:

- The seriousness of the misconduct (e.g. plagiarism, falsification, impersonation).
- The scale and impact (whether the misconduct affected part of the work, the whole submission, or other students).
- Your intent (deliberate deception, careless error, or misunderstanding).
- Whether this is a first incident or a repeated one.
- The stage of your studies (e.g. first year vs. final year).
- The weight of the assessment (e.g. a minor task vs. a final project or performance).
- Any mitigating circumstances that are evidenced (e.g. health or personal factors).

Sanctions will always be explained clearly, with reasons given for the decision.

Possible Outcomes

No Misconduct Found

- No action taken.
- No record made.
- Original marks reinstated if they were withheld.

Poor Academic Practice Identified

- No formal sanction.
- Developmental feedback and academic support given.
- An informal note may be kept internally but is not classed as misconduct.

Academic Misconduct Confirmed

Sanctions may include:

Level	Definition	Examples	Typical Sanctions
Low-Level	Minor breach; no intent; first-time offence.	Poor paraphrasing, undeclared AI summary use, referencing copied from another student	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mark penalty or resubmission with a cap.• Written warning.
Moderate-Level	Clear misconduct; some evidence of planning or intent.	Moderate plagiarism, undeclared collaboration, reused prior work, and AI-generated content passed off as one's own.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mark of zero.• Resit opportunity capped.• Formal misconduct record.
High-Level	Serious or repeated breach; intentional deception.	Contract cheating, impersonation, falsification, major use of AI tools, and stolen work.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Zero for the module.• No resit opportunity.• Possible suspension or withdrawal.• Permanent misconduct record.

Each case is considered individually. The Panel will explain the reasoning behind the decision and how the outcome meets the ICMT's expectations for fairness, consistency, and integrity.

Recording and Retention

- Confirmed cases are recorded on your internal student file.
- Records are not shared externally unless required by law, a regulator, or a professional body.
- The record may be considered in any future cases, but it does not automatically prevent progression unless further misconduct occurs.

If You Disagree with the Outcome

You have the right to appeal if you believe:

- The process was not followed correctly.
- The evidence was misunderstood or incomplete.
- The sanction was disproportionate.
- New and relevant evidence has become available.

(See Section 9: Appeals and Independent Review for full details.)

9. Appeals and Independent Review

If you believe the outcome of your academic misconduct case was unfair, flawed, or not handled correctly, you have the right to appeal. Appeals exist to protect students from errors in process or judgement, not simply because you disagree with the decision.

Grounds for Appeal

You may appeal if:

- New evidence has emerged that could not reasonably have been provided earlier, and it may have made a difference to the outcome.
- A procedural error occurred, such as the process not being followed correctly.
- There was evidence of bias or a conflict of interest in the decision-making.
- The sanction was clearly disproportionate to the nature of the misconduct.

You cannot appeal simply because you are unhappy with the result.

How to Submit an Appeal

- Submit your appeal in writing within 10 working days of receiving your outcome letter.
- Address your appeal to the Chair of the Academic Misconduct Panel (or their nominee).

Clearly state:

- The grounds for your appeal.
- Any supporting evidence.
- What outcome you are seeking (for example, a reduced sanction or a rehearing).

Your appeal will be acknowledged promptly, and you will be told whether it meets the criteria to proceed.

What Happens Next

If accepted, your appeal will be considered by an Appeals Panel. This panel will:

- Review the full case file, including your appeal statement and the Panel's original reasoning.
- Request clarification or additional evidence if needed.
- Decide whether a hearing is necessary or whether the case can be resolved based on the documents.

Appeals Panel Outcomes

The Appeals Panel may decide to:

- Uphold the original decision.
- Amend the outcome by reducing or adjusting the sanction.
- Overturn the decision and remove all findings and penalties.
- Refer the case back for a full rehearing if there was a serious flaw in the process.

You will receive the outcome of your appeal in writing within 15 working days, with reasons given.

Completion of Procedures Letter

Once the appeal is concluded, you will receive a Completion of Procedures Letter. This confirms that all internal steps have been completed and is required if you wish to take your case to an external body for independent review.

10. Misconduct in Performance and Practical Work

Performance and practical assessments are at the heart of your training at the International College of Musical Theatre (ICMT). They carry the same standards of honesty and professionalism as written assignments. Creative work may be physical, collaborative, or improvised, but it must still reflect your own genuine input.

Performance Work as Academic Work

All performance and practice-based tasks, whether rehearsed, improvised, choreographed, directed, or devised, are formal assessments. You are expected to:

- Create and perform original work, or clearly acknowledge when interpreting someone else's.
- Follow the brief and rules, including whether collaboration or external support is permitted.
- Declare your process truthfully, including who contributed and how.
- Avoid any action that could mislead assessors about the origin or authenticity of your work.

Examples of Misconduct in Performance Contexts

Misconduct in performance or practical settings may include:

- **Unauthorised Collaboration:** Sharing choreography, script choices, or staging across solo assessments; co-devising material for a solo piece without permission.
- **Falsifying Your Process:** Inventing rehearsal logs, journals, or feedback records; claiming to have attended or completed tasks you did not.
- **Impersonation or Proxy Submission:** Having someone else perform in your place for a filmed or live assessment; submitting work recorded by another person.
- **Manipulation of Technical or Environmental Factors:** Tampering with sound, lighting, props, or recorded material to disguise errors or disadvantage others.
- **Plagiarism of Creative Material:** Copying choreography, staging, movement motifs, or vocal delivery from online content, past productions, or peers without acknowledgement; reusing your own past work without approval.

Defining ‘Your Own Work’

In performance settings, “your own work” refers to:

- Your creative and interpretive input.
- Your rehearsal and preparation process.
- Your response to feedback and direction.
- Your ability to meet the assessment brief honestly and independently.

External coaching, peer feedback, or inspiration may be part of your development, but the final performance must clearly reflect your own skills and decisions. If others have contributed, you must declare it.

Avoiding Misconduct in Practice-Based Tasks

To stay on the right side of integrity in performance:

- Document your process honestly and accurately.
- Check the rules of the task with your tutor, especially around collaboration or reusing material.
- Be transparent about contributions from others.
- Credit sources of inspiration, choreography, or material when used.

Key Standard Across All Assessments

Whether in written, practical, or performance work, the same question applies:

- Does this assessment truthfully represent my own effort, process, and understanding? If not, it may be misconduct.

11. Support and Guidance

Academic integrity is not only about avoiding misconduct, but also about developing the judgement, resilience, and professionalism you will need throughout your career. We are committed to supporting you before, during, and after any challenges with assessment.

Proactive Support

Most cases of misconduct come from confusion, inexperience, or pressure, not dishonesty. That is why early action matters.

- Ask early if you are unsure; there is no penalty for checking, but there can be consequences for guessing.
- Use the support offered to you; it is there to help you succeed without compromising your integrity.

Sources of Help

You are not expected to work everything out alone. Support is available from:

- **Your Tutors:** They clarify briefs, explain referencing and collaboration rules, and give direct feedback on how to meet assessment requirements.
- **Head of Musical Theatre:** Offers academic skills coaching, support with stress or workload, guidance on extensions or mitigating circumstances, and practical help with referencing and structure.
- **Student Services Manager:** Provides targeted support for students with specific learning differences (e.g. dyslexia, ADHD) and confidential advice if you are worried you may have crossed a line.

Protecting Your Integrity

- Plan; rushing invites mistakes.
- Track your sources and rehearsal influences clearly.
- Keep your process records (logs, reflections, journals) honest.
- Be open about contributions from others.
- Do not submit material you cannot explain or reproduce.

Integrity as a Skillset

Integrity is not a checklist of “dos and don’ts.” It is a professional skillset. It means:

- Making good decisions under pressure.
- Asking for help when you need it.
- Taking responsibility for your own learning and growth.
- Knowing the difference between inspiration and imitation.

You are not expected to be perfect, but you are expected to be honest.

