# RAISING AWARENESS OF INCLUSIVE PRACTICE IN ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

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## KEY WORDS

academic integrity, inclusion, inclusive practice

This session will report from a UK-based investigation into inclusive practice in academic integrity in HE. Recently, there has been a greatly increased focus on inclusive policies in universities as an essential element of the Equality Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) agenda, in particular related to inclusive teaching and learning (Thomas and May, 2010), with principles suggested for ensuring all learners' needs are considered (Larkin, Nihill and Devlin, 2014) and recommendations for 'levelling the playing field' by designing inclusive assessment (Carroll and Ryan, 2005, p.8).

However, so far, the inclusive agenda has not been applied specifically to university practices concerned with academic integrity, including teaching, support and dealing with academic integrity problems. There are many academic integrity issues that connect with inclusion, such as: the continued over-representation of students from certain ethnic groups, including international students, in academic conduct investigations (Gray, 2020; Pecorari, 2016); the opinion of some staff that plagiarism is an international students' problem (Carroll and Ryan, 2005; Mott-Smith, Tomaš and Kostka, 2017); the difficulties some student groups experience with understanding academic conduct regulations and good academic practice (Morris, 2018; Tauginiené et al., 2019); non-native speaker students' misinterpretation of Turnitin results when studying without sufficient support (Kaktiņš, 2019); academic literacy teaching being available to some students and not others (Wingate, 2015).

Research and practice of inclusion highlight different groups who may be excluded or marginalised in their access and experience of learning. Thomas and May (2010) describe these different groups as diversity dimensions in terms of education (prior qualifications), disposition (learning styles or beliefs), circumstances (age, disability, financial background) and culture (language, ethnicity, country of origin). However, rather than categorising students, this research aligns to the definition from Thomas and May (2010, p.50) that inclusion is a means of making Higher Education 'accessible, relevant and engaging to all students'. Furthermore, as argued by ICAI (2014) 'creating equitable and inclusive approaches to learning supports the values of academic integrity', therefore I contend that inclusive practice for all contemporary students needs to be part of an effective approach to academic integrity.

The aim of this session is to raise awareness of inclusion issues through discussing new research into the teaching, support, guidance and processes involved with academic integrity at a UK university. Results will be presented from three sources of data gathered by the researcher at her own institution: an analysis of guidance documents about academic integrity provided to students, using the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) guidelines for comprehension to test inclusive practice (CAST, 2018); interviews with 10 key staff selected for their roles in academic integrity (investigation of academic conduct, support for referrals, teaching academic integrity, management of inclusion and assessment) who provided their views about how academic integrity is taught, how students are supported with academic integrity, and how academic integrity problems are processed within the institution; interviews with 5 students who experienced the academic conduct referral process. The interviews

were carried out with an awareness that academic integrity issues may be sensitive and a readiness to refer interviewees to appropriate channels of support if needed. Results indicate that although there are positive intentions within the guidance, teaching and support of academic integrity, there is an insufficient focus on inclusion issues and more efforts are needed to make a coherent inclusion strategy that is embedded into all academic integrity practices.

The session presents recommendations for inclusive academic integrity, in which principles of inclusive education can be effectively applied to the teaching of academic integrity and dealing with academic integrity issues. Participants will be encouraged to reflect on and discuss the degree to which their own context of academic integrity promotes inclusive practice. The session presents original research about a neglected area of academic integrity as a contribution of interest to global academic integrity educators concerned about inclusion, and thus aligns with the conference theme of 'Academic Integrity: Current Research'.

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