



# Plagiarism Policy

## Policy owner

University Secretariat

## Approval date and body

13 October 2005, Academic Council

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## 1. Purpose

The creation of knowledge and wider understanding in all academic disciplines depends on building from existing sources of knowledge. The University upholds the principle of academic integrity, whereby appropriate acknowledgement is given to the contributions of others in any work, through appropriate internal citations and references. Students should be aware that good referencing is integral to the study of any subject and part of good academic practice.

## 2. Definitions

Plagiarism is a form of academic dishonesty, where ideas are presented falsely, either implicitly or explicitly, as being the original thought of the author's. The presentation of work, which contains the ideas, or work of others without appropriate attribution and citation, (other than information that can be generally accepted to be common knowledge<sup>1</sup>) is an act of plagiarism. It can include the following:

- 1.1. Presenting work authored by a third party, including other students, friends, family, or work purchased through internet services;
- 1.2. Presenting work copied extensively with only minor textual changes from the internet, books, journals or any other source;
- 1.3. Improper paraphrasing, where a passage or idea is summarised without due acknowledgement of the original source;
- 1.4. Failing to include citation of all original sources;
- 1.5. Representing collaborative work as one's own.

## 3. Scope

The University understands plagiarism to be the inclusion of another person's writings or ideas or works, in any formally presented work (including essays, theses, projects, laboratory reports, examinations, oral, poster or slide presentations) which form part of the assessment requirements for a module or programme of study, without due acknowledgement either wholly or in part of the original source of the material through appropriate citation.

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<sup>1</sup> Common knowledge refers to information, which is generally known and does not require to be formally cited in a written piece of work. Each subject area will have its own set of common knowledge.

Plagiarism is a serious academic offence. While plagiarism may be easy to commit unintentionally, it is defined by the act not the intention. All students are responsible for being familiar with the University's policy statement on plagiarism and are encouraged, if in doubt, to seek guidance from an academic member of staff. The University advocates a developmental approach to plagiarism and encourages students to adopt good academic practice by maintaining academic integrity in the presentation of all academic work.

#### **4. Principles**

- 4.1 Plagiarism is a serious academic issue and the University will examine all alleged instances of plagiarism thoroughly and apply such penalties as it considers appropriate where plagiarism is confirmed to have taken place;
- 4.2 Alleged cases of plagiarism should be examined carefully to establish the facts and relative context of the alleged offence taking into account the nature and extent of plagiarism as well as the experience and seniority of the student;
- 4.3 All assignments will have a plagiarism declaration which indicates that the work presented is that of the students;
- 4.4 The University statement on plagiarism and associated procedures will be published, available widely and accessible to all staff and students;
- 4.5 Suspected instances of plagiarism should be assessed within the School and a determination made as to whether the matter may be resolved at a local level or whether a referral to the Registrar, or their nominee, under the University's disciplinary procedures is required;
- 4.6 Records will be retained of all instances of plagiarism and will be held on a student's record on the University Student Information System.

#### **5. Roles and Responsibilities**

- 5.1 Academic Staff Prior to the submission of assessments, students will be briefed on plagiarism by academic staff and will be provided with information about the accepted citation methods for all assessed work in their subject area;
- 5.2 Head of School Each Head of School will ensure that appropriate advisory arrangements are in place to promote academic integrity in the subject area and to provide guidance on instances of plagiarism. This responsibility may be vested in a nominated individual;
- 5.3 School Each School will periodically evaluate its arrangements for dealing with plagiarism to ensure that where any recurrent patterns of plagiarism emerge, either in the case of individual students, or groups of students, its overall approach is appropriate and capable of ensuring that any further recurrences are addressed;
- 5.4 University The University reserves the right to use electronic and other detection mechanisms to identify instances of potential plagiarism and any work submitted for assessment may be subject to electronic or other detection procedures;

## 6 University Plagiarism Procedures

- 6.1 Where an examiner detects a suspected instance of plagiarism in a student's assignment or examination, taking account of the specific context and nature of the case, any of the following courses of action may be followed:
- a) Discussion directly with the student to provide advice about correct citation and how to avoid plagiarism in the future. The student may be required to resubmit the work without any further penalty;
  - b) Referral of the alleged instance for review according to the School's plagiarism advisory arrangements. The student may receive a verbal or written warning, will receive advice about correct citation and may be required to resubmit the work with or without an academic penalty;
  - c) Referral of the alleged instance to the University Registrar, or their nominee, for resolution via the University's disciplinary procedures. In some contexts, a first instance may require referral directly to the Registrar, or their nominee.
- 6.2 Where an alleged case is referred to the School or the University, a short report outlining the grounds of suspicion, a copy of the piece of work and any supporting evidence should be provided;
- 6.3 In all cases of referral the student should be informed by the School, Registrar's Office or the Office of the Dean of Academic Affairs as appropriate, that their assignment or examination script is under scrutiny as an alleged instance of plagiarism;
- 6.4 In all cases of referral students will have the right to support and representation such as that provided by the Students' Union;
- 6.5 Where a case of plagiarism referred to the School has been proven, the outcome of the case should be recorded on the student's record by the School;
- 6.6 Where a student has been referred previously to the School and found to be in breach of the terms of the University's Plagiarism Policy, the School will make a judgement as to whether a recurrence can be handled at a local level or whether it merits being handled as a disciplinary matter by the Registrar or their nominee;
- 6.7 Instances of plagiarism referred to the Registrar or their nominee for resolution under the University's disciplinary procedures, if established, will be subject to the following penalties which may be applied in whole or in part:
- a) Re-submission, where the maximum grade awardable is D- or equivalent;
  - b) Exclusion from the module;
  - c) Exclusion from the programme;
- 6.8 Where a cases of plagiarism referred to the Registrar of their nominee has been proven, the outcome of the case will be detailed on the student's record by the Registrar's Office.

## Related Documents

Carroll, J. (2002) *A Handbook for Deterring Plagiarism in Higher Education* (Oxford, Oxford Centre for Staff and Learning Development).

Levin, P. (2003) *Beat the Witch-hunt! Peter Levin's Guide to Avoiding Plagiarism and Rebutting Accusations of Plagiarism, for Conscientious Students* (<http://student-friendly-guides.com/wp-content/uploads/Beat-the-Witch-hunt.pdf>) [accessed 1<sup>st</sup> September 2005]

National University of Ireland, Galway (NUIG) Code of Practice for Dealing with Plagiarism (<http://www.nuigalway.ie/plagiarism>) [accessed 1st September 2005]

Park, C. (2004) Rebels without a Clause: towards an institutional framework for dealing with plagiarism by students, *Journal of Further and Higher Education*, 28(3), pp.291-306.

Stefani, L. & Carroll, J. (2001) A Briefing on Plagiarism, *LTSN Generic Centre Assessment Series No: 10*.

University of Bath, Library and Learning Centre Plagiarism (<http://www.bath.ac.uk/learningandteaching/resources/plagiarism/>) [accessed 3 September 2005]  
University College Dublin, (2003) Faculty of Agriculture Guidelines on Plagiarism.

University of Essex, *Plagiarism at the University of Essex*, <http://www.essex.ac.uk/plagiarism/> [accessed 19 September 2005]

Western Washington University, *The Student's Guide to Avoiding Plagiarism*, Department of Sociology (<http://www.wvu.edu/soc/docs/plagiarism.pdf>) [accessed 26th August 2005].