



## POLICY

### STUDENT PLAGIARISM

#### Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to set out the principles supporting FPD's expectations in relation to academic honesty, and for ensuring a fair and consistent approach to dealing with plagiarism should it arise.

#### Policy scope

FPD recognises that fostering academic honesty is a key element of ethical education, and is opposed to, and will not tolerate, plagiarism. FPD also recognises its responsibility in ensuring that students are educated in, and understand their responsibilities in relation to, academic honesty and plagiarism. Students will receive credit for work presented or submitted for assessment as prescribed in the relevant subject outlines. It is unfair and dishonest for students to present or submit work for assessment that dishonestly represents the work of others as their own.

#### Definitions

Plagiarism is defined as presenting someone else's words, work, or ideas as your own, with or without their consent, by incorporating it into your work without full acknowledgement. All published and unpublished material, whether in manuscript, printed or electronic form, is covered under this definition. Plagiarism may be intentional or unintentional.<sup>1</sup>

#### Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of students to comply with this Policy and its procedures, and to ensure that they do not commit, or conspire with another person to commit plagiarism. Work submitted or presented should be genuine and original.

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<sup>1</sup> Oxford English Dictionary. N.d. Plagiarism, Available at: <https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/guidance/skills/plagiarism>

It is the responsibility of staff to ensure that subject outlines give clear guidelines on FPD's Policy and Procedure on plagiarism and, where possible, should include discipline or subject specific examples. Students should receive written guidance on the steps they might take to ensure that plagiarism is avoided. Staff should be aware of the different educational background of students, including some who may be unaware of the normal practices and expectations in relation to academic honesty. It is essential to guide students towards FPD's expectations in this regard and provide them with the necessary support therewith.

## Procedures

How to avoid plagiarism:

- To avoid a charge of plagiarism, all sources must be acknowledged in a clear and precise manner in accordance with accepted practice. The study guide of each formal qualification will include information on the correct method to reference sources.

How is plagiarism detected?

- FPD utilises Turnitin® software to check for similarities across millions of websites, articles, books and other student assignments submitted to the software.
- FPD students and staff use Turnitin® software to obtain an originality report, which reveals the percentage of material plagiarised or inappropriately cited in the assignment.
- Staff members should also use other means to check for plagiarism. For example, if such staff member detects similarities from previously read or observed material submitted in an assignment or creativity project submitted for assessment, they may refer directly to the assumed source of plagiarism.
- Staff will use their professional judgement when determining the amount or extent of actual plagiarised material in an assessment item and must be prepared to support this finding with appropriate evidence if they consider taking action against the student.
- Staff will compile a report for each submitted assignment and provide this report to the Registrar on a monthly basis.

What happens if a student plagiarises?

- When plagiarism is identified, it will be necessary to decide:
  - Whether the plagiarism should be dealt with at an informal or a formal level
  - If a formal response is required; the appropriate level of response must be determined.
  - This decision will be based on the level of significance of the alleged plagiarism.
  - All reports from Turnitin® are controlled and signed off by the Registrar who determines the response to the student.
  - All assignments with a plagiarism report of above 20% for undergraduate programmes and 10% for postgraduate programmes, are checked for references and a decision is made based on the findings.
  - If the student used the appropriate referencing method, the assignment is handed over for assessment;
  - If the student plagiarised and did not appropriately reference, they will receive a letter and clarification on the required improvements and resubmission.
  - When plagiarism is suspected, the following steps will be taken:
    - The Student Administration and Engagement Coordinator will initially assess the degree of plagiarism, taking into account the extent of material plagiarised and the impact thereof on

the work presented as original, and the percentage load of the particular assessment task within the course.

- The Student Administration and Engagement Coordinator will inform the Head of School and the Registrar, who will assist in determining whether there is plagiarism and, if so, whether the plagiarism is significant or not. The student's apparent level of intention to deceive will be considered when determining and weighing the seriousness of the plagiarism. The level and effect of that intention will be the primary consideration in determining penalties or further action. If the plagiarism in the assignment or project is judged as significant, the Registrar and Head of School will meet with the student to discuss. The student will receive advance notice of the purpose of the meeting and may bring a support individual to the interview. The purpose of the meeting will be to determine whether, and the extent of, plagiarism occurred and give the student the opportunity to respond. If requested, the student will get the opportunity to respond in writing before any decision regarding penalties is taken. Should it be confirmed during the meeting that the student's work contains plagiarism, the range of likely penalties will be discussed.
- Depending on the level of significance of the plagiarism:
  - the student may receive a reduced mark for the assessment task and verbal advice on avoiding further plagiarism.
  - the student may be required to take on an additional assessment task in that subject/module, or to re-submit the original assessment task after re-working it.
  - the student's work may be assessed as Fail (F) for the subject for the relevant time period.
  - the student may receive a grade of Fail (F) as their final assessment for the subject/module for the year, which could lead to failure of the course/programme.
  - the most serious cases of significant offences could be considered as serious misconduct and, after investigation, penalties could include failure in the course/programme and exclusion from FPD.
- In all of the above, the matter will be noted on the student's file and the student will receive a copy of such note.
- If a student disagrees with the penalty issued as a result of an allegation of plagiarism, the student may submit a grievance under FPD's Grievance Policy and Procedure ([See Policy SR3: Student and Academic Grievances](#)).

## Accountabilities

The Academic Committee is responsible for review and approval of this policy on an annual basis. The policy is to be distributed to staff via induction and distributed to students and FPD's community via the website and other publications.