

Code of Practice for Dealing with Plagiarism

This Plagiarism Code came into effect at the start of the 2012/13 academic year.

1.0 Purpose

To set out the code of practice for dealing with issues of student Plagiarism.

2.0 Description

Plagiarism is the act of copying, including or directly quoting from the work of another without adequate acknowledgement, in order to obtain benefit, credit or gain. Plagiarism can apply to many materials, such as words, ideas, images, information, data, approaches or methods. Sources of Plagiarism can include books, journals, reports, websites, essay mills, another student, or another person.

Self-Plagiarism, or auto-Plagiarism, is where a student re-uses work previously submitted to another course within the University or in another Institution.

All work submitted by students for assessment, for publication or for (public) presentation, is accepted on the understanding that it is their own work and contains their own original contribution, except where explicitly referenced using the accepted norms and formats of the appropriate academic discipline.

Plagiarism can arise through poor academic practice or ignorance of accepted norms of the academic discipline. Schools should ensure that resources and education around good academic practice is available to students at all levels.

The Plagiarism Penalty Grid (included in this document) will be made available to all students.

Cases in which students facilitate others to copy their work shall also be subject to the procedures outlined here.

2.1 Procedures

Each School will appoint at least one Plagiarism advisor, who is normally a member of academic staff. These advisors are Designated Authorities, as described in the Student Code of Conduct, and have responsibility and authority for dealing with suspected and reported cases of Plagiarism.

A list of the current Plagiarism advisors will be maintained and made available to all academic staff of the University.

A member of teaching staff who suspects Plagiarism is welcome to speak with an

appropriate Plagiarism advisor, in confidence, about the case. At this point, the staff member is free not to continue with a formal report.

If a staff member decides to formally report a suspected case of Plagiarism, a short report shall be prepared including a (marked-up) copy of the student work, along with any evidence for suspecting Plagiarism. This report should be forwarded to the Plagiarism advisor.

The Plagiarism advisor shall conduct an initial investigation of the alleged Plagiarism, to determine if there is a case to be made. If the advisor concludes that there is no case of Plagiarism, the reporting member of staff will be notified, with a clear statement of the reasons for the decision.

If the Plagiarism advisor decides that the case is one of Plagiarism, he/she will make an initial assessment of the case using the penalty grid (step 1).

If the points, according to the penalty grid, are in the lower two bands (up to 379) the advisor may conduct an informal interview with the student to discuss the suspected case. If the advisor is satisfied that the case exists, an appropriate penalty will be selected from the grid (step 2).

If the points, according to the penalty grid, are more than 524, the advisor should refer the case to the discipline committee, in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.

In all other cases (points in the bands 380-524), the student will be invited to attend an interview with the Plagiarism adviser and an additional member of staff. The invitation may be by email or letter, and will include an explanation of the purpose of the meeting, including a copy of the marked-up piece of work. The student may be accompanied at the interview by a "friend".

The additional member of staff may be another Plagiarism advisor, the member of staff who reported the case, or another senior member of staff from the School.

Where a student does not engage with the process, by not responding or by refusing to attend an interview, the case will be referred to the discipline committee.

At the interview, the student will be given a clear explanation of what has been alleged, shown a copy of his/her work, given the opportunity to justify the work and be invited to admit or deny responsibility.

Following the interview, if the advisor is satisfied that the case exists, an appropriate penalty will be selected from the grid (step 2). After a penalty has been decided, the advisor will perform a fairness check to consider the impact of the penalty on the student's overall performance. If the impact is incommensurate with the offence, the advisor may choose to adjust the penalty. In all cases, the student will be notified by the advisor, in writing, of the decision and any penalty imposed.

The Plagiarism advisor will write a report, recording the decision and any penalty, which should be lodged centrally. This report is confidential and will not reflect upon

the student's record. It will be used to determine if a second or subsequent offence has occurred, and for statistical information only.

It may be appropriate for incidents of Plagiarism to be made known to relevant academic and support staff where this is required for the proper administration of academic programmes and academic decision making. Such sharing of information with appropriate staff does not breach confidentiality.

3.0 Related Documents

The Student Code of Conduct.

Plagiarism Penalty Grid

Step 1: Assign Points Based on the Following Criteria

History

1st Time	100 points
2nd Time	150 points
3rd/+ Time	200 points

Amount/Extent

Below 5% OR less than two sentences	80 points
As above but with critical aspects* plagiarised	105 points
Between 5% and 20% OR more than two sentences but not more than two paragraphs	105 points
As above but with critical aspects* plagiarised	130 points
Between 20% and 50% OR more than two paragraphs but not more than five paragraphs	130 points
As above but with critical aspects* plagiarised	160 points
Above 50% OR more than 5 paragraphs	160 points
Submission purchased from essay mill or ghostwriting service	225 points

* *Critical aspects are key ideas central to the assignment*

Level/Stage

1st year	70 points
Undergraduate (not 1st or final year)	115 points
Final year/Postgraduate	140 points

Value of Assignment

Standard assignment	30 points
Large project (e.g. final year dissertation, thesis)	115 points

Additional Characteristics (to be used only in extreme cases)

Evidence of deliberate attempt to disguise Plagiarism by changing words, sentences or references to avoid detection: **40 points**.

Step 2: Award penalties based on the points

Summative Work

In all cases a formal warning is given and a record made contributing to the student's previous history.

Points	Available Penalties (select one)
280-329	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No further action beyond formal warning Assignment awarded 0% - resubmission required, with no penalty on mark
330-379	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No further action beyond formal warning Assignment awarded 0% - resubmission required, with no penalty on mark Assignment awarded 0% - resubmission required but mark capped or reduced*
380-479	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assignment awarded 0% - resubmission required but mark capped or reduced Assignment awarded 0% - no opportunity to resubmit
480-524	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assignment awarded 0% - no opportunity to resubmit
525+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Case referred to Discipline Committee

Formative Work

280-379	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Informal warning
380+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formal warning, with record made contributing to the student's previous history

* Normally, marks will be capped at the pass mark for the assignment.

If resubmission is required, failure to resubmit will result in the automatic capping of the Autumn resit for the relevant module.

Where capping is required as a penalty this will be enforced independently of M&S