

SCHOOL PROCEDURES FOR DETERRING PLAGIARISM

DEFINITIONS OF PLAGIARISM AND COLLUSION

Plagiarism:

The Compact Oxford Dictionary defines *plagiarise* as:

“take (the work or idea of someone else) and pass it off as one’s own”.

Examples of plagiarism might include:

- verbatim copying of another individual/institution’s work without acknowledgement;
- close paraphrasing of another's work by simply changing a few words or altering the order of presentation, without acknowledgement;
- unacknowledged quotation of phrases from another's work;
- the deliberate and detailed presentation of another's concept as one's own.

Collusion:

The Compact Oxford Dictionary defines *collusion* as:

“secret cooperation in order to cheat or deceive”

This can take the form of conscious collaboration, without official approval, between two or more students in the preparation and production of work which is ultimately submitted by each in an identical, or substantially similar form and/or is represented by each to be the product of his or her individual efforts.

Collusion also occurs where there is unauthorised co-operation between a student and another person in the preparation and production of work which is presented as the student's own.

The procedure outlined below is specific to Warwick Business School and supersedes any other advice available from the University of Warwick's main website. Any queries regarding this should be directed to Academic Services at academicconduct@wbs.ac.uk.

1. Annual Notification of Good Academic Writing and Referencing Information to Students

WBS programme teams should review student documentation on an annual basis to ensure up-to-date guidance is provided on good academic writing style and correct referencing techniques. This guidance should be readily available in student handbooks, clearly explained during induction sessions and periodically reinforced throughout the duration of the course. In addition, students should be notified that further information is available on my.wbs and that it is in their best interest to ensure they have read this material and completed the University's PLATO online self-test course before submitting all assignments, but particularly during the early part of their course.

2. Use of Plagiarism Detection Software Elsewhere

Students are advised not to use plagiarism detection software packages (such as Turnitin) at other institutions or detection software available online. Turnitin automatically adds all new material to its database so this practice may lead to students' work being investigated for plagiarism erroneously.

In reality, following basic good academic writing practice significantly reduces the likelihood of students' work being investigated for plagiarism. The system is not in place to trip students up, and there are no hidden traps. If in any doubt then you should complete the PLATO online self-test course (available in the Study Skills section on the front page of my.wbs).

3. Formative Assignments to Prevent Plagiarism

Where appropriate, programme teams should, in the early stages of every course, offer students an opportunity to submit a formative piece of assessment, with the aim of alerting students to good writing and referencing techniques and illustrating the effectiveness of the plagiarism detection software.

4. Self-Plagiarism and Self-declaration of Compliance with University Guidelines on Plagiarism

All programmes should ensure that each piece of work submitted contains a statement declaring the work to be the student's own. Reproduction of essays submitted previously for credit constitutes self-plagiarism, in light of this the student should declare the following:

"No substantial part(s) of the work submitted here has also been submitted by me in other assessments for accredited courses of study and I acknowledge that if this has been done an appropriate reduction in the mark I might otherwise have received will be made."

5. Procedure for Investigating Suspected Cases of Plagiarism

In the event of a Named Internal Examiner (NIE) (or other member of staff marking a piece of work) suspecting collusion or plagiarism, the marker (if not the NIE) should inform the NIE immediately.

When the marker/ NIE is confident that, after careful review of the work, there remain concerns about the integrity of the work, the marker should take the following action:

- (i) The marker should contact [Academic Services](#) in order to establish that it is a first offence, as a second offence of 'negligence' is normally treated as 'misconduct'.
- (ii) The marker should also confirm with [Academic Services](#) whether there are any circumstances that should be taken into account, for example individual academic consequences such as the stage the student has reached in their studies, any mitigating factors and the nature and extent of the negligence. These should all be considered prior to enforcing any penalty or reduction in marks.

When considering a case, every attempt will be made to approach the matter with an open mind, giving due weight to any evidence, explanations or mitigating circumstances put forward by the student as well as the academic consequences that the penalty may have on the student progressing with their studies.

The marker can then either deal with the case themselves if it is simple case of negligence (see 5 A (i) Negligence Dealt with by NIE), or refer the case to the WBS Plagiarism Panel (see 5 A (iii)).

A. NEGLIGENCE

A decision of negligence will be made when work is deemed to have been improperly referenced through the incompetent or careless academic practices of the student. When considering the penalty to be imposed in such cases, the student's individual circumstances should be taken into account (e.g. the stage the student has reached in their studies, any mitigating factors and the nature and extent of the unacknowledged copying).

(i) **Negligence Dealt with by NIE**

In straightforward cases of poor referencing or careless academic writing practice, the marker may penalise the student using any or a combination of the following penalties:

- a. Reduce the mark in line with the severity of the offence by a maximum of 10 marks, provided that the case falls clearly into the 'negligence' category.
- b. Instruct the student to re-submit the piece of work with correct referencing to be marked normally as a first attempt.
- c. Instruct the student to submit a new piece of work to be marked normally as a first attempt.

Note: Any reduction in marks should be applied to the component part of the module only, and not to the overall module mark, although the final module mark may be affected as a result.

- ***The programme team will document the mark reduction.***
- ***The marker is required to mention the mark reduction and document the reasons why it has been applied, in the feedback provided to the student.***

If, after reviewing the submission in light of these considerations, the marker is in any doubt that the case should be categorised as 'negligence', the case should be reported to AS who will invoke the full plagiarism process and report the case to the WBS Plagiarism Panel.

(ii) **Invoking the Full Plagiarism Process**

Release of Marks

Where an assignment has been referred to the plagiarism panel for investigation, programme teams should register an interim mark of zero until the outcome of the investigation is known. Students should be advised that all marks are provisional until ratified by the Board of Examiners.

- a. The NIE should contact AS via the [online plagiarism report form](#) which asks for brief details (e.g. student ID number, module code, module title, percentage weighting of the assessment and reason for suspecting plagiarism) along with copies of the Turnitin report and the student's original submission.
- b. AS will check whether the case constitutes a repeat offence of misconduct or negligence and will send a notification letter to the student informing them that their assessment is under investigation for possible plagiarism. (The student will be informed that they do not need to respond at this stage, but that they *may* be asked to provide a written statement and they will have an opportunity to present their case in a face-to-face meeting.) If the case constitutes a repeat offence of misconduct the process for severe plagiarism will be followed (see section C below).
- c. AS will then allocate the case to a member of the WBS Plagiarism Panel and provide them with the Turnitin report, the student's original assessment, brief details regarding the case, and any documentation that the student has provided since being notified.
- d. The allocated panel member will then contact the NIE and following their discussion will make an initial assessment of the case.
 - i. They may agree that there is no case to pursue or that the student should be reminded of correct referencing techniques. AS will write to the student advising them of this outcome and a note will be retained by the Plagiarism Panel.
 - ii. If the case demonstrates: a) negligence; b) misconduct; or c) severe plagiarism then the plagiarism process continues as follows.

(iii) **Negligence Dealt with by Panel**

- a. The NIE and panel member agree that this is a case of negligence involving poor referencing or careless academic writing practice, is more significant than **Negligence Dealt with by NIE** (see 5 A (i) above) but not a case of misconduct (a deliberate attempt to cheat). (Where NIE and panel member do not agree, a second panel member may be asked to review the case such that a decision can be reached.)

The NIE will be advised to either:

- i. Reduce the mark in line with the degree of the offence.
- ii. Instruct the student to re-submit the piece of work with correct referencing to be marked normally as a first attempt.
- iii. Instruct the student to submit a new piece of work to be marked normally as a first attempt.

Note: Any reduction in marks should be applied to the component part of the module only, and not to the overall module mark, although the final module mark may be affected as a result.

- ***The programme team will document the mark reduction.***
- ***The marker is required to mention the mark reduction and document the reasons why it has been applied, in the feedback provided to the student.***

- b. The panel member will then inform AS of the outcome and a letter will be sent to the student (copied to NIE, programme team, and personal tutor where appropriate). The student will be advised that their assignment was improperly referenced due to poor scholarship in the category of 'negligence', advised to meet with their personal tutor (where appropriate), to receive further guidance on correct referencing techniques and advised that any future occurrences may be dealt with more severely. Appropriate feedback should be given to the student to help aid them when submitting any further assignments. This is to be provided by the marker or panel member to AS who will communicate this to the student.
- c. Penalties given in negligence cases are a matter of academic judgement and therefore not subject to the right of appeal. Any penalties incurred must be implemented in accordance with the exam conventions of individual programmes. AS will check this with Programmes before any penalty is implemented. If a penalty decision falls outside the jurisdiction of the relevant conventions, AS will seek further guidance from the University

B. MISCONDUCT

A decision of misconduct will be made in cases where it is deemed the student has deliberately or extensively cheated, either through collusion or plagiarism and that the offence should be pursued within the School without recourse to an Investigating Committee of Senate (ICS). The penalties available to the School (subject to the exam conventions of individual programmes) are as follows:

- A reduction in mark, to a maximum of zero, for the piece of work in which the plagiarism has occurred (with or without the opportunity to resubmit or undertake a further assessment);
- Re-submission of the original work with revised referencing, the work to be marked normally as a first attempt;
- Re-submission of another piece of work on a different topic, the work to be marked normally as a first attempt;
- Re-submission of the original work with revised referencing, for a capped mark;
- Re-submission of a new piece of work for a reduced or capped mark.

- (i) The NIE and panel member agree that this is a case of misconduct (a deliberate attempt to cheat), rather than a case of negligence (poor referencing or careless academic writing practice). (Where NIE and panel member do not agree, a second panel member may be asked to review the case such that a decision can be reached.)
- (ii) AS will be informed and will send a letter to the student (copied to programme team and personal tutor if applicable) informing the student of the decision and inviting the student to provide a written statement or to present the case in person. A copy of the Turnitin report will, if applicable, accompany the letter, as well as the original assignment. The student will be given 7 calendar days to submit their statement or to notify us that they wish to present their case in person. Only in exceptional circumstances or during University closure periods will extensions be considered. Students attending a face-to-face meeting may invite one other person to attend with them and they may wish to consider contacting their personal tutor where applicable.
- (iii) The student will also be advised that the panel may request a face-to-face or telephone interview with the student, whereby at least 3 calendar days' notice will be given to the student. The student will be interviewed by the panel member and the relevant NIE with a representative of AS in attendance. The interview is not to be treated as a further test of the student's knowledge of the subject area.
- (iv) Upon consideration of the statement and/or completion of the interview, a decision will be made by the NIE and panel member regarding the penalty to be imposed and communicated to AS who will send a decision letter to the student (copied to programme team, NIE and personal tutor where applicable).
- (v) The student will be invited to either accept the penalty or to appeal and allowed 10 calendar days to respond:
 - a. In the event of the student accepting the penalty, a report of the circumstances and level of penalty given will be communicated to the Secretary of the Board of Examiners.
 - b. In the event of the student opting to appeal, the matter will be referred to an Investigating Committee of the Senate (ICS) (see Appendix Two: University Calendar, [Regulation 11](#), Section B, paragraphs 5-9).

C. SEVERE PLAGIARISM

If the initial assessment concludes that a more severe penalty should be imposed than the School is permitted to give under University regulations, the case should be referred to an Investigating Committee of the Senate (ICS). The following are examples of cases that should normally be referred:

- Second offences of misconduct;
- Allegations relating to a research thesis submitted for examination for a higher degree (MPhil or PhD);
- Allegations relating to an assessment that contributed to the previous approval of an award to the student;
- Allegations of a serious nature, e.g. the student is suspected of having used work from another student or accessed work from a commercial internet site or an agency writing company;
- Where the penalty imposed would potentially result in the student being ineligible to qualify for the award for which they are registered;
- Where there are multiple allegations of cheating, affecting more than one module, against the same student, which if proven would result in the student being ineligible to qualify for the award for which they are registered;
- Where the case is complex, for example involving allegations of collusion against two or more students.

- (i) The NIE and panel member agree that the case is severe one and communicates the decision to AS, who forward the case to the Chair of the Plagiarism Panel and Associate Dean (Programme Quality) for confirmation that it should be referred to an ICS.
- (ii) In the event of any disagreement about the severity of the case, the Chair of the Plagiarism Panel and Associate Dean (Programme Quality) will consult again with the Plagiarism Panel.
- (iii) In the event that the case is confirmed as severe, AS will inform the student that the case has been referred to an ICS (letter copied to programme team, personal tutor and NIE). The student will then be provided with information relating to [Regulation 11](#), Section B, paragraphs 5-9 of the University Calendar (see Appendix Two).
- (iv) A report outlining the School's findings and all relevant materials pertaining to the case will then be sent by the Chair of the Plagiarism Panel and Associate Dean (Programme Quality) to the Academic Registrar for presentation to an ICS (see Appendix Two).

6. Retrospective Checking of Assignments

Where a case of plagiarism or cheating is proven, the School reserves the right to check the student's previous assignments for similar offences. If further instances are identified and proven, this may result in the application of penalties retrospectively. Repeat cases will normally be referred to the University's Academic Registrar and an ICS, who may impose a more severe penalty than the School has done.

7. Multiple Investigations

Where a student has submitted multiple assignments which are subsequently investigated, they will normally be referred to the ICS (see 5.c. above). However, where a second assignment has been referred to the Plagiarism Panel prior to a student receiving notification regarding a first assignment referred, both assignments would normally be pursued simultaneously within the School initially and although investigated separately, would not count as two separate instances.

8. Confidentiality

When a student indicates that their work contains confidential material (typically sensitive company data), it will not be uploaded to Turnitin. Such instances will be clearly communicated to the NIE and/or marker. If a NIE feels that there is no confidential data in the assignment, they may request that Turnitin be used and the student would then be asked to provide proof of confidentiality.

9. Annual Reporting of Plagiarism

Programme Team are required to report cases of plagiarism in the Annual Course Review Report and should, therefore, retain a record of the outcome of each investigation in the student's file. A complete file of the investigation will be maintained by AS.

In the event of a number of cases of plagiarism being detected on the same module, consideration should be given to reviewing the nature of the assessment(s) to reduce the likelihood of future cases occurring. The Chair of Programme Quality Committee (PQC) will monitor the incidence of suspected cases, outcomes and penalties applied (usually in the form of report to PQC in the autumn term).

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Senior Assistant Registrar
25/09/13

University of Warwick, Regulation 11, Section B (Paragraphs 5-9)

- 5) In all cases where a report has been submitted by the Head of Department (or his/her authorised deputy) to the Academic Registrar, the Head (or his/her authorised deputy) shall warn the student that this report has been made, and inform him/her that he/she may make a written statement to be submitted to the Academic Registrar before the meeting of an Investigating Committee. The student shall be provided by the Academic Registrar with a statement of the allegations made against him/her, together with copies of any supporting evidence, at least five days before the meeting of the Investigating Committee.
- 6) The reports shall be considered by an Investigating Committee of the Senate, whose membership shall be appointed by the Vice-Chancellor (or his nominee) and shall be chaired by the Chair of a Faculty Board or the Chair of a Faculty Undergraduate or Graduate Studies Committee (as appropriate) other than that of the student's faculty (or his/her nominee), together with not fewer than two members drawn from a panel of up to twenty members appointed by the Senate on the recommendation of the Faculty Boards (up to five nominees per faculty, panel members to serve for a period of three years). The Investigating Committee shall not include any member of the student's department. In considering the case the Investigating Committee shall take into account the Faculty and/or departmental instructions in relation to assessed work as well as the definitions in relation to cheating set out in University Regulations. The Head(s) of the Department(s) responsible for the module(s) concerned (or his/her authorised deputy) shall present the case and shall have a right to call witnesses to appear before the Committee. The Chair of the appropriate Examiners' Board (or his/her authorised deputy where the Chair of the Examiners' Board is the Head of the Department responsible for the module(s) concerned) shall be in attendance in an advisory capacity.
- 7) If he/she wishes, the student shall have the right to appear before the Investigating Committee, and he/she may invite any one other person to attend the Committee. The name and status of any person accompanying the student must be notified to the Chair of the Investigating Committee via the Academic Registrar in advance of the meeting. The student shall also have the right to request any witnesses to appear before the Committee and/or to provide the Committee with a written statement prior to its meeting.
- 8) If the Investigating Committee is not satisfied that an offence has taken place, the student shall be informed and the matter shall end there. The Chair of the Investigating Committee may also take Chair's action to dismiss a case prior to any committee meeting of s/he judges that there is no case to answer.
- 9) If the Investigating Committee is satisfied that an offence has taken place it shall:
 - a) determine the penalty and inform the secretary of the appropriate Board of Examiners and the student accordingly. The maximum penalty shall not normally exceed a mark of zero in that unit of study* in which the piece of work is being assessed (with or without the opportunity to resubmit or undertake a further assessment) but in appropriate cases the Committee shall have the power to impose a more severe penalty, it being understood that such a penalty would be imposed without prejudice to the provisions of the Disciplinary Regulations. The Investigating Committee may refer cases it considers appropriate to the University Discipline Committee, sanctions available to the Discipline Committee including termination of the student's registration, or
 - b) where the offence relates to an assessment which contributed to the previous approval of an academic award or honour to the candidate, make such recommendations to the Senate (or to the Senate Steering Committee acting on the Senate's behalf) to take such action under University Statutes, Ordinances and Regulations as it may consider appropriate (including that the previous academic award or honour to the candidate should be revoked).

**A unit of study is defined as that part of a student work load, in a given year, which is allocated an approved separate examination weighting by the appropriate body.*

WBS Plagiarism Procedure Flowchart

