

**Procedure Title: Plagiarism Procedure**

Area Code:	EXAM
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Approving Authority:	Registrar Academic Council

**1. Purpose**

IT Sligo fosters a quality culture based on integrity and honesty to support good academic conduct. This procedure aims to be an effective way of preventing, detecting and deterring plagiarism at all levels and by all students of the Institute of Technology, Sligo.

**2. Scope**

An occurrence of plagiarism constitutes academic misconduct and is dealt with according to the institute's disciplinary procedures. This document provides a definition of plagiarism and explains the process involved in addressing student plagiarism in a way that is fair, effective and robust. This procedure applies to all students of the institute.

**3. Reference Documents**

QQI Assessment and Standards 2013, section 4.11 'Dealing with Plagiarism and Other Types of Academic Misconduct'

EXAM024 Disciplinary procedure for Students (Examinations)

**4. Procedure****4.1 Definition**

Student plagiarism occurs when a student presents the work of another as their own work, without appropriate acknowledgement. It can include:

- Presenting work which has been copied from the internet, books, journals or other sources;
- Presenting work which paraphrases the writings of other authors, without acknowledgement;
- Presenting work which has been written by somebody else, such as another student or a family member;

- Presenting work which has been purchased from an internet site or other source and submitting as own work;
- Presenting work which has been produced collaboratively as one's own individual work;
- Submitting the same piece of their own work for a number of different assignments.
- Students making their work available to other students, where work should be completed on an individual basis.

Plagiarism by students can be deliberate or accidental, where a student fails to use appropriate citation and referencing in their work or is unaware of what constitutes plagiarism.

The standard of proof applied at every stage in this procedure is the balance of probabilities.

#### **4.2 Proper acknowledgement of one's own work and the work of others**

Students are encouraged to read widely for essays, projects and dissertations and to incorporate that knowledge in their work. Writers have to acknowledge the source of synthesised material and direct quotations have to be clearly identified. It is important that material is not plagiarised, that is using it as if it was a person's own ideas and work. However, students are encouraged to reflect on topics and express their own opinions.

All material submitted for assessment is assumed to be a student's own work except where it is clearly referenced as originating in another source. Including the source in a bibliography is not sufficient without acknowledgement in the body of the written work.

The proper procedure for such work is citation: acknowledging or attributing the idea or quote by providing information on its source in accordance with the recommended referencing system used in the discipline. Direct quotations must be referenced and summarised material should be acknowledged.

Students submitting written material for any assessment undertaken outside of supervised examinations should sign a declaration on the first page that the material is their own work.

It is important that all students are given proper instruction and guidance on referencing and on the consequences of plagiarism. While such information will be provided in student handbooks and codes of conduct, this is also a matter for every lecturer and Programme Board to address with each class group. This should include instruction on: referencing; overuse of quotations; citation; paraphrasing; note taking, and the use of plagiarism detection software such as Turnitin©.

#### **4.3 Preventing Plagiarism**

##### **4.3.1 Programme Boards**

Programme Boards can help minimise plagiarism by:

- Developing clear programme assessment strategies and accompanying module assessment strategies by engaging in training, guidance and support in the design of assessments to minimise susceptibility to plagiarism and in methods of detection
- Implementing the appropriate citation method across the programme;
- Providing clear guidelines for assignments with accompanying assessment criteria;
- Include in assessment tasks processes designed to test for plagiarism e.g. assessment panels, project presentations, interviews;

- Teaching referencing skills across the programme e.g. how to conduct independent research; how to reference material from sources; how to paraphrase; how to write up references properly; quoting other work;
- Briefing students on plagiarism each year as part of the programme;
- Including examples of plagiarism in the programme handbook;
- Encouraging students to use electronic detection methods for written work.

#### 4.3.2 Students

There are a number of strategies for avoiding plagiarism and Students can minimise the possibility of accidental plagiarism by:

- Informing themselves of plagiarism and what it means in their programme e.g. reading the Student Handbook, the programme handbook;
- Developing a clear understanding of the assessment tasks;
- Developing the appropriate research and referencing skills;
- Reviewing assignments before submission to check for plagiarism;
- Use of the Writing Centre

Appendix 1 contains some references and resources for both Programme Boards and students about plagiarism.

#### 4.4 Guidelines for Dealing with Plagiarism at Level 1

##### 4.4.1 Rationale

IT Sligo recognises the importance of informal communication between staff and students and encourages such communication as a means of resolving concerns over minor plagiarism issues. The guiding principle here is that complaints should be dealt with at the lowest possible level. Thus, a 'Level 1' resolution will normally be sought for a first allegation of plagiarism, unless there are compelling reasons for proceeding directly to 'Level 2'.

##### 4.4.2 Definition of a Level 1

A level 1 category is incidental and of a very minor nature, and there is no evidence on the student's Person Comment Form, SPACMNT, in Banner of previous cases of plagiarism.

##### 4.4.3 Definition of a Level 1 Resolution

A level 1 resolution occurs when both the lecturer and the student agree to resolve an allegation of plagiarism with appropriate academic sanctions as outlined below.

##### 4.4.4 Procedures for a Level 1 Resolution

The lecturer should carefully consider the evidence of plagiarism. Indicators and/or proof of plagiarism may include, but are not limited to, one or more of the following:

- Identification of the source of the materials used by the student without proper acknowledgement, or represented as the student's own work;
- A demonstrably marked difference in the writing style of the student, as compared to previous work, or variations in font, grammar and spelling from section to section;
- Written Testimony from others regarding a student's use of academically dishonest means to complete the assignment;
- First-hand observation of the student engaging in plagiarism;
- An unusual or suspicious degree of similarity with work submitted by other students;
- Admission by the student that s/he plagiarised.

As soon as possible after the discovery of the plagiarism, taking account of the context and nature of the case, the following course of action should be taken:

- The lecturer should ascertain from the school administration the status of the student in relation to previous Plagiarism offences. If the student has had any previous confirmed plagiarism offences, detailed in the Person Comment Form, SPACMNT, the guidelines for dealing with Plagiarism at Level 2 should be followed.
- Direct discussion with the student to provide further advice about correct citation protocols and how to avoid plagiarism in the future. The student may be required to re-submit the work with or without any of the sanctions listed below.
- Upon agreement that plagiarism occurred and that a Level 1 resolution is acceptable to all parties, the lecturer should fill in a short report detailing the allegation, the objective evidence and the sanction imposed. This report should be signed by all parties involved in the resolution – student and lecturer.
- A copy of this report is given to the student and a second copy to the Admin Manager in the school within five days of the resolution. The school administration should retain a file (paper / electronic) of the plagiarism and make the appropriate entry on the Person Comment Form, SPACMNT in Banner. Example is addition of brief note 'Level 1 Plagiarism on dateX'.
- A sample report is available in Appendix 2. If the semester ends without a Level 1 resolution, the lecturer should assign the grade 'WH' (Withheld) to the student alleged to have plagiarised;
- If the student denies the allegations and will not agree to sign the report and accept the sanction(s) imposed, or if the allegation cannot be resolved at departmental level, the matter must be referred to the Level 2 process. It is hoped that most cases of alleged plagiarism will be resolved without recourse to Level 2 proceedings.

#### 4.4.5 Sanctions for Plagiarism at level 1

One or more academic sanctions may be imposed for plagiarism. Academic sanctions may be imposed by a lecturer with the student's agreement through the Level 1 process.

Level 1 sanctions include:

- No further action beyond formal warning;
- Assignment awarded 0%- resubmission required, with no penalty on mark;

- Assignment awarded 0%- resubmission required but assignment mark capped or reduced;
- Assignment awarded 0% - resubmission required but entire module capped at 40%;
- Assignment awarded 0%- no opportunity to resubmit.

#### **4.5 Guidelines for Dealing with Plagiarism at Level 2**

##### 4.5.1 Definition of Plagiarism at Level 2

Level 2 plagiarism proceedings may be used when:

- The student fails to attend the scheduled meeting in relation to a Level 1 allegation;
- Level 1 resolution fails;
- The student has existing cases in the academic history file;
- The lecturer determines that the gravity of the situation merits formal action.

##### 4.5.2 Procedures for Level 2 Resolution

All level 2 plagiarism issues are resolved through a disciplinary hearing. Contact the Examinations Secretary in order to initiate the disciplinary hearing. This report should outline the grounds for suspicion, a copy of the relevant piece of suspect work and any supporting evidence. A lecturer may not take any academic sanction against a student until the hearing proceedings have run their course.

Details of the level 2 disciplinary process, student communication, penalties and right of appeal are laid out in procedure Exam024.

##### 4.5.3 Sanctions for Plagiarism at Level 2

The hearing of the disciplinary committee may decide to impose no penalty, a level 1 plagiarism penalty or a level 2 disciplinary penalty. Refer To Exam 024/155.

#### **5. Records generated by this procedure.**

All communication with the student will be recorded in Level 1 reports and a copy shall be kept by the Lecturer and School Admin area. School administration should enter a corresponding record in SPACMNT in Banner. These records will be sourced to identify whether previous plagiarism has been identified in the case of an individual student.

Records of all Level 2 Disciplinary Committee hearings and their decisions in respect of plagiarism will be maintained in the Examinations Office.

#### **6 Measurement of Effectiveness of this procedure**

Not Applicable

**7. Revision History**

Revision No	Description of Change	Issue Date	Status
000	New Procedure	8 <sup>th</sup> Feb 2005	Approved by AC
001	Revision	15 <sup>th</sup> June 2012	Approved by AC
002	Revised procedure to include level 1 report and link to level 2 disciplinary hearings	1 <sup>st</sup> Sep 2018	Approved by AC
003	Revised to add recording of Plagiarism in Banner SPACMNT	13/6/2019	Approved by AC

## Appendix 1

### Plagiarism Resources

#### Students

The following is a list of resources that the students can use in preparing work;

This is an online tutorial to test your knowledge on what plagiarism is. It was devised by Acadia University (Canada). It takes about 10 minutes.

Arcadia University. (2018). You Quote it, You Note it! Last Accessed 11 April 2018 from <http://library.acadiau.ca/sites/default/files/library/tutorials/plagiarism/>

The Owl at Purdue. (2018). Avoiding Plagiarism. Last Accessed 11 April 2018 <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/589/01/>.

The Owl at Purdue. (2018). Avoiding Plagiarism, Safe Practices: An Exercise. Retrieved 11 April 2018 <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/589/04/>

iParadigms LLC. (2018). Plagiarism dot Org. Last Accessed 11 April 2018 <http://www.plagiarism.org/>.

Library Section of ITSligo website.

#### Programme Boards

University of British Columbia. (2018) Plagiarism Resource Centre: For Faculty. Last Accessed 11 April 2018. <http://www.library.ubc.ca/home/plagiarism/for-faculty.html>.

Tennant P, Rowell G, Duggan F (2007) Academic Misconduct Benchmarking Exercise Part 1. The Range and Spread of Penalties Available for Student Plagiarism among UK Higher Education Institutions. Available at <http://www.plagiarism.org/>. Last accessed 11 April 2018

Tennant P, Duggan F (2008), Academic Misconduct Benchmarking Exercise Part 2. The Recorded Incidence of Student Plagiarism and the Penalties Applied. Available at <http://www.plagiarism.org/>. Last accessed 11 April 2018.

**Appendix 2**

**Level 1 Plagiarism report (Exam 016)**

Date:

Student Name:

Student Number:

Course:

Year:

Details of Assignment:

Dear Student,

A level 1 plagiarism report has been initiated in relation to the assignment above.

Student plagiarism occurs when a student presents the work of another as their own work, without appropriate acknowledgement. It can include: (Tick one or more)

Presenting work which has been copied from the internet, books, journals or other sources	
Presenting work which paraphrases the writings of other authors, without acknowledgement	
Presenting work which has been written by somebody else, such as another student or a family member;	
Presenting work which has been purchased from an internet site or other source and submitting as own work;	
Presenting work which has been produced collaboratively as one's own individual work;	
Submitting the same piece of their own work for a number of different assignments.	
Students making their work available to other students, where work should be completed on an individual basis.	
Other (provide details)	

Student Declaration Yes / No

Do you already have a previous case of level 1 plagiarism on your academic file?	
Has the assignment been discussed with the lecturer?	
Do you agree that plagiarism has occurred?	

**Resolution (select one)**

Proposed Level 1 Sanction (Select from the list in the procedure).

No agreement reached. Case referred to Level 2 Disciplinary Hearing

Comments:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature and date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Lecturer Signature and date