

DIVISION OF STUDENT AND STAFF SERVICES

**GUIDELINES & PROCEDURES FOR IMPLEMENTING THE POLICY
STATEMENT ON PLAGIARISM, COLLUSION AND RELATED FORMS OF
CHEATING**

Authorised by: Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Provost

Date of Authorisation: December 2003

Policy Review Date: December 2005

APPROVED

January 2004

Any person who requires assistance with any aspect of this document can contact Policy and Appeals on 8303 7503.

1. Introduction

Academic integrity is a quality associated with high standards of scholarship and is a responsibility of both staff and students. Academic staff should provide examples of good practice in academic integrity by acknowledging appropriately the works, designs, ideas and words of others in their teaching and research. Providing appropriate examples of assessment work that display good practice in using citations, references and acknowledgements and providing opportunities for students to practise their use will assist in developing academic skills and in reducing the instances of plagiarism and collusion.

The University is committed to assisting staff and students in maintaining high standards of academic integrity by implementing highly visible procedures associated with educational opportunities and detection. Staff can also assist by employing approaches to assessment that minimise the possibility for students to submit plagiarised material.

2. Issues Associated with Plagiarism, Collusion and Related Forms of Cheating

Teaching staff can provide information and opportunities that will assist a student's progress from a high level of dependence on the works of others to a stage where they are using the work of others to augment their own interpretation of an issue or event.

University rules, policies and guidelines tend to focus on the punitive aspects of procedures rather than the educative and often fail to articulate to students why the conventions of citing and referencing are an integral part of developing scholarly writing skills, and why plagiarism is considered a serious offence in the academic environment.

Plagiarism may occur because of cultural issues, such as misunderstanding academic conventions in a particular discipline or a level of English language skills that prevents adequate expression. In some cultures, the close replication of an expert's work represents a sign of learning and respect. However, some plagiarism results from an intention to deceive the assessor and is outright cheating. Whatever the reasons there are actions for all members of the University community that will minimise cases of plagiarism.

3.1 Responsibilities of the Faculty/School/Department

The University is committed to taking a consistent and equitable approach to the issue of plagiarism and collusion. Faculties, Schools and Departments are encouraged to develop their own approaches to providing students with information about the University's rules, policies and guidelines relating to plagiarism and collusion, and to provide learning opportunities for students to make use of the resources available to assist them in writing and other assessment tasks.

Students require guidance on issues of academic integrity, academic styles of writing and discipline conventions for referencing and acknowledging the works of others. They also require opportunities to practise applying these attributes to their own work. Students should be provided with opportunities to engage in learning activities that can lead to improvements in their skills, and their participation in group activities and be given constructive feedback in relation to the use of sources. They require explicit information on referencing styles appropriate to the discipline area in which they are studying.

Faculties, Schools and Departments have the right to set the criteria and marking schemes associated with assessment tasks. Criteria associated with referencing and originality can be used effectively to reinforce the importance associated with academic integrity and high standards in scholarly activity.

3.2 Responsibilities of Staff

Commencing students should be introduced explicitly to the concept of academic integrity and why this is important for student learning. Teaching staff can provide opportunities to discuss standards and expectation in relation to academic work and assessment. Teaching staff are in a position to design assessment tasks that minimise instances of plagiarism, for example, by setting learning outcomes that require students to satisfy specific criteria to explain information that has been included in a submission and to include a recommendation or conclusion based on an issue discussed specifically in the course content. Teaching staff can also assist students to understand discipline-specific approaches to academic writing and presentations by allocating formal contact time to discuss examples and expectations.

All teaching staff should be involved in the prevention and detection of plagiarism. The detection methods may vary depending on the discipline. Examples could include the random sampling of assessment submissions for similarities; using copy detection software (such as Turnitin) to review assessment submissions for appropriate referencing or copying; being aware of significant differences in a student's performance across a number of tasks or using more than one assessor.

The principal methods that should be used to reduce plagiarism are educative and involve ensuring that students are aware of the expectations and standards associated with assessment work for a particular discipline. It is important that students see examples of accepted academic conventions for acknowledging another person's work. Students should be rewarded for expressing ideas in their own words (at an appropriate standard). The use of formative assessment tasks for which timely feedback will be available will reinforce skills in summarising, paraphrasing and referencing appropriately.

Useful resources for staff can be found at <http://www.adelaide.edu.au/ltdu/staff/plagiarism>.

3.3 Responsibilities of the Student

Students should take responsibility for being informed about conventions and expectations in their chosen discipline. When information and opportunities are provided on referencing and writing skills students should allocate sufficient time to be familiar with the issues. It is important for students to continue to discuss and clarify points of confusion with tutors and lecturers until they have gained a solid understanding of the role of citing and referencing in tertiary assignments.

Student submissions must provide some form of acknowledgment for the following, direct quotes from a published text, paraphrasing or summarising other people's published ideas, the use of graphics, tables or images from a hard copy text or the web. Students need to be aware that changing a few words, or the order of words, in a text is not paraphrasing. If a student is unsure of what should be acknowledged then teaching staff can assist. In addition, students can attend academic writing workshops or attend 'Helpdesk' sessions in the Learning and Teaching Development Unit (<http://www.adelaide.edu.au/ltdu/students/plagiarism>).

It is appropriate that students should develop their own writing style as they progress through their program. Web-based software, such as Turnitin, may be used by students as an educational tool to improve their writing style. The system enables students to review their use of citations and referencing and to experiment with paraphrasing and summarising in a formative mode.

4 Procedures and Penalties for Plagiarism, Collusion and Related Forms of Cheating

The University's approach to suspected cases of plagiarism, collusion and related forms of cheating should be consistent and fair. Students should be aware of the expectations of academic integrity and how it will be upheld. Students should also be aware of their rights and responsibilities for dealing with issues associated with plagiarism, collusion and related forms of cheating and keep copies of their drafts, notes and literature sources so that they are familiar with the details of their submissions.

If a case of suspected plagiarism has been detected, the principles of natural justice should be employed to deal with the procedures. This means that a student will be presented with all the evidence relating to an alleged incidence of plagiarism and be given an opportunity to discuss the circumstances in a manner that is mindful of the stress caused by such allegations. Students should consider having a support person present so that they are not intimidated by a formal proceeding. The evidence of plagiarism will usually involve citing the original source of the work that has not been cited or referenced appropriately.

4.1 If an assessor believes they have evidence that a student has submitted an assessment work that contains plagiarised material, the assessor will notify either the student's lecturer or Course coordinator. If the evidence suggests that there is an inadequate understanding or application of the procedures of appropriate referencing, the student will be contacted and referred to relevant workshops and/or other resources for gaining the necessary skills. The assessor, or Coordinator, may request that the work be resubmitted and re-marked or marks may be deducted because of inappropriate referencing. No record will be entered in the confidential Plagiarism Register of the University, but the Head may keep records of cases where students have been contacted and referred to relevant workshops as described above.

4.2 If the assessor or Coordinator believes that the alleged plagiarism is not due to an inadequate understanding or application of the procedures of appropriate referencing, they will notify the Head. [If the Head is the assessor or the Coordinator, the Faculty Dean, or a nominee, will take the place of the Head in the process.] After consulting the assessor and the Coordinator, the Head may decide either to talk to the student and have the student referred to appropriate

workshops and/or other resources for gaining appropriate skills and provide the same range of assessment options as in Section 4.1 above, or proceed formally to Section 4.3.

4.3 The Head will now notify the student of the alleged plagiarism, in writing, within **5 working days**. The notification to the student will contain details of the assessment work, the evidence pertaining to the material suspected of being plagiarised, their rights concerning the process of investigating allegations of plagiarism and the support available to them, including advice and representation by an Education and Welfare Officer (EWO) or other support person, as provided for in the *Student Complaints Policy*. The notification must also include the scheduled time, date and place for the hearing, which will normally be within **10 working days** from the date of notification, and the names and positions of all attending staff members.

The Head will consult the confidential Plagiarism Register of the University to determine if there is any record of confirmed plagiarism for this student. If there is such a record, the notification must also include this.

4.4 The student will be invited to respond to the Head on the evidence of plagiarism within **10 working days** of the date of notification. The student may respond in person, in writing or orally. The student may invite an EWO or other support person to any meeting to provide them with advice.

If the student and/or his/her support person cannot reasonably meet the time nominated for the meeting by the Head, the hearing may be switched to an alternative mutually agreed time, but in any case no longer than **20 working days** from the date of notification. Telephone conferences may be used to help overcome scheduling clashes, or where the student may be interstate or overseas, with the nominated EWO or other support person in attendance with the Head.

If there is no response to the notification, and/or the student does not attend the scheduled hearing, the Head is required to make one final reasonable attempt at contacting the student, by telephone, email and/or in writing, using the current contact details on the student administration system, or other available contact details. If there is still no contact **5 working days** after this attempt has been made, or the student again fails to arrive at the scheduled time and place, the Head will proceed with the hearing in the student's absence.

4.5 After consulting the assessor and the Coordinator, taking into account any extenuating circumstances presented by the student or his/her representative, and applying to the evidence the principle of "the balance of probabilities" rather than the legal principle of "beyond reasonable doubt", the Head may then decide on one of the following actions:

(i) If, on the balance of probabilities, the available evidence is not sufficient to indicate plagiarism, then no further action need be taken. No record will be entered in the confidential Plagiarism Register of the University and the student will be notified of this outcome in writing within **5 working days**.

(ii) If, on the balance of probabilities, the available evidence is sufficient to indicate that material was plagiarised and no previous record exists in the confidential record of the University, then the student may be given zero marks for the assessment work, and may be given the option of resubmitting. The student will also be provided with resources and assistance in developing a scholarly approach to assessment work, including appropriate methods for referencing and acknowledging the works of others.

The Head may decide that any resubmitted assessment work should be awarded a maximum mark of 50%. A record of the incident, together with the resources and assistance provided, will

be entered in the Plagiarism Register of the University and the student will be notified of this outcome in writing within **5 working days**.

(iii) If, on the balance of probabilities, the available evidence is sufficient to indicate that material was plagiarised and a previous record exists in the confidential record of the University, then the case will be referred to an Assessment Committee. A record will be entered in the confidential Plagiarism Register of the University and the student will be notified of this outcome in writing within **5 working days**.

4.6 The Assessment Committee will be a lower tribunal under the terms of Statute Chapter 12 and associated rules, and will hear the case following the procedures required under that statute and rule. The Committee will consider the case and if it confirms that the evidence provided is sufficient to indicate that material was plagiarised and a previous record exists in the confidential Plagiarism Register of the University, then the assessment work will be given a mark of zero and the student will fail the course without the option of taking a supplementary examination. A record will be entered in the Plagiarism Register of the University and the student will be notified of this outcome in writing within **5 working days**.

If the Assessment Committee determines that multiple and/or systematic acts of plagiarism have been committed by the student, or if the student admits, or is found to have committed, conduct that prejudices the interests of other students or the integrity of an assessment scheme itself, then the case will be dealt with under a complaint of misconduct under the *Rules for Student Conduct in the University*, and a further penalty may be imposed as provided for in those Rules.

5 Appeals

Students should retain a copy of all assessment tasks submitted and any draft notes and sources of information they have used during the preparation of their submitted work. This will assist them should an assessor query aspects of the referencing or originality. It will also assist a student should they appeal against a reduced mark for the lack of referencing or for inappropriate use of sources (as in 4(ii) or (iii) above) in an assessment work. If a student accepts that they have received a reduced mark for not referencing or acknowledging the work of others appropriately, they should seek assistance from staff in the School/Department or the Learning and Teaching Development Unit so that they may avoid this situation in the future.

If a student does not accept that they should have received a low mark for lack of referencing or inappropriate use of sources, initial appeals should be to the original assessor or Coordinator. If the student is not satisfied with the outcome from this appeal they may refer the matter to the Head or follow the procedures outlined in the *Student Complaints Policy* (<http://www.adelaide.edu.au/policies/?100>).

A student who wishes formally to appeal against an assessment mark or a decision resulting from a case dealt with under the Procedures and Penalties for Plagiarism, Collusion and Related Forms of Cheating under Section 4 above, may do so in writing according to the procedures outlined in the *Student Complaints Policy*. Students should be informed of this right in the notification of any investigation of plagiarism or collusion from the Head.