

# Student Plagiarism Policy

<b>Policy owner</b>	Student Engagement, Conduct, Complaints and Appeals (SECCA)	<b>Approval date and body</b>	3 June 2021 Academic Council Executive Committee
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## 1. Purpose

Integrity is an essential value of the University as it underpins all academic activities. To maximise students' learning experience, it is important that they understand the importance of honesty and ethics in scholarship. Working independently, expressing original ideas, and appropriately acknowledging the ideas of others are important skills that will benefit students beyond their time at UCD.

The purpose of this policy, and associated documents, is to set out University College Dublin's arrangements and supports for enabling students to understand and value academic integrity and to avoid plagiarism; and to provide a framework for effective, fair, consistent and timely processes in the event of an allegation of plagiarism being made against a student.

The policy includes: the procedures for investigating an allegation of plagiarism against a student at School and University level, the range of penalties that may be applied at School and University level if an allegation is upheld, the appeal process available to students if an allegation is upheld, and the supports available to students throughout the process.

## 2. Definition

Academic integrity is one of the core values of the UCD Education Strategy and includes adherence to the highest ethical and academic standards. Students, researchers and staff achieve academic integrity through sound academic writing, avoiding plagiarism, and use of appropriate referencing and citation.

Plagiarism is the inclusion, in any form of assessment, of material without due acknowledgement of its original source. Plagiarism is a form of academic dishonesty and may include, but is not limited to, the following:

- Presenting in your own name, work authored by a third party, such as other students, friends or family (with or without permission), or work purchased<sup>1</sup>, (known as 'contract cheating') via organisations such as essay mills. The original source may be in written form or in any other media (for example, audio or video);
- Presenting ideas, theories, concepts, methodologies or data from the work of another without due acknowledgement;
- Incorrect paraphrasing, presenting text, digital work, music, video recordings or images of others with only minor changes (e.g., using synonyms or changing the sentence structure) from an original source; the inclusion of a citation does not eliminate this. Correct paraphrasing in your own words must also include appropriate citation of the original source material<sup>2</sup>. Failing to include appropriate citation of all original sources;
- Representing collaborative work as solely your own, including colluding with or copying from others during examinations;
- Presenting work for an assignment which has also been submitted (in part or whole) for another assignment at UCD or another institution (i.e., self-plagiarism).

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<sup>1</sup> As stipulated under Section 43A of the Amendment Act 2019 to the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012 purchasing work from any such source is purchasing work from an illegal organisation.

<sup>2</sup> For guidance on paraphrasing correctly please see UCD Library: <https://libguides.ucd.ie/academicintegrity/paraphrasing>.

Plagiarism can be either intentional or unintentional. In both instances it is a serious academic offence and may be subject to Student Discipline Procedure.

### **3. Scope**

This policy and any associated procedures apply to all work submitted for assessment by all students registered to University College Dublin, on all taught and research programmes.<sup>3</sup>

### **4. Principles**

The University upholds the principle of academic integrity and expects students to ensure that the intellectual efforts of others are acknowledged correctly in any material submitted for assessment.

The University is committed to ensuring that students have access to excellent academic advice, including advice on referencing and citation and on avoiding plagiarism.

This policy should be interpreted in a manner that:

- a) Promotes equal opportunities for all students to develop a commitment to personal responsibility and academic integrity in assessment;
- b) Treats students fairly and consistently in a transparent manner;
- c) Applies penalties that are fair and proportionate; and
- d) Respects the dignity of all persons involved.

### **5. Roles and responsibilities**

#### **5.1 Roles**

5.1.1 The University sets standards of academic integrity for students and puts in place arrangements to:

- a) Enable students to understand and observe academic integrity and avoid plagiarism;
- b) Provide arrangements to inform and educate students about the policy for unacceptable practices in academic writing and assessment; and
- c) Use electronic and other detection mechanisms, such as text-matching software, to identify instances of potential plagiarism. Any work submitted for assessment may be subject to electronic or other detection procedures.

5.1.2 UCD Library provides education about, and promotes University policy on, academic integrity and has a repository of resources on plagiarism and how to avoid it (<https://libguides.ucd.ie/academicintegrity>).

5.1.3 Schools<sup>4</sup> arrange for students to receive advice and guidance on correct citation and referencing, on avoiding plagiarism, and on the potential consequences of plagiarism. Investigation of suspected cases of plagiarism is initiated by the School.

5.1.4 In some Programmes or Colleges, a number of Schools may group together to form a joint School Plagiarism Committee, with the following arrangements:

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<sup>3</sup> *In relation to research it is expected that allegations relating to minor research assignments undertaken by students on taught programmes will generally be handled in the first instance under this policy and/or the UCD Student Code of Conduct. However, on either taught or research programmes, when allegations of plagiarism are made in respect of research that appears in the published literature, is externally funded or is otherwise of a significance that merits handling through the UCD Procedure for the Investigation of Misconduct in Research, that latter procedure will be invoked. The Registrar or their nominee, following consultation with the Vice President for Research Innovation and Impact will decide which policy will take precedence in individual cases.*

<sup>4</sup> *All references to Schools should be taken to include non-School Teaching Units that offer modules.*

- a) Proposals to establish joint School Plagiarism Committees must be notified to ACCSCC.
- b) The Head of School retains the responsibilities for Head of School under this policy.
- c) Hereafter in this policy the term School Plagiarism Committee may be taken to mean a single or joint School Plagiarism Committee.
- d) Each School's Plagiarism Protocol should specify whether the School has a single School Plagiarism Committee or is part of a joint School Plagiarism Committee.
- e) Committee membership numbers and all other arrangements in this policy apply equally to single and joint Student Plagiarism Committees. Joint committees may be drawn from a panel of the appointees from each constituent School.

5.1.5 Student Advisers and Student Union representatives provide support and advice to students against whom allegations of plagiarism are raised.

## 5.2 Responsibilities

5.2.1 Head of Schools' responsibilities include:

- a) Development and periodic review of a School Plagiarism Protocol (suggested headings in Appendix 1);
- b) Establishing a School Plagiarism Committee or joining the School in a joint School Plagiarism Committee<sup>5</sup>,
- c) The School Plagiarism Committee will consist of three voting members (a Chair and a maximum of two additional members of academic staff) for the purposes of reviewing suspected instances of plagiarism within the School(s) and deciding whether the matter may be resolved at School Plagiarism Committee level or whether a referral to the University Discipline Procedure is required;
- d) Ensuring that appropriate and timely student advisory arrangements are in place to promote academic integrity in the subject area(s) and to educate students about avoiding plagiarism;
- e) Ensuring that records of all instances of plagiarism and outcomes of investigations are kept;
- f) Periodically evaluating its arrangements for dealing with plagiarism to ensure consistency in case management, and that where any recurrent patterns of plagiarism emerge, either in the case of individual students, or groups of students, the overall approach is appropriate and capable of ensuring that any further recurrences are addressed.

Operational responsibility for c) - e) may be vested in a nominated individual (hereafter referred to as the School Plagiarism Adviser).

5.2.2 School Plagiarism Advisers' responsibilities (if nominated) include:

- a) Carrying out duties delegated by the Head of School;
- b) Being aware of the types, nature and outcomes of allegations of plagiarism that arise in the School;
- c) Advising academic staff who wish to consult on suspected or ongoing allegations of plagiarism.

5.2.3 Module Coordinators' responsibilities include:

- a) Ensuring that their students are briefed on avoiding plagiarism and providing them with information about expectations for citation methods for all assessed work in their module, prior to the students submitting assessments or taking examinations;
- b) Guided by this policy and the School Plagiarism Protocol, Module Coordinators will exercise their judgement when deciding whether incidents will be dealt with directly or referred to the School Plagiarism Committee for consideration, and may consult with the School Plagiarism Adviser, where one has been appointed.

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<sup>5</sup> School Plagiarism Committee may hereafter be taken to refer to a single or joint School Plagiarism Committee.

When deciding on whether cases should be referred to the School Plagiarism Committee, Module Coordinators may wish to consider the following:

- the characteristics of categories of plagiarism outlined in section 6
  - the relative experience / stage of the student
  - any additional school guidance that may have been developed
- c) Initiating plagiarism procedures in suspected cases of plagiarism;
- d) Preparing a short report outlining the grounds of suspicion, a copy of the piece of work and supporting evidence;
- e) Follow the school's plagiarism protocol with regard to communicating with the student about the alleged plagiarism, this may include:
- informing the student that their assignment or examination script is under scrutiny as an alleged instance of plagiarism;
  - advising students who they refer to the School Plagiarism Committee of the supports available to them, such as those provided by Student Advisers or the Students' Union.

5.2.4 School Plagiarism Committees' responsibilities include:

- a) Examining allegations of plagiarism in submitted work referred by Module Coordinators;
- b) Evaluating the case and deciding whether plagiarism has taken place;
- c) Deciding whether a case should be addressed by the School Plagiarism Committee or referred without decision to the Student Discipline Procedure;
- d) Providing an accompanying report where allegations are referred to the Student Discipline Procedure;
- e) Deciding on a penalty for cases where plagiarism is deemed to have taken place, guided by the UCD Plagiarism Tariff <sup>6</sup>;
- f) Providing an accompanying report where allegations are referred to the Student Discipline Procedure without decision;
- g) Communicating the outcome of the School Plagiarism Committee meeting to the student and the Module Coordinator;
- h) Keeping a record of the type, circumstances and outcome (decision and penalty) of referred allegations of plagiarism.

Where a Module Coordinator who refers a case to the School Plagiarism Committee is a committee member, they must be replaced by an alternate when the case that they referred is being considered.

5.2.5 Examiners' responsibilities include:

- a) Being aware of, and considering, the UCD Student Plagiarism Policy when reviewing assignments and examinations;
- b) Grading as normal and consulting the Module Coordinator in suspected cases of plagiarism, following grading.

5.2.6 Student's responsibilities include:

- a) Attending and/or taking part in any referencing / citation training and plagiarism-avoidance information sessions or workshops arranged by the School and/or the Library and UCD Writing Centre;
- b) Being responsible for the academic integrity of any assessment they submit, including producing original work in all assessment with appropriate citation and referencing of sources;
- c) Monitoring their UCD email for communications from Schools or the University;

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<sup>6</sup> A UCD Plagiarism Tariff, adapted from the AMBeR Tariff <https://www.plagiarism.org/paper/plagiarism-reference-tariff> has been developed and is associated with this policy.

- d) Engaging with and responding to Module Coordinators and the School Plagiarism Committee in a timely manner and within any timelines set out;
- e) Where meetings with the School Plagiarism Committee are held students may be accompanied by a support person of their choice, such as their Student Adviser or a Students' Union Sabbatical Officer;
- f) Students are expected to speak for themselves at meetings, the role of any person accompanying students is to provide support.

5.2.7 Academic Council Committee on Student Conduct and Capacity's (ACCSCC) responsibilities include:

- a) Maintaining oversight of implementation, and periodic review, of this policy and its procedures;
- b) Receiving notifications from new joint School Plagiarism Committees of their constituent Schools, and of any subsequent changes in membership;
- c) Keeping a record of joint School Plagiarism Committees and their constituent Schools.

## 6. Categories of Plagiarism

The characteristics that distinguish cases are likely to be:

- a) Cases that are deemed to be minor infringements and evidence of poor academic practice are likely to be characterised as follows:
  - Apparent unintended misuse of source materials.
  - Inadequate citation such as poor referencing, inappropriate paraphrasing, demonstrates student's need for further guidance on referencing and citation.
  - Over-reliance on sources without sufficient input of the student's own work.
  - The suspected plagiarism represents only a small proportion of the work and/or an element in a piece of work which makes a small contribution to the grade for the assessment component.

Minor instances and poor academic practice are likely to be addressed directly by Module Coordinators without referral through the actions set out under section 7.1 but may be addressed by the School Plagiarism Committee in some cases depending on the circumstances of the alleged breach.

- b) Cases that are referred to the School Plagiarism Committee are likely to include instances where larger proportions of suspected plagiarism are evident, the component assessment under scrutiny is worth a significant proportion of the module, or where a Module Coordinator notes repeated minor instances. Decisions available to the School Plagiarism Committees are outlined in section 7.3.5.
- c) Cases that are considered sufficiently serious by the School are referred without decision to the UCD Student Discipline Procedure (e.g. second offence or significant plagiarism in major assessments).

## 7. School Plagiarism Investigation Procedure

### 7.1 Initial investigation and procedure

Where an examiner, who is not the Module Coordinator, detects a suspected instance of plagiarism in a student's assessment, they should grade the assessment as normal and then consult with the Module Coordinator.

Taking account of the specific context and nature of the case, any or all of the following courses of action may be followed by the Module Coordinator as soon as possible:

- a) Discussion directly with the student about the issue that has arisen with their assessment;
- b) Consultation with the School Plagiarism Adviser (if nominated);
- c) Provide, or arrange that the student receive one-to-one advice about academic integrity and avoiding plagiarism and / or refer the student to the UCD Library and / or the University Writing Centre for advice and guidance on good writing practices and how to avoid plagiarism. Instances of poor academic practice and minor infringements may be reflected in the grade awarded by Module Coordinators using the [Component Grade Scale](#);

- d) Refer the case to the School Plagiarism Committee as an alleged case of plagiarism. The Module Coordinator should submit a short report outlining the grounds of suspicion, a copy of the piece of work and any supporting evidence to the School Plagiarism Committee. Where it is decided to refer the case to the School Plagiarism Committee, Module Coordinators may advise the student that their assessment has been referred to the School Plagiarism Committee and that the Committee will contact them in relation to the matter and note the supports available, such as their Student Adviser or an SU Sabbatical Officer. A Module Coordinator may refer a case to the School Plagiarism Committee without following actions a-c.

## 7.2 Referral to the School Plagiarism Committee

Where an allegation is referred by a Module Coordinator, the School Plagiarism Committee will:

- a) Inform the student, through their UCD email address, that:
- i. their assessment is under scrutiny as an alleged instance of plagiarism; the Module Coordinator's report should be included in the correspondence;
  - ii. they are invited to respond to the allegation in accordance with the School's Plagiarism Protocol;
  - iii. in the absence of any response the committee may, within any timeframes established, proceed to consider the case.
- b) The student must be advised about sources of support such as those provided by Student Advisers and by the Students' Union.

## 7.3 School Plagiarism Committee

7.3.1 In cases where a student has been referred previously to a School Plagiarism Committee and found to be in breach of the terms of the University's Student Plagiarism Policy, the committee will make a judgement as to whether the recurrence can be handled as an academic matter at School level or whether it merits being handled as a disciplinary matter.

7.3.2 The Assessment and Module Coordinator's Report will be reviewed by the committee and one of the following decisions will be taken:

- If the extent of plagiarism warrants it, the case may be referred directly to the Student Discipline Procedure.
- If the matter could have been appropriately dealt with as a minor infringement or poor academic practice the case may be referred back to the Module Coordinator for resolution.
- Plagiarism proceedings will be initiated and the student will be invited to meet the School Plagiarism Committee to discuss the alleged plagiarism case and to assist decision-making. Reasonable efforts should be made to accommodate students' requests to change the meeting time/date. However, if the student does not respond to the meeting notification, or cannot or does not attend the meeting, the committee will proceed in their absence.

7.3.3 Where offered by the student, mitigating circumstances may be taken account of, following the committee's decision on whether plagiarism has occurred. Where a student indicates the presence of issues that fall under the scope of the Extenuating Circumstances Policy the committee may advise the student to make an application using the Extenuating Circumstances procedure if they have not already made such an application.

7.3.4 In cases where it is determined that plagiarism has taken place, the penalty will be guided by a University-approved tariff <sup>7</sup>.

7.3.5 The School Plagiarism Committee may decide any of the following:

- a) That plagiarism has not occurred; the assessment component grade will stand. No record is kept on the Plagiarism Record System.

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<sup>7</sup> A UCD plagiarism tariff, adapted from the AMBeR Tariff <https://www.plagiarism.org/paper/plagiarism-reference-tariff> has been developed and is associated with this policy. <sup>8</sup> UCD Late Submission of Coursework Policy (the late submission penalty applies to all penalties that permit re-submission so that the student is not advantaged by re-submitting after the deadline).

- b) That plagiarism has occurred. In all cases the student will receive a verbal or written warning, be directed on where and how to receive advice about academic integrity (good writing, citation and referencing practices and avoiding plagiarism) and the case will be recorded in the Plagiarism Record System. In addition, the committee may:
- i. Permit the student to re-submit the assessment component, incurring a late submission grade penalty<sup>8</sup>;
  - ii. Permit the student to re-submit the assessment component and direct that the grade be capped<sup>9</sup>; School Plagiarism Committees may select the capped grade from all passing grades of the Component Grading Scale as deemed appropriate. When capping grades School Plagiarism Committees may wish to limit this to a D- or at the original grade or an adjusted original grade in line with Academic Regulation 4.26 and the Component Grade Scale.
  - iii. Direct that the grade for the assessment component be reduced without an opportunity to resubmit the assessment. School Plagiarism Committees may select grades from all passing grades of the Component Grading Scale as deemed appropriate.

If a penalty results in a change to a grade that has already been approved by a Programme Examination Board, the Chair of the School Plagiarism Committee should request that the Module Coordinator submits an *exceptional change of grade* request to the Chair of Academic Council Committee on Examinations.

- c) Refer the alleged instance, without any decision, for resolution under the University's Student Discipline Procedure. In some contexts, a first instance may require direct referral (e.g., plagiarism in single-assessment modules, second or subsequent offence, or for significant plagiarism in heavily weighted assessments).
- d) Decisions will be communicated to students through their UCD email address,(copying the Module Coordinator). Where a decision is made under 7.3.5b the communication should include reference to their right to appeal decisions under specified grounds and under Student Appeals Procedure (see section 8).

7.3.6 In all cases of referral to the University Student Discipline Procedure, the School Plagiarism Committee should:

- a) Prepare and send a short report outlining the grounds of suspicion, reason for referral, a copy of the assessment component and any supporting evidence, copying the Module Coordinator;
- b) Inform the student, through their UCD email address, that their assessment has been referred for scrutiny as an alleged instance of plagiarism under the University Discipline Procedure<sup>10</sup>; and
- c) Advise the student of the supports available to them. Where meetings are held students may choose to be accompanied by a support person of their choice, such as a Student Adviser, or a Students' Union Sabbatical Officer.

7.3.7 The School Plagiarism Committee will record incidents of plagiarism on the Plagiarism Record System.

- a) The Plagiarism Record System is a central university system for Schools to record incidents of plagiarism found by the School Plagiarism Committee. A member of staff, nominated by the Head of School will maintain the record.
- b) Access to the system will be limited to faculty and staff with responsibility for applying the policy, administering the student discipline procedure, and maintaining the system. This will include the Chair of a School Plagiarism Committee and the member of School staff nominated for the purpose of

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<sup>8</sup> *UCD Late Submission of Coursework Policy (the late submission penalty applies to all penalties that permit re-submission so that the student is not advantaged by re-submitting after the deadline).*

<sup>9</sup> *School Plagiarism Committees cannot apply grade reductions or cap resubmitted work that is graded using pass/fail, this includes where plagiarism occurs in a resit.*

<sup>10</sup> *Referrals are made without decision, therefore, the Student Appeals Procedure is not applicable and should not be referenced in communications informing students that the case has been referred to be dealt with under the Student Discipline Procedure. Students will be provided with the opportunity to appeal decisions made under the Student Discipline Procedure.*

implementing the policy, i.e. identifying previous breaches of the plagiarism policy by students, and entering outcomes decided by a School Plagiarism Committee.

- c) Personal data collected and processed under the Student Plagiarism Policy will include: student name and ID number, relevant module code, plagiarism category, assessment type and the decision of the School Plagiarism Committee. Personal data will not be included in any university reports on plagiarism.

## **8. Appeals to School Plagiarism Committee outcomes**

8.1 An appeal to decisions of the committee may be made to the University's Student Appeals Committee within 10 working days from the date of issue of the decision of the School Plagiarism Committee. Details of the appeal procedure can be found in the [Student Appeals Procedure](#).

8.2 Appeals may be made on the following grounds:

- New evidence: information directly relevant to the decision, which for good reason was not available to the School Plagiarism Committee.
- Procedural irregularity: there is evidence that the procedures relating to a decision were not followed properly, which may have impacted on the School Plagiarism Committee's decision.
- Disproportionate outcome; the outcome applied was disproportionately severe with regard to the circumstances of the case.

8.3 Decisions of the Student Appeals Committee. The Committee may:

- Uphold the Appeal, in full or in part.
- Reject the Appeal.

In cases where a Student Appeals Committee upholds an appeal either on the ground of a procedural irregularity in the process leading to the original decision, or on the ground of new evidence, the Student Appeals Committee, at their discretion, may refer the case back to the original decision-making body for a new hearing with such conditions as the Student Appeals Committee deems appropriate, this may include the constitution of a new committee.

8.4 On upholding an appeal a Student Appeals Committee may require the appellant to meet specified conditions and in considering an appeal against a penalty the Student Appeals Committee may decrease or increase the penalty or change the nature of the penalty.

8.5 The outcome of an appeal will be communicated to the relevant School for implementation.

## **9. University Student Discipline Procedure**

9.1 The University Discipline Procedure under the Student Code of Conduct will be followed.

9.2 Where an allegation of plagiarism referred to the Student Discipline Procedure has been proven:

- a) Any of the penalties available under the Student Discipline Procedure may be applied, this includes, but is not limited to, reduction of a component assessment or module grade up to and including the award of NM (No Grade) for the module or deprivation of any academic award, scholarship or prize, at a Student Disciplinary hearing;
- b) The outcome of the case will be communicated to the School and recorded by the Student Engagement, Conduct, Complaints and Appeals on the Plagiarism Record System.

## **10. Related documents**

- [Student Code of Conduct](#)
- [Student Discipline Procedure](#)



## Appendices

### Appendix 1: Recommended headings for a School's Plagiarism Protocol

- School name;
- School Plagiarism Adviser (if appointed);
- Chair and member(s) of the School Plagiarism Committee (noting whether it is a single or joint School Plagiarism Committee). Schools may not necessarily be represented on the joint Committee if its constituent Schools number more than three Schools;
- A list of the referencing / citation system(s) in use in the School, indicating associated programmes, modules or disciplines as appropriate.
- School Procedure: any other information that clarifies how the School will apply the UCD Student Plagiarism Policy for staff and students, (e.g. who notifies students that they have been called to meet the School Plagiarism Committee: the Module Coordinator or the committee).

### Appendix 2: Recommended information to be included in plagiarism referral documents,

#### a) within School and b) School Plagiarism Committee to the Student Discipline Procedure

- School name
- Student name
- Student number
- Programme
- Year of study
- Module(s)
- Information on assessment component including weighting
- Note on grounds of suspicion for plagiarism
- Supporting documentation should include:
  - A copy of the relevant assessment(s) as submitted by the student
  - A copy of any evidence of plagiarism (e.g. original sources or software detection evidence)
- First or subsequent incident (if known)
- Presence of any mitigating or extenuating circumstances (Yes/No information only in the referral documentation – detail should be revealed to relevant personnel only).

### Appendix 3: Draft template email to student in suspected cases of plagiarism

Dear [insert name]

Your assessment [insert detail] in module [insert module code] has been referred to the [insert name] School Plagiarism Committee as a suspected instance of plagiarism.

You are invited to meet the School Plagiarism Committee on [insert date] at [insert time] in [insert location]. You may, if you wish, bring a support person to the meeting with you (e.g. Student Adviser or Students' Union Sabbatical Officer).

If you cannot attend at the above time, please notify us by return email, and we will try to accommodate a change of date, however, if you do not respond to this invitation or do not attend the meeting, it may proceed in your absence, and you will be informed of the outcome in due course.

I attach a copy of the UCD Student Plagiarism Policy for your information.

Yours

[Insert name] [Insert position]

## Appendix 4: Guide to using the AMBeR Plagiarism Tariff

### Guide to using the AMBeR Plagiarism Tariff

#### Context

In order to address the challenges of transparency and consistency in the penalties imposed for student plagiarism in the UK, the AMBeR *Plagiarism Reference Tariff* was designed as a guide to the application of penalties that may be imposed for student plagiarism in Higher Education. It is widely used in the United Kingdom and to a lesser extent in Ireland.

The tariff is available at <https://tinyurl.com/w9qnkb5> and a report on its development is available at <https://www.plagiarism.org/paper/plagiarism-reference-tariff>.

The tariff is not designed to be used to assist in determining whether a student has plagiarised. The purpose of the tariff is to determine an appropriate penalty, once plagiarism has been established.

#### UCD

The AMBeR Plagiarism Tariff was used as a basis for the development of the UCD Tariff. The purpose of the Tariff is to guide those responsible for making decisions with regard to penalties for students who have been found to have plagiarised, i.e. Student Plagiarism Committees, the Registrar or their nominee under the Student Conduct stage of the Student Discipline Procedure and members of Student Disciplinary Committees. The UCD Student Plagiarism Policy permits module coordinators to deal with very minor infringements and poor academic practice through providing advice or arranging that the student receives advice about good writing practice and how to avoid plagiarism (see section 7.1.C. Module coordinators may reflect poor academic practice in the grade awarded, but they do not apply penalties under the policy or the student discipline procedure and therefore will not use the tariff.

While the Tariff is primarily designed to be used for deciding penalties in cases of plagiarism identified in assessments that are graded, an additional tariff table has been included in the proposed UCD Plagiarism Tariff to take account of a) research degree theses, b) PhD Stage Transfer Assessments, or c) final PhD dissertation submission or d) pass/fail assessments, because they do not receive a graded outcome.

#### Notes

The Tariff is a guide for penalties and only takes account of aspects directly associated with plagiarism. Some of its weaknesses that have been highlighted in <https://www.plagiarismtoday.com/2012/08/06/looking-at-the-AMBeR-benchmark-plagiarism-tariff/> are shown below.

1. **Collusion:** The tariff is not designed to deal with collusion, cases of students working inappropriately together on the same assignment. The tariff is not suitable for use in such cases because it is difficult to accurately determine the extent of plagiarism of individual students when they have worked together. Suspected collusion cases may be referred to be dealt with under the Student Discipline Procedure. Reports of alleged misconduct should be supported by documentary evidence. For information on submitting reports of alleged breaches see <https://www.ucd.ie/secca/studentconduct/> - Information For Staff and the [Guide to Completing Student Misconduct Incident Report](#).
2. **Extenuating Circumstances:** The tariff does not take account of extenuating circumstances. The School Plagiarism Committee have the discretion to separately factor-in the presence of mitigating circumstances and may adjust penalties accordingly.
3. **Long-Term Impact:** The tariff does not weigh the long-term impact of any punishment on a student's career, which may be relevant in some professions, depending on the extent of plagiarism.
4. **Different Types of Plagiarism:** The tariff is built for verbatim plagiarism but may not adequately address other types, such as source plagiarism, plagiarism of ideas, etc.
5. **Some Room for Judgment:** Though the tariff works to remove most of the human error out of the process and succeeds, there's still some discussion to be had about what the value of the assignment is and whether there was an attempt to hide the plagiarism. In short, two people can use the same tariff and come up with different scores.

#### Development of a UCD Plagiarism Tariff based on the AMBeR model

- The AMBeR Plagiarism Tariff scoring system is shown on page 2; scoring does not take place until after a decision has been made that plagiarism has taken place.

- The AMBeR Plagiarism Tariff penalty system is shown on page 3.
- The proposed UCD Plagiarism penalty system, adapted from the AMBeR tariff is shown on page 4. Penalties noted at the Discipline level are taken from the Student Discipline Procedure.

The original tariff document and associated research report can be found at <https://www.plagiarism.org/paper/plagiarism-reference-tariff>

# 1

## Assign points based on the following criteria

### HISTORY

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

### AMOUNT / EXTENT

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

\* Critical aspects are key ideas central to the assignment

† Some institutions may consider this to be a separate form of academic malpractice

### LEVEL / STAGE

Level 1	<b>70 points</b>
Level 2	<b>115 points</b>
Level 3/Postgraduate	<b>140 points</b>

### VALUE OF ASSIGNMENT

Standard weighting	<b>30 points</b>
Large project (e.g. final year dissertation)	<b>60 points</b>

### ADDITIONAL CHARACTERISTICS

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

### Tariff amended for UCD use (UCD Plagiarism Tariff)

Level	Points	Work submitted for gradable assessment
All	n/a	In all cases where it is determined by the School Plagiarism Committee that plagiarism has taken place a formal verbal or written warning is given, and a record is made contributing to the student's previous history on the UCD Plagiarism Record System. In addition, the committee <u>may</u> apply any of the following penalties as appropriate
School Plagiarism Committee	280-329	Assessment component provisionally awarded NM <sup>11</sup> - resubmission permitted, with a late submission grade penalty <sup>12</sup>
School Plagiarism Committee	330-379	Assessment component provisionally awarded NM - resubmission permitted, with a late submission grade penalty, or Assessment component provisionally awarded NM – resubmission permitted but grade for the resubmitted assessment capped. School Plagiarism Committees may select the capped grade from all passing grades of the Component Grading Scale as deemed appropriate. When capping grades School Plagiarism Committees may wish to limit this to a D- or at the original grade or an adjusted original grade in line with Academic Regulation 4.26 and the Component Grade Scale
School Plagiarism Committee	380-479	Assessment component provisionally awarded NM – resubmission permitted but grade for the resubmitted assessment capped. Direct that the assessment grade is reduced with no opportunity to resubmit. School Plagiarism Committees may select grades from all passing grades of the Component Grading Scale as deemed appropriate.
University Student Discipline Procedure <sup>13</sup>	480-524	Penalties applied under the Student Discipline Procedure are done so at two stages of the process 1) a Student Conduct Meeting and 2) the Student Disciplinary Committee Hearing. Penalties will be applied as appropriate to the circumstances of the case. Cases scoring 525 and above will normally attract more severe penalties, however, the under the Student Discipline Procedure decision-makers have the authority to select penalties following consideration of all circumstances relating to the case. The lists of penalties available under the Student Discipline Procedure are included in full. They include some penalties that are more appropriate for non-academic misconduct which may not be relevant to incidents of plagiarism.
University Student Discipline Procedure	525+	<p><b>1. Student Conduct Meeting</b></p> <p>Penalties available at the Student Conduct Meeting stage are presented section 5.5 of the Student Discipline Procedure. Applicable penalties may be applied in combination.:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Issue a warning.</i></li> <li>• <i>Impose a fine not exceeding €250.</i></li> <li>• <i>Require the respondent to pay for, or contribute towards making good any damage or loss they have caused.</i></li> <li>• <i>In the case of academic breaches, reduction of an assessment component grade (assessment where breach occurred) up to and including the application of No Grade (NM).</i></li> <li>• <i>In the case of plagiarism, referred by a School Plagiarism Committee, reduction of a grade up to and including the application of No Grade (NM) <u>for the module</u> where the breach has occurred.</i></li> </ul>

<sup>11</sup> In Academic Regulations the grade “NM” means *No grade - work submitted did not merit a grade*

<sup>12</sup> See [Late Submission of Coursework Policy](#).

<sup>13</sup> Penalties available under the [Student Discipline Procedure](#) are set out in full in section s 5.5 and 7. All penalties remain available to Student Disciplinary Committee

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In addition to the penalties above, a respondent may be required to undertake an activity / action intended to satisfy the University that the respondent understands the consequences of their conduct and learns from the experience</li> </ul> <p><b>2. Student Disciplinary Committee Hearing Stage</b></p> <p><i>Student Disciplinary Committee may impose any of the penalties available at the Student Conduct Meeting stage of the process, and any of the following penalties, either separately or in combination as appropriate to the breach or nature of the breach. Penalties are taken from section 7 of the Student Discipline Procedure</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A written reprimand;</li> <li>• A fine not exceeding €1000;</li> <li>• Reduction of a component assessment grade or module grade up to and including the application of No Grade (NM) for the module;</li> <li>• exclusion from sittings of examinations for a specified period;</li> <li>• withhold any academic award, scholarship or prize including on a permanent basis;</li> <li>• require the reparation of any damage or loss caused, either to the University or to any of its members of staff or students or members of the public;</li> <li>• suspension from accessing specific University facilities;</li> <li>• permanent exclusion from accessing specific University facilities;</li> <li>• suspension from a UCD Residence;</li> <li>• terminate licence to reside at a UCD Residence;</li> <li>• suspension from the University for a specified period, or until such time as any requirements laid down by the Committee such as payment of a fine or the restitution of damage or loss are fulfilled;</li> <li>• permanent expulsion from the University.</li> </ul> <p>In addition to the penalties above, a student may be required to complete an activity / action intended to satisfy the University that a student understands the consequences of their actions. The Committee may in exceptional cases, having regard to all the circumstances of the case, decide not to impose any penalty.</p>
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Level	Points	Work submitted for Pass/Resubmit/Fail assessments, including Stage Transfer Assessments and Research Degree Dissertations
All	n/a	In all cases where it is determined that plagiarism has taken place a formal verbal or written warning is given, and a record is made contributing to the student's previous history on the UCD Plagiarism Record System. In addition, the committee may apply any of the following penalties as appropriate:
School	280-479	Revise, repeat or resubmission of the assessment permitted
Discipline*	479+	An appropriate penalty is taken from within the Discipline range of penalties

## Version

Version	Approval Date	Summary of Changes	Approved By
1	13 October 2005	First Version	Academic Council
2	19 March 2020	Draft updated (i) following development of a UCD definition of plagiarism, (ii) to update the policy and provide more detailed arrangements; (iii) to ensure consistency in the processes for managing cases of plagiarism between and across Schools, iv) to link to a University Plagiarism Tariff, and (v) to reflect establishment of a new Student Appeals Procedure.	Academic Council Executive Committee
3	18 May 2020	Draft updated to include reference to Section 43A of the Qualifications and Quality Assurance Act (Education and Training) (Amendment) Act 2019.	Academic Council Executive Committee
4	25 June 2020	Inclusion of additional text relating the Plagiarism Record System.	Academic Council Executive Committee
6	3 June 2021	Policy updates proposed by ACCSCC following one year of operation of the revised policy. Revisions are based on feedback from policy users and are intended to provide additional procedural detail and guidance for policy users. Revisions have been made to the following sections: 2.6 (Student's responsibility), 5.2.3 and 6 (Categories of Plagiarism), 7.1d (School Plagiarism Investigating Procedure), 7.2 (Referral to School Plagiarism Committee), 7.3,7.3.5 (School Plagiarism Committee) and 8.4 (Appeals to School Plagiarism Committee outcomes).	Academic Council Executive Committee
7	26 May 2022	Updates proposed by ACCSCC based on feedback from chairs of School Plagiarism Committees.	Academic Council Executive Committee
8	19 January 2023	Amendment to section 6b of the policy to align with section 7.3.5b(ii).	Academic Council Executive Committee