GMIT

INSTITIÚID TEICNEOLAÍOCHTA NA GAILLIMHE-MAIGH EO
GALWAY-MAYO INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

Policy on Plagiarism

As approved by the
Academic Council on 18 June 2012
and by the Governing Body on 28 June 2012

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1   CONTEXT

The purpose of this policy is to foster and maintain a culture of honesty and academic integrity in Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology. All staff and students have an obligation to act in an ethical manner, consistent with the requirements of academic integrity.

The aims of this document are to provide a definition of plagiarism and to outline the Institute's policy and procedures for dealing with alleged or suspected plagiarism. This policy applies to all registered students of GMIT and to all academic work (i.e. assignments, theses, projects, presentations, products, assessments, examinations, etc.) undertaken in all disciplines in the Institute. It is the requirement of staff and students to inform themselves of the content of this policy.

All cases of alleged or suspected plagiarism will be reported to the Registrar and dealt with under this Policy.

This Policy on Plagiarism shall be reviewed within the lifetime of each Academic Council (every three years) and updated when required.

2   DEFINITION

Plagiarism is a serious academic offence. It is the passing off of someone else's work as one's own, and is cheating. It is a form of theft of intellectual property[1].

If an act of plagiarism involves more than one student, all parties are considered equally responsible.

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[1] Intellectual Property (IP) refers to creations of the mind: inventions, literary and artistic works, and symbols, names, images, and designs. IP is divided into two categories: a) Industrial property: which includes inventions (patents), trademarks, industrial designs, and geographic indications of source; and b) Copyright: which includes literary and artistic works such as novels, poems and plays, films, musical works, artistic works such as drawings, paintings, photographs and sculptures, and architectural designs. (WIPO 2004)

Plagiarism includes (among other things):

- The unacknowledged paraphrasing or use of other people's words or ideas as if they were one's own.
- The non-acknowledgement of sources.
- Unauthorized copying of another person's work.
- Unauthorised collaboration in an assignment or piece of work.
- Presenting work which has been produced collaboratively as one's own individual work.
- The procurement or sourcing, the recruitment of others to produce or source, and/or the passing off as one's own of any material from electronic or other sources.
- Unacknowledged copying of art or design work.
- Submitting one's own work without declaration of sources and references, or the falsification of references.
- The use of restricted or confidential information in an assignment or piece of work.
- Any of the above, in publication, prototype, or public presentation.

Cases of plagiarism can be unintentional and may arise through poor academic practice. Under GMIT policy this, nonetheless, constitutes a breach of academic integrity and is required to be investigated, evaluated, and dealt with appropriately.

3   PREVENTION

The Institute commits to a pro-active approach to the prevention of plagiarism through the development of good academic practice.

The advancement of knowledge and the development of concepts, ideas, artefacts and products are core aspects of what we do at GMIT. This also includes research in all its facets: thesis writing, laboratory work, report writing, the development of software, and the creation and design of artistic objects. It is the Institute's aim to inspire and encourage students on their path to becoming professionals by providing a positive learning environment and by cultivating academic trust between staff and students.

A two-pronged strategy has been adopted: a) A clear framework for the prosecution of plagiarism cases (as set out in this policy) is provided; b) Guidelines and aids are to be developed to assist in the avoidance of plagiarism.

Preventative measures include (among other things):

- Referral to this Policy in the assessment instructions to be provided to students.

- Provision, by the Institute, of training in the practices of referencing and citation and in the use of source material(s).

- Provision and maintenance, by the Institute, of a webpage containing a referencing guide, guidelines for writing essays and reports and links to plagiarism detection software and online tutorials.

- Requirement on all students, in respect of all work submitted, to include a plagiarism disclaimer declaring that the work has been completed in accordance with GMIT's Policy on Plagiarism. The form, containing the recommended wording, is included in the Appendix.

- Provision, on an annual basis, of staff training (Continuous Professional Development) in assessment design and formulation. There is a requirement for new staff to avail of training in this area during their first year of employment.

4   PROCEDURES

All allegations or suspicions of plagiarism are prosecuted by the Registrar.

A record of all cases of plagiarism upheld shall be registered on the Institute's centralised database of plagiarism offences. The access to this database shall be restricted to the Registrar's Office. The database shall be maintained in accordance with policies and procedures currently observed by the Disciplinary Committee.

The Registrar shall ensure consistency in the handling of all cases of plagiarism across the Institute.

4.1 Detection

When plagiarism is alleged or suspected:

1. The member(s) of the academic staff concerned shall contact the student(s) to inform him/her/them that plagiarism is alleged or suspected and that the Institute Policy on Plagarism will be automatically invoked.

2. The Head(s) of Department shall be informed in writing by the member(s) of the academic staff concerned of the incident of alleged or suspected plagiarism. The form shall be accompanied by supporting documentation, i.e. substantiating example(s) of the alleged or suspected plagiarism.

3. The Head of Department(s) shall invite the student(s) to furnish a written response regarding the alleged plagiarism.

4.2 Prosecution

1. The Head(s) of Department shall seek confirmation from the Registrar's office as to whether previous cases of plagiarism involving the student(s) concerned have been upheld. Previous infractions will have a bearing on the severity of the penalty recommendation.

2. The Head(s) of Department with the lecturer(s) shall recommend a penalty should the allegation or suspicion be upheld or admitted to by the student concerned.

3. All documentation shall be sent directly to the Registrar, who convenes the Disciplinary Committee.

4. Where a complaint or suspicion of plagiarism is upheld by the Disciplinary Committee or admitted to by the student concerned, minor penalties (see Section 5) proposed in non-award stages may be ratified by the Disciplinary Committee.

5. In all other cases (award stages and/or recommendation of major penalties) where a complaint or suspicion of plagiarism is upheld by the Disciplinary Committee or admitted to by the student concerned, the standard procedures for Disciplinary Committee hearings shall apply, as outlined in the Code of Student Conduct.

6. All parties involved (student(s), reporting member(s) of the academic staff, Head(s) of Department, Head of College/Centre, and Registrar) shall receive a report on the outcome of the process. This shall include the final ruling and any penalty imposed.

5   PENALTIES

In cases of alleged or suspected plagiarism, any of the penalties from the list below may be recommended should the allegation or suspicion be upheld or admitted to by the student concerned.

Where a complaint or suspicion of plagiarism is upheld or admitted to, the Disciplinary Committee shall impose penalties on a case-by-case basis, taking account of previous infractions where such have occurred.

Any of the following penalties shall be imposed, either separately or in combination where appropriate:

Minor Penalties:

1. A reprimand (a verbal or written warning).

2. A zero mark with provision for a repeat attempt/resubmission. Repeat/ resubmission will be considered as a second attempt and the assessment mark will be capped at the minimum pass mark.

3. A zero mark for the assignment with no opportunity to repeat/resubmit in the current academic year.

Major Penalties:

1. A zero mark for the full module, irrespective of the percentage allocation and credit weighting of the assessment which was plagiarised.

2. Exclusion from assessments and/or examinations for a specified period, potentially resulting in the temporary suspension of academic progression.

3. Suspension from the programme.

4. Expulsion from the Institute.

5. Deprivation of award.

6   APPEALS PROCESS

The decision of the Disciplinary Committee may be appealed to the Appeals Subcommittee of the Governing Body within two weeks from the date of issue of the decision. Any of the student(s), reporting member(s) of the academic staff, Head(s) of Department, and Head of College/Centre involved in the particular case may lodge an appeal.

The standard procedure for an appeal to the Governing Body Appeals Subcommittee shall apply as outlined in the Code of Student Conduct.

All parties involved shall receive a report from the Governing Body Appeals Subcommittee on the outcome of the appeals process. This shall include the final ruling and any penalty imposed.

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8 APPENDIX

Plagiarism Disclaimer - Lecturer's Report on Alleged Plagiarism

PLAGIARISM DISCLAIMER

STUDENT NAME: ....

STUDENT NUMBER: ....

PROGRAMME: ....

YEAR: ....

MODULE: ....

LECTURER: ....

ASSIGNMENT TITLE: ....

DUE DATE: ....

DATE SUBMITTED: ....

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: ....

I understand that plagiarism is a serious academic offence, and that GMIT deals with it according to the GMIT Policy on Plagiarism.

I have read and understand the GMIT Policy on Plagiarism and I agree to the requirements set out therein in relation to plagiarism and referencing. I confirm that I have referenced and acknowledged properly all sources used in preparation of this assignment. I understand that if I plagiarise, or if I assist others in doing so, that I will be subject to investigation as outlined in the GMIT Policy on Plagiarism.

I understand and agree that plagiarism detection software may be used on my assignment. I declare that, except where appropriately referenced, this assignment is entirely my own work based on my personal study and/or research. I further declare that I have not engaged the services of another to either assist in, or complete this assignment.

Signed: ....

Date: ....
Please note: Students MUST retain a hard/soft copy of all assignments.

LECTURER'S REPORT ON ALLEGED PLAGIARISM

STUDENT NAME: .... STUDENT ID NO: ....

PROGRAMME TITLE: .... YEAR/STAGE: ....

MODULE TITLE: ....

ASSIGNMENT TITLE: .... OR,

EXAMINATION SESSION: ....

EXAMINATION DATE: ....

I present the following evidence of alleged plagiarism (additional pages may be appended if required):

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Signed: .... Date: ....
Lecturer

Signed: .... Date: ....
Head of Department