



## **Policy on Plagiarism**

As approved by Academic Council on 17<sup>th</sup> June 2019

and by the

Governing Body on 29<sup>th</sup> August 2019

**Document Location**

## Revision History

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Version Number/ Revision Number	Revision Date	Summary of Changes	Changes marked
1.1	June 2019	Addition of Inappropriate editing/proofreading to policy and plagiarism penalty grid. Reference to similarity report OR evidence of plagiarism. Update of section on retaining and use of reports of plagiarism. Addition of Appendix 1 (Examples of Plagiarism), Appendix 4 (Lecturer's Report on Alleged Plagiarism) and Appendix 5 (Sample Lecturer's Report). Further clarification on penalty grid that % does not relate to similarity report.	

## Consultation History

Version Number/ Revision Number	Consultation Date	Names of Parties in Consultation	Summary of Changes
		Working Group	
		Academic Council	

## Approval

This document requires the following approvals:

Name	Title	Date
	Academic Council	17 <sup>th</sup> June 2019
	Governing Body	29 <sup>th</sup> August 2019

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# 1 Purpose

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 principle 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 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.

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 the act of copying, including or directly quoting from the work of another without adequate acknowledgement, in order to obtain benefit, credit or gain. Plagiarism may also take place when a third party's proof reading of another's work involves the correction of the student's work rather than identification of spelling/grammatical errors. Whether plagiarism is intentional (deliberate lack of acknowledgement of someone else's work) or unintentional (genuine lack of understanding of paraphrasing and referencing requirements) it is a breach of policy and is regarded as an academic offence. Plagiarism may be committed unintentionally; it is defined by the act not the intention. Plagiarism can apply to many materials, such as words, ideas, images, information, data, approaches or methods. Sources of plagiarism can include books, journals, reports, websites, essay mills, another student, or another person. Examples of plagiarism can be seen in appendix 1.

### 3 Description

All work submitted by students for assessment, for publication or for presentation, is accepted on the understanding that it is their own work and contains their own original contribution, except where explicitly referenced using the accepted norms and formats of the appropriate academic discipline.

Plagiarism can arise through poor academic practice or ignorance of accepted norms of the academic discipline. Schools should ensure that resources and education around good academic practice is available to students at all levels.

Cases in which students facilitate others to copy their work shall also be subject to the procedures outlined here.

Plagiarism includes (among other things):

- Unacknowledged paraphrasing or use of other people's words or ideas as if they were one's own.
- 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.
- 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.
- Unacknowledged reuse of software or hardware
- Any of the above, in publication, prototype, or public presentation.

Inappropriate editing/proof-reading by a third party. Proof reading by a third party, excluding supervisors of undergraduate and post graduate theses, should be limited to advice regarding grammar and structure; and should not involve writing or rewriting of any text or other parts of assignments (creation of graphs, diagrams, schematics, PowerPoint presentations). While proof

reading by supervisors of undergraduate and post graduate theses can also include advice on the content of dissertations, proof reading should also be limited to advice on grammar, content and structure, with minimum actual rewriting of text bar as a demonstrative purpose.

## 4 Prevention

The Institute commits to a proactive 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.

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), and the use of plagiarism detection software.
- Provision and maintenance, by the Institute, of online material on the GMIT library website, containing a referencing guide, guidelines for writing essays and reports and online tutorials.
- The Plagiarism Penalty Grid (appendix 2) will be made available to all students.
- 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 (appendix 3), and is available to download from the student portal. This disclaimer form is also available from Moodle for electronic submission.
- 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.
- This policy, along with all QA policies, is available on the GMIT website.

## 5 Procedures

### *Informal*

A member of teaching staff who suspects plagiarism should speak with their HOD about the case. An example of an informal response would be for the lecturer to provide the student with formative feedback.

### *Formal*

If a staff member decides to formally report an alleged case of plagiarism, a short report (Appendix 4) shall be prepared including the similarity report generated by the plagiarism detection software and the completed penalty grid (an example of a completed penalty grid is contained in appendix 5) along with any further evidence for suspecting plagiarism. This report should be forwarded to the HOD.

The HOD shall conduct an initial investigation of the alleged plagiarism, to determine if there is a case to be made. If the HOD concludes that there is no case of plagiarism, the reporting member of staff will be notified, with a clear statement of the reasons for the decision.

If the HOD decides that the case is one of plagiarism, he/she will make an assessment of the case reviewing the material provided by the lecturer (step 1).

If the points, according to the penalty grid, are in the lower two bands (up to 379) the HOD may conduct an informal interview with the student to discuss the alleged case. If the HOD is satisfied that the case exists, an appropriate penalty will be selected from the grid (step 2). The student and staff member will be notified of the outcome.

If the points according to the penalty grid, are 525+, the HOD should refer the case to the Registrar to bring to the disciplinary committee, in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. The penalty grid points and their calculation should be submitted to the Registrar, and subsequently to the Disciplinary Committee, if relevant.

In all other cases (points in the bands 380-524), the student will be invited to attend an interview with the HOD and an additional member of staff. The invitation may be by email or letter, and will include an explanation of the purpose of the meeting, including a copy of the marked-up piece of work. The student may be accompanied at the interview by either a family member, a fellow student or a member of the Students' Union. The additional member of staff will be a nominee of the HOD.

Where a student does not engage with the process, by not responding or by refusing to attend an interview, the case will be referred to the Head of School with a recommendation for penalty provided by the Head of Department.

At the interview, the student will be given a clear explanation of what has been alleged, shown a copy of his/her work, given the opportunity to justify the work and be invited to admit or deny responsibility.

Following the interview, and in the event that the student denies responsibility, if the HOD is satisfied that a case exists, an appropriate penalty will be selected from the grid (step 2). After a penalty has been decided, the HOD will perform a fairness check to consider the impact of the penalty on the student's overall performance. If the impact is incommensurate with the offence, the HOD may choose to adjust the penalty. In all cases, the student will be notified by the HOD, in writing, of the decision and any penalty imposed.

The HOD will write a report, recording the decision and any penalty, which will be retained in the School Office to be used to determine if a second or subsequent offence has occurred. A copy of the report

(with the student's name and number redacted) will be sent to the Registrar's Office to be used for statistical purposes.

The student will have the option to appeal the decision of the HOD to his/her Head of School or decisions made by the Head of School to the Registrar.

The Registrar will conduct occasional audits of reports submitted to ensure consistency of application of this policy.

#### **5.1 Procedures of the Disciplinary Committee**

Alleged cases of plagiarism referred to the Registrar will be heard by the Disciplinary Committee.

The composition and procedures of the Disciplinary Committee as outlined in the Code of Student Conduct will apply.

**5.2** The Registrar will brief the President on cases of plagiarism heard by the Disciplinary Committee.



## APPENDIX 1 Examples of Plagiarism

Below is an original excerpt from a recently published paper. References are highlighted in yellow for clarity:

Global aquaculture seafood production was worth an estimated US\$232 billion in 2016 (FAO, 2018). Due to the depletion of fish stocks and subsequent quota restrictions, the proportion of seafood produced through aquaculture is predicted to rise considerably (FAO, 2018). At the same time, consumers have become more food conscious seeking traceability of produce (El Sheikha and Montet, 2016, Tamm et al., 2016, Stawitz et al., 2017). Traceability tools exist for agricultural (Ali et al., 2014, Sardina et al., 2015) and finfish produce (Wang et al., 2018) based on analytical techniques such as compound specific isotopic analyses and in particular, genetic approaches. At present, no scientifically based system currently exists to trace farmed shellfish produce to its source (Leal et al., 2015).

Below is an example plagiarises the original text above as it is verbatim or near verbatim. References are highlighted in yellow for clarity, with plagiarised text highlighted in red.

<sup>1</sup> Global aquaculture seafood production was worth an estimated US\$232 billion in 2016 (FAO, 2018). Due to the reduction of fish stocks and subsequent quota restrictions, the proportion of seafood produced through aquaculture is projected to rise considerably (FAO, 2018). Simultaneously, <sup>1</sup> consumers have become more food conscious seeking traceability of produce (El Sheikha and Montet, 2016, Tamm et al., 2016, Stawitz et al., 2017). Traceability tools exist for agricultural (Ali et al., 2014, Sardina et al., 2015) and fish products (Wang et al., 2018) based on analytical techniques including compound specific isotopic analyses and in particular, genetic approaches. Presently, no scientifically based system currently exists to trace farmed shellfish produce to its source (Leal et al., 2015).

The text below plagiarises the Bennion et al. paper, as although the student has paraphrased the first section, the second section (after the Stawitz et al., 2017 reference) is verbatim or near verbatim. References are highlighted in yellow for clarity, with plagiarised text highlighted in red.

In 2016, the worldwide culture of marine organisms was valued at approximately US\$232 (FAO, 2018). The decrease in the biomass of wild populations of fishes and the resulting quota applied to fisheries has resulted in forecasted increases in the percentage of seafood that will be derived through aquaculture (FAO, 2018) while consumers have concurrently been demanding the right to know where food products have originated (El Sheikha and Montet, 2016, Tamm et al., 2016, Stawitz et al., 2017). While traceability tools exist for both agricultural (Ali et al., 2014, Sardina et al., 2015) and finfish produce (Wang et al., 2018) based on analytical techniques including compound specific isotopic analyses and in particular, genetic approaches. Presently, no scientifically based system currently exists to trace farmed shellfish produce to its source (Leal et al., 2015).

The text below should be considered plagiarism, while the student has appropriately paraphrased the text, they have not referenced the various publications/sources.

In 2016, the worldwide culture of marine organisms was valued at approximately US\$232. The decrease in the biomass of wild populations of fishes and the resulting quota applied to fisheries has resulted in forecasted increases in the percentage of seafood that will be derived through aquaculture while consumers have concurrently been demanding the right to know where food products have. While such provenancing tools are available for both agricultural and fish produce using various methodologies such as compound specific isotopic analyses and more commonly, genetic techniques, no such traceability system is yet available to scientifically identify the rearing location of shellfish from aquaculture.

The example below should be considered plagiarism due to insufficient referencing. While the text is sufficiently paraphrased, only the first section is suitably referenced, while the second section (after the Stawitz et al., 2017 reference) is not referenced. References are highlighted in yellow for clarity, with plagiarised text highlighted in red.

In 2016, the worldwide culture of marine organisms was valued at approximately US\$232 (FAO, 2018). The decrease in the biomass of wild populations of fishes and the resulting quota applied to fisheries has resulted in forecasted increases in the percentage of seafood that will be derived through aquaculture (FAO, 2018) while consumers have concurrently been demanding the right to know where food products have originated (El Sheikha and Montet, 2016, Tamm et al., 2016, Stawitz et al., 2017). While such provenancing tools are available for both agricultural and fish produce using various methodologies such as compound specific isotopic analyses and more commonly, genetic techniques, no such traceability system is yet available to scientifically identify the rearing location of shellfish from aquaculture.

## APPENDIX 2 Plagiarism Penalty Grid<sup>1</sup>

**Step 1:** Assign Cumulative Points based on the following Criteria (see example at the end).

### History

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

### Amount/Extent

Below 5%* OR less than two sentences	80 points
As above but with critical aspects** plagiarised	105 points
Between 5%* and 20% more than two sentences but not more than two paragraphs	105 points
As above but with critical aspects** plagiarised	130 points
Between 20%* and 50% OR more than two paragraphs but not more than five paragraphs	130 points
As above but with <b>critical aspects**</b> plagiarised	160 points
Above 50%* OR more than 5 paragraphs	160 points
Editing by a third party <sup>2</sup>	160 points
Submission purchased from essay mill or ghost-writing service	225 points

*\* Please note the % does not relate to the similarity report generated by the text matching system, but relates to the percentage of the assignment irrespective of format.*

*\*\*Critical aspects are key ideas central to the assignment*

### Level/Stage

1 <sup>st</sup> year	70 points
Undergraduate (not 1 <sup>st</sup> or final year)	115 points
Final year / Postgraduate	140 points

### Value of Assignment

Standard assignment (less than or equal to 2 credits)	30 points
Large project (e.g. final year dissertation, thesis or greater than 2 credits)	115 points

### Additional Characteristics (to be used only in extreme cases)

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

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<sup>1</sup> Source: <http://www.nuigalway.ie/plagiarism/>

<sup>2</sup> A student may ask a third party to identify errors, particularly spelling and grammar, in their work, but may not get their work edited by another.

**Example of calculating a penalty:**

$$\begin{aligned} & \text{History (1<sup>st</sup> time) + Amount/Extent (between 5% and 20%) + Level/Stage (1<sup>st</sup> year) + Value of Assignment (Standard)} \\ & = 100 + 105 + 70 + 30 = 305 \text{ points} \end{aligned}$$

**Step 2:** Award penalties based on the point bands below:

In all cases a formal warning is given and a record made contributing to the students' previous history.

Points	Available Penalties (select one)
280 – 329	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• No further action beyond formal warning</li><li>• Assignment awarded 0% - resubmission required, with no penalty on mark</li></ul>
330 – 379	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• No further action beyond formal warning</li><li>• Assignment awarded 0% - resubmission required, with no penalty on mark</li><li>• Assignment awarded 0% - resubmission required but mark capped or reduced<sup>1</sup></li></ul>
380 – 524	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Assignment awarded 0% - resubmission but mark capped or reduced</li><li>• Assignment awarded 0% - no opportunity to resubmit.</li></ul>
525 +	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Case referred to Disciplinary Committee</li></ul>

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1. Normally, marks will be capped at the pass mark for the assignment.

## APPENDIX 3 Plagiarism Disclaimer



### Disclaimer Form

For Individual Work

For Group Work

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

### **Plagiarism Disclaimer**

Student Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Student Number(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Programme: \_\_\_\_\_

Year: \_\_\_\_\_

Module: \_\_\_\_\_

Lecturer: \_\_\_\_\_

Assignment Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Due Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Submitted: \_\_\_\_\_

Additional Information: \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

*I/We understand and agree that plagiarism detection software may be used on my assignment.*

I/We declare that, except where appropriately referenced, this assignment is entirely my own work based on my personal study and/or research. I/we further declare that I/we have not engaged the services of another to either assist in, or complete this assignment. Where such services are legally allowed and encouraged I/we have acknowledged same in this assignment.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# APPENDIX 4 Lecturer's Report on Alleged Plagiarism



## LECTURER'S REPORT ON ALLEGED PLAGIARISM

STUDENT NAME: ..... STUDENT ID NO: .....  
 PROGRAMME TITLE: ..... YEAR/STAGE: .....  
 CREDIT WEIGHTING OF THE ASSIGNMENT: \_\_\_\_\_ MODULE CREDITS: \_\_\_\_\_  
 MODULE TITLE: .....  
 ASSIGNMENT TITLE: ..... **OR,**  
 EXAMINATION SESSION: ..... EXAMINATION DATE: .....

Mark awarded for assignment		Plagiarism Detection software %	
Plagiarism amount/extent			
Sources			
Plagiarism Penalty Grid Calculation	History		Level/Stage
	Amount/Extent		Value of Assignment
	<b>Total Points</b>		
Consequence(s) of penalty			
Lecturer Recommendation			
HOD Decision			

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

# APPENDIX 5 Example Lecturer's Report



## LECTURER'S REPORT ON ALLEGED PLAGIARISM

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

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

CREDIT WEIGHTING OF THE ASSIGNMENT: \_\_\_\_\_ MODULE CREDITS: \_\_\_\_\_

MODULE TITLE: .....

ASSIGNMENT TITLE: ..... **OR,**

EXAMINATION SESSION: .....EXAMINATION DATE: .....

Mark awarded for assignment		57%	Plagiarism Detection software %	62%
Plagiarism amount/extent		50% + and more than 5 paragraphs		
Sources one, classmate. Assignments 47% similar to each other				
Plagiarism Penalty Grid Calculation	History	100	Level/Stage	140
	Amount/Extent	160	Value of Assignment	30
	<b>Total Points</b>	430		
Consequence(s) of penalty Students current CA mark will reduce from 52% to 43%. 75% of module CA (100% CA module) completed				
Lecturer Recommendation Assignment awarded 0%, no option to resubmit. Lecturer meet student and discuss, including highlighting module mark now weak with only one assignment remaining				
HOD Decision				

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