

## Guide to using the UCD Plagiarism Tariff

**NOTE: This document should be read with the Student Academic Misconduct Procedure**

To enhance transparency and consistency in the application of academic penalties following incidents of plagiarism UCD introduced a Plagiarism Tariff in 2020. The AMBeR Plagiarism Tariff<sup>1</sup> was used as a basis for the development of the UCD Plagiarism 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 Academic Integrity Committees, the Registrar or their nominee under the Student Conduct Meeting stage of the Student Discipline Procedure and members of Student Disciplinary Committees. The Student Academic Misconduct Procedure permits module coordinators to deal with minor errors, inconsistencies and infringements as poor academic practice through providing advice or arranging that the student receives advice about good writing practice and how to avoid plagiarism (see section 5.1.1 of the Procedure). Module coordinators may reflect poor academic practice in the grade awarded, but they cannot apply academic misconduct penalties under the Student Academic Misconduct Procedure and therefore will not use the Tariff.

While the Tariff is specifically designed to be used for deciding penalties in cases of plagiarism identified in assessments that are graded, an additional table has been included in the UCD Plagiarism Tariff to take account of research degree theses, PhD Stage Transfer Assessments, and final PhD dissertation submission.

The UCD Plagiarism Tariff is a guide for penalties and only takes account of aspects directly associated with plagiarism. It is not suitable for other categories of academic misconduct. **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](#).

1. **Mitigating and Aggravating Circumstances:** The tariff does not take account of mitigating or aggravating circumstances. School Academic Integrity Committee consider the presence of mitigating or aggravating factors and may adjust penalties accordingly.
  2. **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.
  3. **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.
  4. **Unauthorised use of generative AI:** The tariff is not suitable for guiding penalties in relation to incidents of unauthorised use of generative artificial intelligence due to the difficulty in accurately assigning scores for the amount / extent of work in the assessment that has not been authored by the student.
  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.
- The scoring system is shown on page 2; scoring should be undertaken after the decision has been made that plagiarism has taken place.
  - The penalty table is shown on page 3. Penalties are drawn from the Student Academic Misconduct Procedure and the Student Discipline Procedure.

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<sup>1</sup> 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 AMBeR 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>

# 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 <sup>†</sup>	<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**

## UCD Plagiarism Tariff

The table below is used to guide decisions relating to the application of penalties where School Academic Integrity Committees have determined plagiarism has occurred. The Student Academic Misconduct Procedure sets out all of the academic penalties available to School Academic Integrity Committees in section 5.3.6 and should be read with this guidance. The options detailed in each band of scoring can be applied to all work that is graded using the UCD Component Grading Scale, [Academic Regulations 4.22](#).

**Resits:** Academic Regulations require that resit assessments are graded with pass/fail. This means that the options outlined below cannot be applied where plagiarism occurs in a resit assessment.

### Section 5.3.6.b v states:

Where an assessment component is graded Pass / Fail or where academic misconduct occurs in a resit assessment, School Academic Integrity Committees may apply an 'NM' grade for assessment components and 'NM(R)' for resit attempts, or consider referral to the Student Discipline Procedure.

Level	Points	Work submitted for graded assessments.
All	n/a	In all cases where it is determined by the School Academic Integrity Committee that plagiarism has taken place a formal verbal or written warning is given, and the incident is recorded on the Academic Misconduct Record System. In addition, the committee <u>may</u> apply any of the following penalties as appropriate
School Academic Integrity Committee	280-329	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Permit the student to resubmit the assessment component without an academic misconduct penalty.</li> <li>• Permit the student to resubmit the assessment component and reduce the grade achieved in the resubmitted work by a maximum of two grade points.</li> </ul> <p>Example grade point reductions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ One grade point: reduced from B- to C+</li> <li>○ Two grade points: reduced from B- to C.</li> </ul>
School Academic integrity Committee	330-379	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Permit the student to resubmit the assessment component and reduce the grade achieved in the resubmitted work by a specified number of two or more grade points.</li> <li>• Permit the student to resubmit the assessment component and apply a 'cap' on the grade of the resubmitted work, i.e. apply an upper limit on grade that can be achieved in the resubmitted work.</li> </ul> <p><b>Capping Grades</b>            Grades can be capped at any passing grades of the Component Grading Scale (See Academic Regulation 4.22). Resubmitted work should be graded as normal but cannot be awarded a grade higher than the capped grade set by the School Academic Integrity Committee.</p>

School Committee	380-479	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Permit the student to resubmit the assessment component and apply a 'cap' on the grade of the resubmission, i.e. place an upper limit of the grade that can be achieved in the resubmitted work.</li> <li>• Reduce the grade and do not permit the student to resubmit the assessment component. The grade may be reduced to any passing grade from the Component Grading Scale, however, the School Academic Integrity Committee may wish to apply the lowest passing grade of D- to reflect the higher Tariff score.</li> </ul> <p><b>Capping Grades</b>  Grades can be capped at any passing grades of the Component Grading Scale (See Academic Regulation 4.22). Resubmitted work should be graded as normal but cannot be awarded a grade higher than the capped grade set by the School Academic Integrity Committee.</p>
University Student Discipline Procedure <sup>2</sup>	480-524	<p>Penalties applied under the Student Discipline Procedure can be applied at two stages of the process 1) at a Student Conduct Meeting and 2) by a Student Disciplinary Committee. 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.</p> <p><b>1. Student Conduct Meeting</b>  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 misconduct reduction of an assessment component grade (assessment where academic misconduct occurred) up to and including the application of No Merit Grade (NM). Reduction of an assessment component grade may include capping of a grade for any remediation attempts taken by the respondent, up to and including grades for repeat attempts at an assessment component(s).</i></li> <li>• <i>In the case of academic misconduct reduction of a grade up to and including the application of No Merit Grade (NM) for the module where academic misconduct has occurred. Reduction of the module grade may include capping of a grade for any remediation attempts taken by the respondent, up to and including grades for repeat attempts at a module, where repeat grade scale is normally used.</i></li> <li>• <i>In cases where a reduction of a grade results in a requirement that the respondent repeats the module in which academic misconduct has occurred, the Registrar of their nominee may impose capping of a grade for the repeat attempt of the module. Such a cap may be imposed on a specific assessment</i></li> </ul>
University Student Discipline Procedure	525+	

<sup>2</sup> Penalties available under the [Student Discipline Procedure](#) are set out in full in sections 5.5 and 7. All penalties remain available to Student Disciplinary Committee

		<p>component(s) or an overall module grade. Where a module is not offered the substitute module may be capped in accordance with the repeat grade scale.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disallow the student from taking a resit examination(s) next time a resit assessment is offered, and/ or to require the respondent to repeat the module in full, with or without capping of the repeat attempt grade.</li> <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>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</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 Merit Grade (NM) for the module. Reduction of a component assessment or module grade may include capping of a grade for any remediation attempts taken by the respondent, up to and including grades for repeat attempts at a module, where repeat grade scale is normally used.</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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## Research Degrees

Level	Points	Research Degrees
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 Academic Misconduct 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