

# Student Plagiarism Policy - Process Map for School Investigation Procedure

Academic integrity is an essential value of the University as it underpins all academic activities. Suspected instances of student plagiarism in a module assessment should be reviewed within the School(s)\* and a determination made as to whether the matter may be addressed at School(s) level or whether a referral to the University Discipline Procedure is required.

\* For the purpose of this policy, any academic unit offering modules is referred to as a School

Start / end

Process

Referral

Outcome / decision

Before submission of assessments students receive advice and guidance on correct citation and referencing, on avoiding plagiarism, and on the potential consequences of plagiarism being identified in assessed work.

## Abbreviations

MC (Module Coordinator)  
SPC (School Plagiarism Committee)  
SPA (School Plagiarism Adviser)

An Examiner or MC suspects plagiarism in a student's assessment.  
If the Examiner is not the MC s/he consults the MC.

MC will exercise their judgement when deciding whether incidents can be dealt with directly or referred to the SPC, and may consult with the SPA, if appointed.

Case warrants referral to the School Plagiarism Committee

Case will be dealt with directly by the MC (minor examples of poor academic practice / infringements)

The MC provides, or arranges that the student receives, advice about correct citation and / or refers the student to the UCD supports for advice and guidance on good writing practices and plagiarism avoidance. Such cases of plagiarism may be reflected in the grade awarded by MC using the Component Grade Scale.

The MC refers the case to the SPC and submits a short report outlining the grounds of suspicion, a copy of the piece of work and any supporting evidence.

In line with the School's Plagiarism Protocol, the MC or the SPC advises the student (through UCD email account) that their assessment is under scrutiny as an alleged case of plagiarism and has been referred to the SPC. The report, a copy of the piece of work and any supporting evidence submitted by MC should be included in the correspondence.

**Decision:** Plagiarism has not occurred. The assessment component grade stands. No record is made on the Plagiarism Record System

The School Plagiarism Committee evaluates the case and decides whether plagiarism has taken place or not.

If there was a previous breach, a judgement is made on whether to handle recurrence at School level or whether it should be referred to discipline.

**Decision:** SPC determines that the matter could have been dealt with as a minor infringement or poor academic practise and refers the case back to the MC.

The student is invited by the SPC to discuss the allegation. The correspondence from the SPC should include a copy of the MC's report and any other material that the SPC will rely upon to make its decision. The student is invited to respond to the allegation in accordance with the School's Plagiarism Protocol and is informed of supports available to them such as Student Adviser or an SU Sabbatical Officer. If the student does not respond or attend, following reasonable efforts to accommodate the student, the meeting may proceed in their absence.

**Decision:** plagiarism has taken place

Direct referral (without decision) to Student Discipline Procedure; e.g. serious first instance, or second or subsequent incidence, of plagiarism, or significant plagiarism in heavily weighted assignments.

Extenuating or mitigating circumstances may be considered after the decision has been made.

The student receives a verbal or written warning, is directed on how to receive advice about academic integrity, and a record of the case is made in the Plagiarism Record System. In addition, the SPC may:

- permit the student to re-submit the assessment component, a) incurring a late submission grade penalty, or b) direct that the grade be capped, or c) direct that the grade be reduced\*\* without the opportunity to resubmit the assessment.

\*\*the committee will be guided by a University-approved Tariff

The SPC:  
a) refers the alleged instance, **without decision**, for resolution under the University Student Discipline Procedure.  
b) completes [Student Misconduct Incident Report](#) and submits all material that it relied upon to make its decision. Please refer to the [Guide to completing the report](#).  
c) informs the student of referral via their UCD email address copying the MC  
d) advises the student of the supports available to them  
The facts and outcome of the case are recorded and a case summary added to the Plagiarism Record System.

The student and MC are informed of the outcome (the decision ± penalty) by the SPC. The outcome of the case is recorded on the Plagiarism Record System

The student can appeal an **outcome (decision and/or penalty)** of the SPC to the University Student Appeal Procedure

If a penalty results in a change to a grade that has already been approved by a Programme Examination Board, the Chair of the SPC should request that the MC submits an Exceptional Change of Grade Form to the Chair of Academic Council Committee on Examinations.