



**EUTOPIA WEEK**

European University

**University integrity**

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# The Fundamental Values of Academic Integrity



## Honesty

- Academic communities of integrity advance the quest for truth and knowledge through intellectual and personal honesty in learning, teaching, research, and service.

## Trust

- Academic communities of integrity both foster and rely upon climates of mutual trust. Climates of trust encourage and support the free exchange of ideas which in turn allows scholarly inquiry to reach its fullest potential.

## Fairness

- Academic communities of integrity establish clear and transparent expectations, standards, and practices to support fairness in the interactions of students, faculty, and administrators.

# The Fundamental Values of Academic Integrity



## Respect

- Academic communities of integrity, must showing respect for diverse opinions and ideas across the academic community.

## Responsibility

- Academic communities of integrity rest upon foundations of personal accountability coupled with the willingness of individuals and groups to lead by example, uphold mutually agreed-upon standards, and take action when they encounter wrongdoing

## Courage

- To develop and sustaining communities of integrity, it takes more than simply believing in the fundamental values. Translating the values from talking points into action--standing up for them in the face of pressure and adversity—requires determination, commitment, and courage.

# Student Plagiarism

## Plagiarism

copying from  
someone else's  
creation without  
giving the writer  
his or her due  
credits



- Policies are encouraged at nationally and institutionally level to develop tools in detecting plagiarism and academic dishonesty at bachelor, masters and PhD degree levels.
- In handling allegations of academic misconduct and plagiarism cases, it is required that academic staff act with fairness, consistency, and proportionality.
- However, students first must be supported and encouraged to follow good academic practice and scholarship as a means of avoiding academic misconduct and plagiarism.
- Firstly, there is *no consensus across Europe* and even within countries or institutions on what constitutes plagiarism.
- Secondly, despite the Bologna Process, there are different views about what is *acceptable academic practice* for students at different levels of education – bachelor, masters and PhD.
- Thirdly, there are substantial differences in pedagogic practices and assessment methods that influence expectations on the extent of *scholarly activity* and *critical thinking* in student work.

# Allegation of Plagiarism or Copyright Theft



- In several European countries – the requirement is that when making an allegation of plagiarism or “theft of copyright” – an academic must prove that a student intended to deceive and plagiarised.
- This condition, enshrined as a legal requirement in some EU countries (e.g., Sweden, Germany, and Austria),
- However, for an academic to raise an allegation of student misconduct can be very difficult to provide and present evidence of this nature.
- In many European countries, academics are discouraged from raising cases of plagiarism – sometimes being threatened with dismissal (e.g., in Finland, Italy, and Germany) – such approach leads to genuine cases of plagiarism being either ignored.
- In many cases inadvertent or accidental plagiarism is not highlighted as problematic – students who lack skills and knowledge for writing and research appropriate support must be given to improve their academic practice – ignoring either inadvertent or deliberate plagiarism has implications on academic standards.
- In some European countries, (e.g., France) – view that formal academic writing skills and use of referencing were not necessary for bachelor level students but should only apply at master’s level and above.
- Other countries including (e.g., Finland and Luxembourg) main focus on promoting and enforcing policies and oversight for integrity in research and at doctoral level, with apparently less concern about developing scholarly skills with their undergraduate and master’s students.

## Plagiarism and Poor Academic Practice



- Sweden is by far the only EU country that has national legislation defining policies and procedures for handling cases of misconduct, including accusations of plagiarism in Higher Education (Universitets-och högskolera°det).
- The bureaucracy underlying the associated institutional processes are disproportionate for minor cases and in other cases could prove far too lenient.
- The penalty available to the panel is temporary suspension (maximum 1 year – but often a shorter suspension period was applied), after which time the student was allowed to continue on their course with no further sanctions.
- Assessment based on memorising factual information (e.g., France, Romania, Bulgaria, Poland, and Lithuania) can also encourage and reward plagiarism.
- Memorising factual information — as an approach restrict learning by not allowing students to develop their own voices and scholarly practices in reading, writing, and research during their bachelor degree programs, which leaves them poorly equipped for advanced study and research.



## Academic corruption and corruptive behaviour

- In recent years, almost every country in Europe has suffered from negative publicity in the media with accusations of plagiarism or academic misconduct – researchers, academics, and high-ranking politicians, with many cases documented and progress-tracked through websites, wikis, and blogs in different languages.
- Although people responsible for exposing these cases are often treated with disdain, particularly by colleagues of those targeted – the **whistleblowers** have performed an important role for promoting academic integrity.
- The whistleblowers and the media reporting (e.g., the Netherlands, Denmark, and Germany) had elevated the need for institutions to consider developing policies for academic standards and integrity.
- However, in (Romania, Hungary, and Bulgaria), prominent figures were still in post despite the whistleblowers and the media revelations from about their conduct – the impact on students of such negative role models.

# Corruptive behaviour and buying degrees

- Plagiarism is a complex issue that spans a wide range of academic activity. At one end of the spectrum is poor academic practice, where the plagiarism is inadvertent; at the other end are the deliberate attempts to cheat.
- For example, the purchase of essays through so-called essay mills: organisations that, for a fee (£7,500 for a PhD), will draft bespoke essays that are guaranteed not to be detected by the standard detection software.
- Institutions should aim to develop a culture of academic integrity with the responsibility for embedding that culture lying with academic staff and policy makers as well as students





# Poor Research Practices and Misconduct (Incentives)



- The main motivations for misconduct are job security or reputational.
- As fewer researchers are in tenured positions – more rely on competitive grants to fund both their salaries (researchers know that if they do publish, their careers will be at an end).
- Similarly, PhD students and postdoctoral researchers know that if their research fails to get published (their career is jeopardised).
- Foreign students and postdocs know that a successful research publication in a prominent journal can lead to residency, citizenship and perhaps a tenure-track position. If research fails to produce the hoped-for result will mean they have to return to their home country
- Senior researchers, including those that have job security – have strong incentives to build a reputation by consistently publishing in high-profile journals and be invited to give plenary talks at international meetings.
- Such pressures have not only tempted researchers to fabricate papers, but they have also led some to corrupt the peer-review process, by tricking editors so that they act as referees for their own manuscripts.

# Authorship and the Law

- Being granted rights as an author to sue anyone for breaching your ownership over textual product that you created (as the originator of the work) underpins the existence of plagiarism.
- In England, poets like William Wordsworth were petitioning for individual writers to be granted authorial rights over their creations – as booksellers or individual patrons held proprietary rights over literary works. In the late sixteenth century, the idea emerged that a written text was a unique individual creation.
- The acceptance of individual authorial rights was legislated in the Statute of Anne of 1710 – which conferred an individual who created new “works” in writing or speech, with tangible property rights over the work. The Act opened the door for authors to claim their literary works as property – authors had legal standing to enforce their property rights in court.
- One landmark legal decision was when the great *English poet Alexander Pope sued Edmund Curll* in 1741. This is recognised as the first English case where the new term copyright appeared.
- In this case, the Lord Chancellor, Lord Hardwicke, determined writing a text was “a solitary and selfsufficient act of creation” – it also provided the framework for the idea that the law would recognise the rights of an author as a “solitary genius, writing in isolation”.
- However, today *Stealing and not awarding credit, Ghost and Honorary* – are prevalent
- In particular *Ghost and Honorary* – are in paper without having fulfilled the usual requirements to justify their inclusion, i.e., they have not made a substantial intellectual contribution to a paper – Pharmaceutical companies use *Ghost and Honorary to write papers*, by offer honorary authorships to “opinion leaders” in order to influence clinicians.



# Thank You

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