

# **University Regulations on Plagiarism**

## **Graduate Diplomas and Degrees**

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### **Application of these Regulations**

- 1 These Regulations apply to the presentation of work by a student for evaluation, whether or not for credit, but do not apply to invigilated written examinations.

### **Definition of Plagiarism**

- 2 In these Regulations,  
“plagiarism” means the unacknowledged and unjustified use of the words, ideas or creations of another, including unjustified unacknowledged quotation and unjustified unattributed borrowing;  
“Level 1 plagiarism” means plagiarism which does not meet the definition of Level 2 plagiarism;  
“Level 2 plagiarism” means plagiarism undertaken with the intention of passing off as original work by the plagiariser work done by another person or persons.
- 3 What may otherwise meet the definition of plagiarism may be justified for the purposes of Regulation 2 where the particular unacknowledged use of the words, ideas and creations of another is, by the standards of the relevant

academic discipline, a function of part or all of the object of the work for evaluation whether or not for credit, including without limitation:

- a. The unacknowledged use is required for conformity with presentation standards;
  - b. The task set or undertaken requires producing a result by teamwork for joint credit regardless of the level of individual contribution;
  - c. The task set or undertaken requires the use of an artificial language, such as is the case with computer programming, where the use of unoriginal verbal formulae is essential.
- 4 The fact that a user enjoys the right of use of certain words, ideas and creations as a matter of intellectual property, does not justify their unacknowledged use under Regulations 2 and 3.

### **Other Definitions**

- 5 In these Regulations,  
“BGSR Regulations” means the University of the West Indies Regulations for Graduate Diplomas and Degrees;  
“Campus Co-ordinator” means the Campus Co-ordinator for Graduate Studies and Research.

### **Evidence of Plagiarism**

- 6 In order to constitute evidence of plagiarism under these Regulations, there must be identified as a minimum the passage or passages in the student’s work which is/are considered to have been plagiarised and the passage or passages from which the passages in the student’s work are considered to have been derived.

### **Student Certification**

- 7 When a student submits for examination prepared work under Regulation 1, the student shall sign a statement, in such form as the Board for Graduate Studies and Research may prescribe, that the work submitted is free of plagiarism including unattributed unjustified quotation or paraphrase. The student may utilize electronic vetting to facilitate the assessment and certification. The results of the electronic vetting shall be provided to the Supervisor by the student when the work is submitted to the Supervisor for approval to submit for examination.
- 8 Quotation or paraphrase is attributed for the purpose of Regulation 7 if the writer has indicated that the work is not the writer’s own, even if the source is not identified.

- 9 Absence of certification does not prohibit the University from proceeding with a charge of plagiarism.

**Electronic Vetting for Plagiarism by the University**

- 10 The Campus Coordinator may authorise or direct the Faculty Office, or other authorized body on behalf of the Campus Committee, that the work submitted under Regulation 7 be subjected to further electronic scrutiny in order to verify its freedom from plagiarism before being submitted to the Examiners. The results of the electronic vetting shall be submitted to the Campus Coordinator, the Dean and the Head of Department, and shall be considered in determining whether the University proceeds with submission of the work to the Examiners. The results of such electronic vetting although capable, where the requirements of Regulation 6 are satisfied, of constituting evidence under these Regulations, are not thereby conclusive of any question as to whether or not plagiarism exists.
- 11 Where suspected plagiarism is detected, whether through the procedures outlined in Regulation 10, or whether subsequently during the course of examination, the person(s) detecting the suspected plagiarism, whether the Dean, Head of Department or Examiner, shall:
- a. where there is suspected evidence of Level 1 plagiarism in work which does not constitute a thesis or major project report (defined as the report comprising 25% or more of the total credits for the programme), refer the matter to the Examiners for their consideration as a charge of Level 1 plagiarism under Regulation 12; or
  - b. where there is suspected evidence of Level 1 plagiarism in a thesis or major project report, refer the matter to the Campus Coordinator as a charge of Level 1 plagiarism under Regulation 13; or
  - c. where there is suspected evidence of Level 2 plagiarism, refer the matter to the Campus Coordinator as a charge of Level 2 plagiarism under Regulation 19.

**Level 1 Plagiarism in Work which does not Constitute a Thesis or Major Project Report**

- 12 In work submitted for examination which does not constitute a thesis or major project report under the University Regulations for Graduate Degree and Diplomas, and where the Examiners are satisfied that Level 1 plagiarism has been committed, they shall levy a penalty for the Level 1 plagiarism charged in the form of a reduction in the marks which would have otherwise been awarded. The First Examiner must inform the Campus Registrar of the penalty levied and of the

evidence of plagiarism. When the normal examination process is complete, the Campus Registrar must communicate this information to the student.

### **Level 1 Plagiarism in Theses and Major Project Reports**

- 13 In the case of theses and major project reports, evidence of Level 1 plagiarism must be reported to the Campus Co-ordinator to support a charge of Level 1 plagiarism by the Dean, the Head of Department or an Examiner, where the person making the report considers that Level 1 plagiarism has been committed. Such a report and charge may be made regardless of the outcome of any scrutiny under Regulation 10.
- 14 If the Campus Co-ordinator considers that Level 1 plagiarism has been committed as charged, the Campus Co-ordinator shall return the submitted work to the student for revision and resubmission within a period determined by the Campus Coordinator but which may not exceed one year. The outcome and the penalty levied shall be reported to the Board for Graduate Studies and Research and the University Registrar. The University Registrar shall inform the student of the outcome of the assessment and the penalty levied.

### **Level 1 Plagiarism: Appeals**

- 15 In the case of work which is neither a thesis nor a major project report, a student may appeal against the finding of plagiarism or the penalty levied under Regulation 12 to the Head of Department or, where the Head of Department is the First Examiner who has levied the penalty, to the Dean. Where the same person discharges both the functions of Dean and Head of Department and is also the First Examiner who has levied the penalty, the appeal is to the Campus Co-ordinator.
- 16 In the case of theses and major project reports, the student may appeal to the Board for Graduate Studies and Research from a decision of the Campus Co-ordinator under Regulation 14.
- 17 The Board for Graduate Studies and Research, the Campus Co-ordinator, the Dean or the Head of Department, as the case may be, hearing the appeal, in a Level 1 plagiarism case, may hear the appeal by correspondence. In the case where the Board or person hearing the appeal is not satisfied that there has been plagiarism, or considers that the penalty levied was excessive, they may allow the appeal or remit or reduce the penalty accordingly.
- 18 The Board for Graduate Studies and Research, Campus Co-ordinator, Dean or Head of Department, hearing the appeal, as the case may be, shall report the

outcome of the appeal to the Campus Registrar, who shall advise the student accordingly.

## **Level 2 Plagiarism**

- 19 When a Campus Co-ordinator receives a report of suspected Level 2 plagiarism under Regulation 11c, whether the evidence is in a thesis, a major project report or in work which does not constitute either a thesis or major project report, the Campus Co-ordinator may either:
- a. where not concurring with the identification of evidence of Level 2 plagiarism, communicate with the person(s) reporting the suspected plagiarism, whether the Dean, Head of Department or Examiner, declining to proceed further in relation to the Level 2 proceedings, and shall in addition :
    - i. indicate that the decision is intended to preclude the invocation of the procedures for Level 1 plagiarism; or
    - ii. indicate that the avenue is open for the matter to be treated as a case of suspected Level 1 plagiarism under Regulation 12 in work which does not constitute a thesis or major project report, or as a case of suspected Level 1 plagiarism under Regulation 13 in work which constitutes a thesis or major project report; or
  - b. refer the matter to the University Registrar who shall inform the person(s) reporting the suspected plagiarism and the student that there is a case to be answered, subject to an application under Regulation 20.
- 20 Where the Campus Co-ordinator replies in the terms of Regulation 19a, the Dean, Head of Department or Examiner may apply, no later than the elapse of two complete calendar weeks after the reply has been notified, through the University Registrar to the Chair of the Board for Graduate Studies and Research seeking a reversal of the Campus Co-ordinator's decision.
- 21 The Chair of the Board for Graduate Studies and Research may:
- a. where concurring with the identification of evidence of Level 2 plagiarism, uphold the application in Regulation 20 and treat the case as one which has been referred to the Chair under Regulation 19b; or
  - b. deny the application.
- 22 A denial by the Chair of the Board for Graduate Studies and Research of an application under Regulation 21b is, subject to Regulation 32, conclusive in relation to an allegation of Level 2 plagiarism in the case under consideration.
- 23 A denial by the Campus Co-ordinator under Regulation 19a which is, after the elapse of three complete calendar weeks after the reply has been notified, not the subject of an application under Regulation 20, or a denial by the Chair of the

- Board for Graduate Studies and Research under Regulation 21b, terminates the proceedings on the plagiarism charge, subject to Regulation 32 and save to the extent that the Campus Co-ordinator has ruled otherwise under Regulation 19a.ii.
- 24 Where the matter has been referred under Regulation 19b or an application has been upheld under Regulation 21a, the Chair of the Board for Graduate Studies and Research, at the request of the University Registrar, shall establish a Committee of Inquiry comprising:
- (i) The Chair of the Board for Graduate Studies and Research or his/her nominee.
  - (ii) One Academic Board representative from each campus sitting on the Board for Graduate Studies and Research.
  - (iii) One postgraduate student representative from among those sitting on the Board for Graduate Studies and Research.
- Four members of the Committee including the Chair shall constitute a quorum.
- 25 The Committee of Inquiry is not a court of law but the hearing shall be conducted in accordance with the rules of natural justice. The Committee may summon witnesses to give evidence.
- 26 The Committee of Inquiry reserves the right to have legal representation.
- 27 The student shall be given a written notice from the University Registrar specifying the allegations of the Level 2 plagiarism, along with a copy of all material relevant to the charge and made available to the Committee, at least fourteen days before the hearing of the allegation and within one calendar month of the case first being reported to the Campus Co-ordinator.
- 28 The student shall have a right to appear before the Committee of Inquiry and to be accompanied or represented by a friend or by an attorney-at-law whose expenses will be borne by the student.
- 29 The student shall have the right to ask questions of witnesses, to call his/her own witnesses, to make statements on his/her own behalf, and to make submissions.
- 30 If the student fails to make an appearance before the Committee of Inquiry and does not offer a satisfactory excuse, the Committee of Inquiry may hear the case in the student's absence.
- 31 Where a Committee of Inquiry has been established under Regulation 24, the procedure under these Regulations prevails, subject to Regulation 32, over any other disciplinary proceedings against the student based on the same facts and, without prejudice to Regulation 38. Any other such disciplinary proceedings

- must be terminated, subject to being re-opened to consider a recommendation of the Board for Graduate Studies and Research under Regulation 34b.
- 32 Where other disciplinary proceedings based on the same facts have been completed or have reached the stage of a hearing, whichever comes first, any procedure under these Regulations based on a charge of Level 2 plagiarism shall be terminated.
- 33 i) If the Committee of Inquiry is satisfied, after holding a hearing, that the student has committed Level 2 plagiarism, it shall in making a determination on the severity of the penalty take into consideration:
- a. the circumstances of the particular case;
  - b. the seniority of the student; and
  - c. whether this is the first or a repeated incidence of plagiarism by the student.
- ii) Where a determination on the severity of the penalty has been made, the Committee of Inquiry shall report its conclusions and recommendations to the Board for Graduate Studies and Research which shall:
- a. if the work in which the plagiarism occurred was not a thesis or major project report, fail the student in the assignment and hence the course in which the assignment was submitted, with the option to re-take the course at a time specified by the Board;
  - b. if the work in which the plagiarism occurred was a major project, fail the student in the project report, with the option to re-do and re-submit a project report on a different topic at a time specified by the Board;
  - c. if the work in which the plagiarism occurred was a thesis, either:
    - i find the thesis to be inadequate, requiring re-submission of the revised thesis within eighteen months of the date of notification; or
    - ii fail the thesis, with no allowance for re-submission.
- 34 The Board for Graduate Studies and Research may also, if the Committee of Inquiry so recommends after being satisfied that the student has committed Level 2 plagiarism, either:
- a exclude the student from all further examinations of the University for such period as it may determine; or
  - b recommend to the relevant Academic Board that the student should be dismissed from the University, with or without the possibility of re-entry.
- 35 The decisions taken by the Board for Graduate Studies and Research following receipt of the conclusions and recommendations from the Committee of Inquiry with respect to the outcome of the hearing and the severity of the penalty shall be communicated by the Chair of the Board to the University Registrar who shall inform the student, the Dean, the Head of Department and the Examiners of the decisions taken.

**Clearance on a Charge of Level 2 Plagiarism**

- 36 If the Committee of Inquiry is not satisfied, after holding a hearing, that the student has committed Level 2 plagiarism, it will direct the Campus Co-ordinator to reply to the Dean, the Head of Department, the Examiners and the student, through the University Registrar, advising them of the decision against proceeding further on the charge of Level 2 plagiarism, and may in addition:
- a. indicate that the decision is intended to preclude the invocation of the procedures for Level 1 plagiarism; or
  - b. indicate that the avenue is open to pursue the matter as a case of Level 1 plagiarism under Regulation 12 in work which does not constitute a thesis or major project report, or as a case of Level 1 plagiarism under Regulation 13 in work which constitutes a thesis or major project report.
- 37 A determination of the Committee of Inquiry under Regulation 33 terminates the Level 2 plagiarism proceedings and also precludes any further Level 1 plagiarism proceedings except as indicated by the Committee of Inquiry under Regulation 36b.

**Level 2 Plagiarism: Appeal to the Senate**

- 38 A student may appeal to the Senate from any decision of the Board for Graduate Studies and Research under Regulations 33 and 34a and of Academic Board under Regulation 34b.

**Delegation by Dean or Head of Department**

- 39 The Dean or Head of Department, as the case may be, may generally or in a particular instance delegate that officer's functions under these Regulations.

**Supervisor's Conflict of Interest**

- 40 Any person who has at any time been a supervisor of work in relation to which an issue of plagiarism is being considered under these Regulations must withdraw from performing any functions under these Regulations other than those of supervisor and examiner.

**Amendment of the Regulations for Graduate Diplomas and Degrees**

- 41 These Regulations on Graduate Student Plagiarism are an integral part of the University of the West Indies Regulations for Graduate Diplomas and Degrees, and are available as an Appendix to the University of the West Indies Regulations on Graduate Diplomas and Degrees.