

**08.11**

**POLICY ON THE USE OF PLAGIARISM  
DETECTION SOFTWARE**

## Policy on the Use of Plagiarism Detection Software

### 1. Introduction

This policy aims to provide staff and students of Cardiff Metropolitan University with guidelines on the use of Plagiarism Detection Software (PDS), such as Turnitin. This policy is to be implemented in conjunction with the Unfair Practice Procedure, which can be found within the Academic Handbook

[http://www.cardiffmet.ac.uk/registry/academichandbook/Documents/AH1\\_08\\_01.pdf](http://www.cardiffmet.ac.uk/registry/academichandbook/Documents/AH1_08_01.pdf)

Submission of an assessment to the University's PDS does not imply that Unfair Practice is suspected in that assessment.

The University recognises that PDS can be used as a formative tool for developing academic writing skills, allowing students to upload draft versions of their work to be checked prior to the submission deadline. Staff can access training provided by making a request to the Learning and Teaching Development Unit. LTDU's Guidance on Turnitin can be found at the following link:

<https://tsr.cardiffmet.ac.uk/Units/LTDU/Documents/Good%20Practice%20Guides/Guidance%20on%20Turnitin.pdf>

### 2. Submission of Work for Taught Degrees

The University encourages electronic submission of assignments through the University's Virtual Learning Environment (VLE). Work submitted to the VLE can be automatically scanned by the University's PDS. Where this is not possible, students may be asked to submit an electronic copy of their work along with the hard copy. Tutors have the ability to submit files to Blackboard which are subsequently scanned by the PDS.

### 3. Submission of Work for Research Degrees

Where a student has submitted the bound copy of their thesis they must also submit an electronic version to be scanned by the University's PDS. Academic Registry will upload the file to the PDS and inform the Examination Board Chair and the student's project supervisor of the PDS result. Informed by the PDS result, the Examination Board Chair together with the project supervisor will determine whether to report the submission for plagiarism. Although the student may be aware of the Examination

Board outcome prior to the submission to the PDS the result will not be processed until the thesis has been scanned, i.e. a certificate will not be issued.

#### 4. How to Analyse Reports and Report Alleged Unfair Practice

The interpretation and analysis of the reports produced by the University's PDS is the responsibility of Module Team in the case of Taught Degree submissions and the Chair of the Examination Board and Supervisor(s) in the case of Research Degree submissions. Where Alleged Unfair Practice is suspected the Unfair Practice Procedure should be followed and an Unfair Practice Report Form should be prepared by the Module Team in the case of Taught Degree submissions and the Chair of the Examination Board and Supervisor(s) in the case of Research Degree submissions. The school may wish to appoint an Unfair Practice Representative from their senior lecturers. The role of the Unfair Practice Representative is to bring a consistent approach to Unfair Practice and act as an advisor to tutors prior to the Unfair Practice Report Form being submitted to the DLT.

The PDS will search the internet and previous submissions to the PDS across all Universities who use the same PDS and allow work to be uploaded to the PDS library. The University recognises that there is no lower or upper threshold to the percentage of work identified as plagiarised when establishing a case against a student. The following factors can also be considered by tutors when establishing a case for plagiarism against a student:

- The origin of the matched text or image and whether it has been correctly referenced or cited in accordance with the University's guidelines.
- Whether the match is likely to reoccur due to common terminology or the assessment having a restrictive brief, e.g. set headings etc.
- In cases of self-plagiarism it may be that permission has been granted to reproduce work and this should be stated within the assessment, if not a case may be brought forward.

#### 5. Limitations of Plagiarism Detection Software

PDS can not make a definitive judgement on an assessment and it remains the tutor's responsibility to detect and report Alleged Unfair Practice. The University's PDS will not detect instances where a student has submitted work that has been written by a third party, such as an essay writing service, as this may be an original piece of work.

#### 6. Depository of Submissions

The University reserves the right to maintain an electronic archive of submissions to its PDS for Quality and Standards purposes. Where a submission at another institution is matched against a submission to the University, the University shall allow that institution access to the original submission. Where it has been evident that a graduate of the University has engaged in Alleged Unfair Practice the University shall invoke the

Unfair Practice Procedure (Graduates of Cardiff Metropolitan University) or UW Unfair Practice Procedure (Graduates).

#### 7. Use of Plagiarism Detection Software at Partner Institutions

This policy applies to students studying Cardiff Metropolitan University programmes at collaborative partner institutions. On enrolment with the University students are granted access to plagiarism detection software through blackboard and may use this as a formative tool. It is the responsibility of the partner institution to guide students in the use of plagiarism detection software. The University's Moderator or Link Tutor will provide guidance and training to partner staff wherever needed or requested.