Addressing student plagiarism

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Conflict of interest

I am an employee of iParadigms LLC, who provide the Turnitin and iThenticate originality checking tools to institutions, organisations and individuals worldwide.

The views expressed in this presentation do not necessarily represent those of the company.
(Leeky-Boy, 2006)
Today’s session

- Definitions and background
- Approaches and good practice in institutions
- Undergraduate teaching as a stepping stone to research integrity
Plagiarism occurs when someone...

- Uses words, ideas, or work products
- Attributable to another identifiable person or source
- Without attributing the work to the source from which it was obtained
- In a situation in which there is a legitimate expectation of original authorship
- In order to obtain some benefit, credit, or gain which need not be monetary

(Fishman, 2011)
Why do students plagiarise?

• Poor time planning.
• They think their teachers don’t care.
• Think they can get away with it.
• Determined to beat the system.
• Lack of knowledge of academic conventions.
• Lack of confidence in academic abilities.
• Cultural issues.
• September 2002: JISC formed the Plagiarism Advisory Service and made Turnitin available at no cost to HE and FE institutions.
  – Raise awareness of plagiarism within institutions.
  – Unite pockets of existing good practice.
  – Offer pedagogic and institutional support for implementation of technology.
  – Develop a national strategy for plagiarism detection.
• Arguably more instances of plagiarism identified as more robust measures exist for checking
• Has made approach more cohesive and transparent
• Raised awareness of issues and has stimulated discussion
• Reduction of incidents of actual plagiarism
• UK approach replicated in other countries
  – Discussions on plagiarism now global
Why do institutions need academic integrity guidelines?

• Provide **clarity and transparency** in case processing

• Present a **consistent and structured approach** to students
  
  “The lack of consistency means that we are vulnerable when pursuing a case of plagiarism and of course it is not fair to the students if they have differing experiences.” (O’Neill, 2009)

• Offer guidance to staff (both teaching and support)

• Avoid ad hoc and unsupported use of Turnitin
The academic integrity cycle

Culture of honesty

- Clearly defined policies and procedures
- Assessment tasks which encourage creativity & originality
- Integrated plagiarism detection strategy
- Study skills and information literacy
- Transparent penalty tariffs
“Students receive about 3000 documents/pieces of information at the start of a three-year degree programme…Little of it is read yet many institutions tell students ‘It’s in the Handbook’ when sanctions are applied for plagiarism.” (Carroll & Appleton, 2001)
Learning the rules of the (academic) game

(Snell, 2009)
How do we communicate our message?

(no_typographic_man, 2009)

(Thomas W, 2006)
Some practical suggestions

- Talking heads
- Animated guides
- Examples of plagiarism
- Quizzes
- Turnitin self test facility
- Forums to stimulate discussion
- Practical exercises
- Video resources
“We think these [information] skills need to be incubated during the formative years of childhood: by university or college it is too late to reverse engineer deeply ingrained habits.”

(Information behaviour of the researcher of the future, 2008)
INFORMATION LITERACY

(Rozkosz, 2011)
“Information literacy is knowing when and why you need information, where to find it, and how to evaluate, use and communicate it in an ethical manner.” (CILIP, 2003)
• Everything on the web is free to use.
  – FALSE

• You don’t need to reference things you find on the web.
  – FALSE

• Students skim read rather than evaluating web pages.
  – TRUE

• Because students are technology literate they are efficient at finding good quality sources.
  – FALSE

• Students are good at formulating search strategies.
  – FALSE

• Students prefer search engines to library resources.
  – TRUE

*(Information behaviour of the researcher of the future, 2008)*
Reinforce the positives!

(Cipido, 2009)
Good practice examples

- **Avoiding plagiarism: online tutorial**
  Available at: [http://www2.le.ac.uk/offices/ssds/sd/ld/resources/study/plagiarism-tutorial](http://www2.le.ac.uk/offices/ssds/sd/ld/resources/study/plagiarism-tutorial) (Accessed: 20 March 2013).

- **Et Plagieringseventyr (A Plagiarism carol)**

- **University of Northampton Plagiarism Avoidance Course (UNPAC)**
  Available at: [http://nli.northampton.ac.uk/mmb/smc/cg/blackboard/UNPACmay08/unpac_captivate.htm](http://nli.northampton.ac.uk/mmb/smc/cg/blackboard/UNPACmay08/unpac_captivate.htm) (Accessed: 20 March 2013)
Thank you!

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References


