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ACADEMIC STANDARDS AND QUALITY ENHANCEMENT COMMITTEE
22 October 2020   Agenda Item 12.2

ANNUAL REPORT ON PLAGIARISM AND OTHER FORMS OF CHEATING
OFFENCES IN 2019/20

COVER SHEET

Presenter: Mr A G Faulkner

Action is required of the Committee as indicated below:

Item	Topic	Action
8	Recommendations	To consider the recommendations.

UNIVERSITY OF ULSTER

ACADEMIC STANDARDS AND QUALITY ENHANCEMENT COMMITTEE
22 October 2020

ANNUAL REPORT ON PLAGIARISM AND OTHER FORMS OF CHEATING OFFENCES IN 2019/20

1   INTRODUCTION

The Annual Report on Plagiarism and Other Forms of Cheating Offences in 2019/20 comprises data from the Central Register and Faculty commentaries. The 2019/20 Annual Report includes information on instances of plagiarism, contract cheating, cheating in examinations and other forms of cheating. Following the publication of a report on 'Contracting to Cheat in Higher Education - How to address Contract Cheating, the use of Third-Party Services and Essay Mills' by QAA in October 2017, the Academic Standards and Quality Enhancement Committee agreed that the Plagiarism Register should be extended and Faculties record all forms of cheating from 2018/19 (Min 18.67 refers).

2   RECORDING OF OFFENCES ON THE CENTRAL REGISTER IN 2019/20

The report generated from the Central Register for 2019/20 covers the period 10 September 2019 (the day after the deadline for entering offences for 2018/19) to 10 September 2020 (the day after the deadline for entering offences for 2019/20). Unless otherwise stated, the following observations are therefore based on that period. The record relates to University students (including those at outcentres and QAHE).   Three cases of plagiarism (involving two students) occurred on the International Foundation Programme. While these offences were not entered on the Central Register before the deadline, they have been included in the following observations. The Central Register does not hold records for Associate Students of partner institutions, nor for PhD research students but the Doctoral College reports separately on the latter.

During 2019/20, a total of 217 plagiarism offences, 28 instances of other forms of cheating, 11 instances of cheating in examinations, and one case of contract cheating were recorded on the Central Register.   The University's record of plagiarism offences for 2019/20 is discussed at Section 3 of the annual report, and set out in Appendix 1 and analysed by Faculty in Appendix 2. The record of instances of cheating in examinations, contract cheating and other forms of cheating is set out at Section 4 of the annual report.

3   INSTANCES OF PLAGIARISM RECORDED ON THE CENTRAL REGISTER IN 2019/20

The total number of recorded plagiarism offences in 2019/20 is higher than in recent years, but still involves less than one percent of the student population.

The total number of plagiarism offences (relating to taught courses) recorded on the Central Register for 2019/20 is 217 (154 undergraduate (71%); 63 postgraduate (29%)). This is higher (35%) than the 161 offences recorded for 2018/19 at 10 September 2019. The total number of cases recorded on the Central Register for 2019/20 rises to 243 when cases for that academic year recorded after the reporting cut-off date are included (as at 5 October 2020).

Unlike the previous year, in which more offences occurred at Level 6 than at any other level, in 2019/20 more offences occurred at Level 5 than at any other level. The number of offences in 2019/20 was higher at every level when compared to 2018/19, with the exception of Level 6. There was an increase from the previous year in the reported number of instances of plagiarism at postgraduate level in 2019/20.

Table 3.1. Distribution of Plagiarism Offences across Levels of Study comparing Data for 2019/20 and 2018/19

Level of Study	Number of Cases in 2019/20	Number of Cases in 2018/19
Level 3	2 (1%)	0 (0%)
Level 4	49 (23%)	26 (16%)
Level 5	78 (36%)	37 (23%)
Level 6 (UG award)	25 (11%)	40 (25%)
Level 6 (PG award)	11 (5%)	21 (13%)
Postgraduate Level 7	52 (24%)	37 (23%)

Compared to 2018/19, there has been an increase in the number of offences at all levels, with the exception of Level 6.

Table 3.2. Comparison of Type of Plagiarism Offence in 2019/20 and 2018/19

Offence	Number of Cases in 2019/20	Number of Cases in 2018/19
First Offence	207 (95.5%)	146 (90.7%)
Second Offence	7 (3%)	14 (8.7%)
Third Offence	2 (1%)	1 (0.6%)
Fourth Offence	1 (0.5%)	0 (0%)

As in previous years, the majority of cases recorded were first offences, suggesting that the remedial action taken has generally been effective in deterring repeat offences. The number of first offences has increased by 42%, while the number of second offences has decreased by 50%. Two third offences and one fourth offence have been recorded.

Table 3.3.   Distribution of Type of Plagiarism Offences across Levels of Study in 2019/20

	1st Offence	2nd Offence	3rd Offence	4th Offence	Total
Level 3	**1** *(0)*	**1** *(0)*	**0** *(0)*	**0** *(0)*	**2** *(0)*
Level 4	**49** *(24)*	**0** *(2)*	**0** *(0)*	**0** *(0)*	**49** *(26)*
Level 5	**74** *(37)*	**2** *(0)*	**2** *(0)*	**0** *(0)*	**78** *(37)*
Level 6 (UG award)	**25** *(36)*	**0** *(4)*	**0** *(0)*	**0** *(0)*	**25** *(40)*
Level 6 (PG award)	**8** *(13)*	**2** *(7)*	**0** *(1)*	**1** *(0)*	**11** *(21)*
Postgraduate	**50** *(36)*	**2** *(1)*	**0** *(0)*	**0** *(0)*	**52** *(37)*
TOTAL	**207** *(146)*	**7** *(14)*	**2** *(1)*	**1** *(0)*	

Figures in brackets relate to 2018/19.

Table 3.4. Percentage Change from 2018/19 to 2019/20

Level	% Change
Level 3	**N/A**
Level 4	**88% increase**
Level 5	**111% increase**
Level 6 (UG award)	**37.5% decrease**
Level 6 (PG award)	**48% decrease**
Postgraduate	**41% increase**

Undergraduate Offences

Level 4 Offences

The number of Level 4 first offences has increased from 26 in 2018/19 to 49 in 2019/20. No repeat offences were recorded at Level 4 in 2019/20.

Level 5 Offences

Recorded offences at Level 5 more than doubled from 2018/19 to 2019/20.

Level 6 Offences (Undergraduate Award)

There was a decrease from 40 to 25 in the number of offences recorded at this level during 2019/20 compared with 2018/19.

Postgraduate Offences

Level 6 Offences (Postgraduate Award)

These offences relate to extended Master's programmes delivered at QAHE (MSc International Business (London) and MSc Marketing (London)). Eight first offences, two second offences and one fourth offence at this level were recorded.

Level 7 Offences

The number of postgraduate (Level 7) offences increased from 37 in 2018/19 to 52 in 2019/20. Two second offences were recorded at this level during 2019/20.

4   **INSTANCES OF CHEATING IN EXAMINATIONS, CONTRACT CHEATING AND OTHER FORMS OF CHEATING RECORDED ON THE CENTRAL REGISTER IN 2019/20**

Table 4.1. Distribution of Cheating Offences across Levels of Study

	Cheating in Exams	Contract Cheating	Other Forms of Cheating
Level 3	**0** *(0)*	**0** *(0)*	**0** *(0)*
Level 4	**1** *(0)*	**0** *(0)*	**2** *(1)*
Level 5	**6** *(4)*	**1** *(0)*	**2** *(0)*
Level 6 (UG award)	**4** *(8)*	**0** *(0)*	**9** *(0)*
Level 6 (PG award)	**0** *(0)*	**0** *(0)*	**0** *(0)*
Postgraduate	**0** *(0)*	**0** *(0)*	**15** *(2)*

Figures in brackets relate to 2018/19.

The majority of instances of cheating recorded in examinations occurred at Level 5. There were 28 recorded cases of 'other forms of cheating'; two at Level 4, two at Level 5, nine at Level 6 and 15 at postgraduate level. One case of contract cheating was recorded at Level 5.

Table 4.2. Type of Cheating Offence

	Cheating in Exams	Contract Cheating	Other Forms of Cheating
First Offence	**11** *(11)*	**1** *(0)*	**24** *(3)*
Second Offence	**0** *(1)*	**0** *(0)*	**4** *(0)*
Third Offence	**0** *(0)*	**0** *(0)*	**0** *(0)*
Fourth Offence	**0** *(0)*	**0** *(0)*	**0** *(0)*

Figures in brackets relate to 2018/19.

All of the recorded instances of cheating in examinations were first offences, as was the case of contract cheating. Twenty-four of the 28 recorded offences of other forms of cheating were first offences, while the remaining four were second offences.

One case of contract cheating relating to BSc Hons Occupational Therapy was recorded on the Central Register by the Faculty of Life and Health Sciences during 2019/20. No details regarding this offence have been entered on the Central Register and the Faculty report states that there were no incidences of contract cheating during 2019/20. It is therefore likely that this offence was entered on the Central Register using the wrong code.

The Ulster University Business School recorded cases of cheating under codes UC1 and PC1 [codes for contract cheating offences] but upon review of the details entered regarding these offences, they have been counted as plagiarism offences for the purposes of this report [see UUBS Notes under Table 5.1]. These were recorded against programmes in the Department of Management, Leadership and Marketing but there is no reference in the Faculty's report to these cases of 'contract cheating'. The Faculty's report does, however, highlight four potential cases of contract cheating on the MSc International Business at Magee. At the cut-off date, these offences had not yet been recorded on the Central Register as investigations were still ongoing.

The minutes of the November 2019 Senate meeting refer to a case of contract cheating in the Ulster University Business School by a QAHE student, which was referred to the University's Student Disciplinary Committee (SDC) in October 2019. This case does not appear on the Central Register for 2019/20 but, given the date on which it was considered by the SDC, it is likely that it occurred in the 2018/19 academic year.

In June 2020 the QAA published a second edition of guidance on contract cheating, 'Contract to Cheat in Higher Education – How to Address Essay Mills and Contract Cheating' https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/guidance/contracting-to-cheat-in-higher-education-2nd-edition.pdf?sfvrsn=6197cf81_24. A number of updates have been made by QAA in the June 2020 report in light of:

(i)   increasing marketing of essay mills and increased uptake;
(ii)   the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in terms of adapting teaching, learning and assessment to digital provision, and providing additional student support.

Summary of updates:

- where equal emphasis was previously placed on prevention and detection of essay mills, the revised report highlights the importance and priority of detection as the main deterrent;
- the importance of assessment design in institutional strategy to address contract cheating is highlighted;
- recommendation that a designated member of staff be appointed to provide support and guidance in detecting academic misconduct to ensure consistency across the institution and highlight the importance of addressing the issue of contract cheating;

- with the increase in contract cheating, guidance is given on how to deal with this type of academic misconduct, in particular suspected first time offences;
- additional content on student support.

With regard to other forms of cheating, Faculty reports generally do not explain what was involved in the 28 cases, but regulations include the following examples: impersonation of others, fabrication of results, collusion and use of inadmissible material.

5   ACCURACY OF DATA

As offences are recorded on the Central Register against the date they occur, rather than by the date they are entered on the register, discrepancies may arise depending on the date the report is run from the Central Register.

The impact of Covid-19 in 2019/20, with staff working from home not all having access to the Banner system, means that the Central Register may not be an accurate record of offences for this academic year. Some Faculties indicated in their reports that not all offences had been entered on the Central Register by the cut-off date.

Plagiarism offences are recorded on the Central Register using codes 'UP1/2/3/4' (undergraduate) or 'PP1/2/3/4' (postgraduate). Cases of contract cheating are recorded using codes 'UC1/2/3/4' or 'PC1/2/3/4' and instances of other forms of cheating are recorded using codes 'UO1/2/3' or 'PO1/2/3/4'. Cases of cheating in examinations are recorded using the code 'EX1/2/3/4'. Faculties should ensure that the correct codes are used when recording offences (see Notes below).

Table 5.1. Plagiarism and Other Forms of Cheating Offences Recorded on the Central Register in 2019/20

Faculty	Access, Digital and Distributed Learning	Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences	Computing, Engineering and the Built Environment	Life and Health Sciences	Ulster University Business School	TOTAL
Cases reported by Faculty	3 [2 students]	46	84+	66	74	273+
Cases recorded on Central Register [as at 10.9.20]	0	45	76	62	71	254 [214 plagiarism offences, 11 offences of cheating in exams, 28 other forms of cheating and 1 case of contract cheating]

Notes:

ADDL
- Three plagiarism offences (advised by ADDL) involving two students on the International Foundation Programme have been counted in the annual report but were not entered in the

Central Register [one first offence at Level 3, one first offence at Level 4 and one second offence at Level 3].

AHSS
- Three offences at Level 5 recorded as UO1 relate to plagiarism offences and have been counted as such in the annual report;
- Three PP1 offences were removed from the Central Register by the Faculty after the cut-off date as 'no case', so have not been counted in the annual report;
- One PP1 offence has three entries relating to the same offence in the Central Register, so has been counted once in the annual report.

CEBE
- An offence recorded as EX1 has not been counted in the annual report as it relates to 2018/19;
- An offence at Level 4 recorded as UP1 has not been counted in the annual report as it relates to 2018/19;
- An offence at Level 6 recorded as UO1 relates to a plagiarism offence and has been counted as such in the annual report.

LHS
- Offences occurring at Level 6 in the MPharm programme have been counted as Level 6 (UG award) in the annual report;
- Offences occurring at Level 7 in the MPharm programme have been counted as Postgraduate offences in the annual report;
- Six offences [one UP1 at Level 4, three UP1 offences at Level 5, one UP1 at Level 6 and one UP2 at Level 6] have not been counted in the annual report as they relate to 2018/19;
- Two offences at Level 4 recorded as UO1 relate to plagiarism offences and have been counted as such in the annual report;
- One offence at Level 5 recorded as UP1 has not been counted in the annual report as the same student had two offences but both pieces of work were submitted on the same day, so counted as one offence;
- One offence at Level 6 recorded as UP1 has not been counted in the annual report as the same student had two offences but both pieces of work were submitted on the same day, so counted as one offence.

UUBS
- Two offences at Level 5 recorded as UC1 relate to plagiarism offences and have been counted as such in the annual report;
- One offence at Level 6 recorded as UC1 relates to a plagiarism offence and has been counted as such in the annual report;
- Three offences recorded as PC1 relate to plagiarism offences and have been counted as such in the annual report;
- Three offences [one UP1 at postgraduate level, one UP2 at postgraduate level and one UP3 at postgraduate level] have not been counted in the annual report as they relate to 2018/19;
- An offence recorded as UP1 relates to a postgraduate programme and has been counted as a postgraduate offence in the annual report;
- An offence recorded as UP2 relates to a postgraduate programme and has been counted as a postgraduate offence in the annual report;
- An offence recorded as UP4 relates to a postgraduate programme and has been counted as a postgraduate offence in the annual report.

6   **SUMMARY OF REPORTS FROM FACULTIES, ACCESS, DIGITAL AND DISTRIBUTED LEARNING AND RESEARCH OFFICE**

Faculties and Access, Digital and Distributed Learning, and the Doctoral College were asked to report on plagiarism offences, cheating in examinations, contract cheating and other forms of cheating recorded during 2019/20, and actions proposed, or taken, in light of the 2019/20 records. A summary and full reports are available at the Annex.

Table 6.1. Ratio of Total Number of Offences [plagiarism, cheating in exams, other forms of cheating and contract cheating] to Students by Faculty

Access, Digital and Distributed Learning	1:280
Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences	1:143
Computing, Engineering and the Built Environment	1:63
Life and Health Sciences	1:116
Ulster University Business School	1:80

The Doctoral College has confirmed that there were no instances of plagiarism, contract cheating or other forms of cheating identified during the 2019/20 academic year. [Reported for 2018/19: 0]

7 CONCLUSIONS

The number of plagiarism offences recorded during 2019/20 has increased in comparison with the number of offences reported during the previous academic year.

The increase in the number of plagiarism cases reported during the 2019/20 academic year could be attributed to a number of factors:

- the implementation of the University's Electronic Management of Assessment and Feedback Policy, and increased vigilance of staff may have resulted in more offences being detected;
- Faculties refer in their reports to incidences of academic misconduct having occurred in alternative assessment employed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic;
- additional stress suffered by students arising from the COVID-19 pandemic.

While there is no significant increase in cheating in examinations and contract cheating compared to last year, there is a significant rise in other forms of cheating detected during 2019/20.

8 RECOMMENDATIONS

(i) that Faculties take account of good practice highlighted in other Faculty reports, and ensure that the University's Plagiarism Policy and Procedures and Penalties (2012) and Procedures for dealing with Other Forms of Cheating continue to be observed and rigorously applied across all programmes;

(ii) that Faculties ensure that offences are entered on the Central Register using the correct code and that further details of the nature of other forms of cheating and contract cheating offences be provided in the Register entry;

(iii) that, given the increased prevalence of contract cheating across the UK and Ireland, combined with the low number of recorded cases by Faculties in

2019/20, Faculties, CHERP and the Students' Union reflect on the updated QAA guidance and report to a future meeting;

(iv)   that Faculties and the Distributed Education Board (formerly ADDL) ensure that all plagiarism offences and other forms of cheating in 2019/20 are recorded, using the correct code, at the time the offence is established and no later than the cut-off date of 9 September 2021;

(v)   that Faculties, the Distributed Education Board, and the Doctoral College provide a report on plagiarism and other forms of cheating, with a clear breakdown of the different types of offences and a commentary on issues arising and actions proposed or taken in light of the 2020/21 records, to the Academic Office by 21 September 2021.

AG9.10.20

TOTAL NUMBER OF PLAGIARISM OFFENCES (TAUGHT COURSES) RECORDED DURING 2019/20, 2018/19, 2017/18, 2016/17 and 2015/16

YEAR	Number of undergraduate cases recorded				Number of postgraduate cases recorded		Number of cases recorded by Research Office	Number of cases recorded (undergraduate and postgraduate)				Total number of cases recorded within the University
	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5	Level 6 [UG award]	Level 6 [PG award]	Level 7		1st offence	2nd offence	3rd offence	4th offence	
2019/20	2	49	78	25	11	52	0	207	7	2	1	217+
2018/19	0	26	37	40	21	37	0	146	14	1	0	161*
2017/18	0	38	75	35	0	35	0	174	9	0	0	183**
2016/17	0	55	42	69	0	50	0	205	10	1	0	216[1]
2015/16	0	67	87	90	0	80	0	284	37	2	1	324#

This is the total number of plagiarism offences recorded on the central register as at 3 October 2016.

[1] An additional 3 cases for 2016/17 were entered on the central register after the cut-off date, bringing the total to 219 (as at 3 October 2017).

** An additional 15 cases for 2017/18 were entered on the central register after the cut-off date, bringing the total to 198 (as at 11 October 2018).

* An additional 8 cases for 2018/19 were entered on the central register after the cut-off date, bringing the total to 169 (as at 8 October 2019).

+An additional 26 cases for 2019/20 were entered on the central register after the cut-of date, bringing the total to 243 (as at 5 October 2020).

PLAGIARISM OFFENCES RECORDED BY FACULTIES ON THE PLAGIARISM REGISTER FOR 2019/20 at 10.09.20*

FACULTY	Number of undergraduate cases recorded					Number of postgraduate cases recorded	Number of cases recorded by Research Office	Number of cases recorded (undergraduate and postgraduate)				Total number of cases recorded within the Faculty	% of Total Plagiarism Offences	Student Population (%) 2019/20**
	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5	Level 6 [UG award]	Level 6 [PG award]			1st offence	2nd offence	3rd offence	4th offence			
Arts, Humanities & Social Sciences	0	10	15	9	0	11	0	42	2	1	0	45	21%	6467 (26%)
Computing, Engineering & the Built Environment	0	17	32	7	0	3	0	58	1	0	0	59	27%	4786 (19%)
Life and Health Sciences	0	5	16	7	0	17	0	44	1	0	0	45	21%	7191 (29%)
Ulster University Business School	0	16	15	2	0	32	0	61	2	1	1	65	30%	5686 (23%)
Access, Digital and Distributed Learning	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	3	1%	841 (3%)
TOTAL	**2**	**49**	**78**	**25**	**0**	**63**	**0**	**207**	**7**	**2**	**1**	**217**	**100%**	**24971 (100%)**

*includes three ADDL offences not entered in the central register at this date.
**Student Population 2019/20 (provided by Strategy, Planning and Performance)

Summary of Faculty Reports

ACCESS, DIGITAL AND DISTRIBUTED LEARNING

2019/20

Type of Offence	Total recorded in Central Register	Total reported by ADDL
Plagiarism	**0 [but 3 counted in annual report]**	**2 students [3 offences]**
Contract cheating	-	-
Other form of cheating in coursework	-	-
Cheating in Examination	-	-

Summary of ADDL Report

PROGRAMME	PLAGIARISM CASES	CONTRACT CHEATING	OTHER FORM OF CHEATING IN COURSEWORK	CHEATING IN EXAMINATION
Diploma in International Foundation Studies with Pathways (IFP)	2 students [3 offences]	-	-	-
PgCert in Graduate Leadership	-	-	-	-
Certificate of Personal and Professional Development (CPPD)	-	-	-	-
Postgraduate Certificate of Professional Development (PGCPD)	-	-	-	-

There were no cases of plagiarism, contract cheating, other forms of cheating or cheating in examinations reported by ADDL for 2018/19.

The CPPD and PGCPD frameworks are delivered at Faculty level and any incidences of plagiarism would be reported through Faculties.

Action taken / proposed

Diploma in International Foundation Studies with Pathways (IFP)

- workshops held on topics such as referencing, plagiarism and academic judgement; this workshop will be incorporated into induction process in future;
- discussions with students about grading boundaries, levels of performance and studying at a UK university;
- document on Academic Judgement to be disseminated to colleagues across the University.

PgCert in Graduate Leadership

- projects relate to individual work-based learning contexts thereby minimising possibility of plagiarism occurring.

CPPD and PGCPD Frameworks

- adoption of online submission for majority of modules enables use of Turnitin.

FACULTY OF ARTS, HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

Type of Offence	Total recorded in Central Register 18/19	Total reported by Faculty 18/19	Total recorded in Central Register 19/20	Total reported by Faculty 19/20
Plagiarism	21	26	**45**	**46**
Contract cheating	-	-	-	-
Other form of cheating in coursework	1	-	-	-
Cheating in Examination	-	-	-	-

Summary of Faculty Report – 2019/20

SCHOOL	PLAGIARISM CASES [no of students]	CONTRACT CHEATING	OTHER FORM OF CHEATING IN COURSEWORK	CHEATING IN EXAMINATION
Arts and Humanities	4	-	-	-
Applied Social and Policy Studies	23	-	-	-
Belfast School of Art	-	-	-	-
Communications and Media	16	-	-	-

Education	-	-	-	--
Law	1	-	-	-

Note: total number of instances is 46 (44 students).

As in 2018/19, the majority of recorded cases of plagiarism were first offences occurring across all levels of study. Two cases of plagiarism occurred at postgraduate level (compared with seven offences at this level in 2018/19).

The Faculty reports a significant number of incidences of plagiarism where alternative assessments were set owing to Covid-19 situation.

Action taken / proposed at School/Faculty Level

School of Applied Social and Policy Studies

- guidance included in module and programme handbooks and at induction sessions;
- guidance given by PiP representatives in agency support sessions (PQ Social Work);
- additional information added at the Turnitin portal;
- copies of the plagiarism policy / penalties to be made available on Blackboard.

School of Arts and Humanities

- all students advised of seriousness of plagiarism and penalties imposed;
- advice given to students regarding proper referencing practices;
- full implementation of electronic management of assessment and feedback.

School of Communication and Media

- In response to repeat cases of plagiarism by students who joined in second year, the School is developing a more robust transition process to avoid this in future;
- the School anticipates that changes in Learning and Teaching management will lead to a culture shift.

School of Law

- Steps taken to ensure students are aware of plagiarism, what it is and how to avoid it;
- guidance on how to avoid plagiarism provided at induction sessions;
- all work submitted through Turnitin;
- guidelines on plagiarism included in module handbooks;
- focus on proper referencing;
- modules in undergraduate courses focus on conducting research and proper referencing.

School of Education

- Pieces of assessment are individualised thereby reducing opportunities for plagiarism.

FACULTY OF COMPUTING, ENGINEERING AND THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Type of Offence	Total recorded in Central Register 18/19	Total reported by Faculty 18/19	Total recorded in Central Register 19/20	Total reported by Faculty 19/20
Plagiarism	42	56	**59**	**84+* [incl 26 at QAHE]**
Contract cheating	-	-	**-**	-
Other form of cheating in coursework	2	-	**12**	-
Cheating in Examination	7	-	**5**	-

Summary of Faculty Report

SCHOOL	PLAGIARISM CASES	CONTRACT CHEATING	OTHER FORM OF CHEATING IN COURSEWORK	CHEATING IN EXAMINATION
Computing	32	-	-	-
Computing, Engineering & Intelligent Systems	12	-	-	-
Engineering*	3	-	-	-
Belfast School of Architecture & the Built Environment	11	-	-	-
QAHE	26	-	-	-

*Note that the Faculty report states that not all incidences of plagiarism that occurred in 2019/20 within the School of Engineering have been entered on the Central Register due to an ISD systems issue relating to remote working. [Academic Office note: the Faculty report states these will be included in the 2020/21 report, but as they fall outside of the 2020/21 academic year, they will not be included in next year's report.]

The Faculty reports incidences of plagiarism where alternative assessments were set owing to Covid-19 situation.

The Faculty reports an increase in the number of recorded cases of plagiarism during 2019/20, with the majority of these being first offences at undergraduate level. Twenty-six of the recorded incidences of plagiarism occurred in the BSc Hons Computing Systems programme at QAHE.

Action taken / proposed at School/Faculty Level

School of Computing

- Guidance on avoiding plagiarism provided at induction / re-induction and throughout modules;
- staff reminded of importance of timely and accurate logging of occurrences of plagiarism;
- consistent application of Plagiarism Policy;
- Modules COM398 (8 incidences of plagiarism occurred) and COM400 (16 incidences of plagiarism occurred): classes will be monitored and students alerted to policy on plagiarism and penalties.

School of Computing, Engineering and Intelligent Systems

- Proper referencing explained as part of assessment brief in all courses, particularly postgraduate courses where detection occurred in 2019/20;
- students on all years of all programmes reminded of University's Plagiarism Policy and penalties.

Belfast School of Architecture and the Built Environment

- Course Teams will continue to flag plagiarism as a serious academic offence in classes and at induction / re-induction, and in module and course handbooks;
- potential for plagiarism will be taken into consideration when designing alternative online assessments in place of written examinations.

QAHE

The Faculty reports that QAHE has "a robust plagiarism and academic misconduct system in place with zero tolerance for academic misconduct".

- Workshops run alongside normal teaching to help students develop skills in academic writing and academic integrity;
- all new and returning students receive induction and are reminded of consequences of plagiarism and cheating;
- from 2020/21, students involved in academic misconduct will be required to attend a workshop;
- issue and consequences of plagiarism discussed during presentation of module assessment and assignment specifications refer students to the University's Plagiarism Policy;

- from 2020/21, importance of correct referencing will be included in assessment briefs, module co-ordinators will flag students at risk of further academic misconduct and highlight consequences of repeat offences;
- modules where academic misconduct was frequent in 2019/20 will be monitored closely in 2020/21 and course director will meet with tutors at the start of semester and mid semester to review measures in place to deter plagiarism.

FACULTY OF LIFE AND HEALTH SCIENCES

Type of Offence	Total recorded in Central Register 18/19	Total reported by Faculty 18/19	Total recorded in Central Register 19/20	Total reported by Faculty 19/20
Plagiarism	48	48	45	66
Contract cheating	-	-	1	-
Other form of cheating in coursework	-	-	15	-
Cheating in Examination	-	-	1	-

Summary of Faculty Report

SCHOOL	PLAGIARISM CASES	CONTRACT CHEATING	OTHER FORM OF CHEATING IN COURSEWORK	CHEATING IN EXAMINATION
Biomedical Sciences	20	-	-	-
Geography & Environmental Sciences	6	-	-	-
Health Sciences	11	-	-	-
Nursing	14	-	-	-
Pharmacy & Pharmaceutical Sciences	7	-	-	-
Psychology	2	-	-	-
Sport	6	-	-	-

The Faculty reports an increase in the number of cases of plagiarism recorded during 2019/20. An increase in the number of plagiarism cases was reported by the School of Biomedical Sciences, School of Nursing, School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences, and the School of Psychology, while all other Schools reported a decrease on the previous year. As in 2018/29, the majority of cases of plagiarism in 2019/20 were first offences.

With the change from on-campus examinations to online assessment, owing to COVID-19, in Semester 2, students were reminded about the importance of proper referencing and care was taken when designing the alternative assessment to reduce the opportunity for plagiarism.

Action taken / proposed at School/Faculty Level

School of Biomedical Sciences

- Lecture on avoidance of plagiarism is given to each year group as part of induction process;
- at least one module common to all students uses electronic detection.

School of Geography and Environmental Sciences

- Constant reminders to students in final year induction and throughout the year about the seriousness of plagiarism;
- dissertations checked through Turnitin;
- students advised about the University's Plagiarism Policy;
- students taught about good academic practice from Year 1;
- series of tutorials for Year 1 students which include sessions on plagiarism and referencing;
- students in Year 2 and final year are reminded about plagiarism and proper referencing;
- marks allocated for proper referencing in assessment criteria for coursework (where appropriate);
- links to Faculty's Guidelines on Harvard Referencing provided in student support area of Blackboard.

School of Health Sciences

- Plagiarism Policy included in module handbooks and at induction.

School of Nursing

- Coursework submitted online using Turnitin;
- Module Co-ordinators / Course Teams continue to ensure students are aware how to avoid plagiarism and how to reference correctly;
- students are encouraged to check their work using Turnitin prior to submission;
- NMC guidance and University's Plagiarism Policy are made available to students at induction in module booklets and on Blackboard Learn;
- formative feedback provided to students throughout the year;
- assignment titles changed annually to reduce risk of plagiarism;
- resources available to students on academic writing skills, avoidance of plagiarism.

School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences

- Students introduced to Turnitin, have a workshop on plagiarism and sessions on referencing within first year modules PHA105 and BIO130;
- information available in Course Support Areas and the library website;
- use of Turnitin embedded into all modules using computer-generated submissions;
- suitability of the Written Unobserved Structured Clinical Examination (which was introduced to replace the OSCE assessment, owing to COVID-19) for assessing counselling skills is being monitored.

School of Psychology

- Students informed of University's Plagiarism Policy at induction and through student handbooks and completion of exercises in Year 1 tutorials.

School of Sport

- Information about University's Plagiarism Policy included in module handbooks in Blackboard Learn.

ULSTER UNIVERSITY BUSINESS SCHOOL

Type of Offence	Total recorded in Central Register 18/19	Total reported by Faculty 18/19	Total recorded in Central Register 19/20	Total reported by Faculty 19/20
Plagiarism	50	50	65	71
Contract cheating	-	-	-	Note: 4 potential cases of contract cheating identified – investigations ongoing.
Other form of cheating in coursework	-	-	1	-
Cheating in Examination	5	5	5	3

Summary of Faculty Report

DEPARTMENT	PLAGIARISM CASES [reported by number of students]	CONTRACT CHEATING	OTHER FORM OF CHEATING IN COURSEWORK	CHEATING IN EXAMINATION
Accounting, Finance &	21	-	-	2

Economics				
Management, Leadership & Marketing	15	-	-	1
Hospitality & Tourism Management	1	-	-	-
Global Business & Enterprise	9	-	-	-
QAHE (London)	25*	-	-	-

*Note: Faculty advises that 15 of these cases have not yet been entered on the register at time of submitting report.

The majority of cases reported by UUBS are first offences.

Action taken / proposed at Department/Faculty Level

Department of Finance and Economics

- Assessment format being changed in module COM118 in which eight Year 2 students shared information digitally during an online assessment.

Department of Management, Leadership and Marketing

- Library sessions on avoiding plagiarism have been organised.

QAHE

- Additional sessions / activities designed to be conducted during induction and seminars;
- the Academic Community of Excellence (ACE) Team will work to help students understand what academic misconduct is and to aid them in identifying appropriate ways to conduct research and reference sources properly;
- additional sessions will be held to aid students with organisation, planning and time management;
- short 'how to' videos will be created to act as quick reference guides for students on academic misconduct, proper referencing.

Faculty Level

- Year 1 skills development modules, with reinforcement throughout courses / years;
- increased electronic submission of written assignments through Turnitin;
- staff reminded to ensure assessment is revised on a regular basis and course teams meet to consider assessment, consistency of approach and 'designing out' plagiarism.

Last year the Faculty reported a plan to pilot the Turnitin Authorship Investigate Tool. The Faculty reports that issues arising from due diligence conversations with pilot institutions and the COVID-19 pandemic have resulted in a delay in progressing the pilot.

Full Reports received from ADDL and Faculties

ACCESS, DIGITAL AND DISTRIBUTED LEARNING

The Interim Dean Academic Business Development (former Director ADDL) has confirmed that two plagiarism offences have been recorded for 2019.20.

In 2019-20, ADDL were responsible for the academic governance of two programmes, Post Graduate Certificate in Graduate Leadership (GLP) and the International Foundation Programme (IFP), along with two flexible frameworks, Certificate in Personal and Professional Development (CPPD) and Post Graduate Certificate in Professional Development (PGCPD).

Both instances of plagiarism occurred in the International Foundation Programme and they have been recorded on the central register. It has been noted by the course director that problems with referencing, using others' work and accepting academic judgement was identified when students submitted their first draft assignment in semester one when nearly 100% of students plagiarised. When queried, students explained that this was permitted in their previous schools. Prior to formal submission, the course team held workshops with the students on topics such as referencing, plagiarism and academic judgement and had discussions with the students about grading boundaries, levels of performance and studying at a UK university. The course director wrote a document on Academic Judgement and requested that the students share the document with their parents to help alleviate any extra pressure. Unfortunately, two instances of plagiarism still occurred in the formal submissions and these were dealt with in accordance with university procedures. The workshop was repeated in Semester 2 as a recap for students, it will be included as part of this year's student induction and will feature in two workshops in both semesters.

The Postgraduate Certificate in Graduate Leadership supports graduate interns in completing projects which are contextualised within their employment, resulting in bespoke responses from students, which relate specifically to individualised work-based learning contexts, thus minimising the possibility of plagiarism.

The CPPD and PGCPD frameworks are delivered at Faculty level and any incidences of plagiarism would be captured and reported through the Faculties.

The adoption of online submission for the majority of modules offered as curriculum enhancement/CPD across both programmes and the undergraduate and postgraduate frameworks (as per the University's Electronic Management of Assessment and Feedback policy) enables Module Coordinators to use 'Turn it in' to check student work more rigorously in relation to any threat of plagiarism.
Use of online submission will be monitored and reviewed by the respective programme teams.

Proposed Action
Include referencing, plagiarism and academic judgement workshop in the International Foundation Year Induction and disseminate the Academic Judgement document with colleagues across the institution.

FACULTY OF ARTS, HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
Report on Instances of Plagiarism in Academic Year 2019/20

1.0   Table 1 Instances of Plagiarism by School, Course and Year of Study

SCHOOL	COURSE	YR	No of Students
Arts and Humanities	• BA Hons History	• 2	• 1
	• BA Hons English & History	• 2	• 1
	• BA Hons History with Education	• 2	• 1
	• BA English & Media Studies	• 3	• 1
Applied Social and Policy Sciences	• BSc Hons Crimn & Crim Justice FT	• 3	• 1
	• PG Dip Pro Dev in Social Work PT	• 1 • 2	• 4 • 4
	• BSc Hons Social Work	• 1 • 2 • 3	• 5 • 2 • 4
	• BSc Hons Sociology with Criminology	• 3	• 1
	• BSc Hons Community Development	• 2	• 1
	• MA Social Policy	• 1	• 1
Communications and Media	• BSc Hons Interactive Media	• 1 • 2 • 3	• 1 • 2 • 1
	• BA Hons Media Studies & Production	• 2 • 3	• 1 • 1
	• BSc Hons Communication, Advertising and Marketing	• 1	• 2
	• BSc Hons Communication Management and Public Relations	• 1	• 3
	• BSc Hons Language &	• 1	• 1

	Linguistics	•	2	•	1
	• BSc Hons Communication and Counselling Studies	•	1	•	3
Law	• LLM Itnl Commercial Law and ADR	•	1	•	1
Belfast School of Art	-				
School of Education	-				
		Total No of Instances		46 (44 students)	

Faculty Summary

- In total, 46 instances were recorded, compared with 26 in 2018/19.
- There were 2 recorded instances for part-time and postgraduate students.
- Offences were spread across the years of study, level 4 (46%), level 5 (30%), level 6 (20%) and level 7 (4%).
- As in 2018/19, the majority (93%) of recorded instances were first offences.

2.0   Associate Heads of School Commentaries

School of Applied Social and Policy Sciences

In the academic year 2019/20 there have been 23 cases of plagiarism recorded across the school. This compares to 21 cases last year. There are no cases of contract cheating.

The majority of cases pertain to the undergraduate social work programmes (11) and the Post Qualifying Social Work programmes (8) which have shown an increase from 4 cases last year to 10 cases this year in the undergraduate provision and a decrease from 11 cases last year to 8 cases this year in the post qualifying provision.
All programmes followed the recommended penalties apart from the Post Qualifying Social Work provision. The programme's plagiarism policy does not align with the University's as they award 0% with the resubmission capped at 50% due to the professional concerns around plagiarism within the profession. This policy was developed with external examiner guidance (Jane Lindsay) and had been reviewed through revalidation processes and submitted for the University's plagiarism practice review and approved.

The two Social Work programmes have confirmed the following action plans that are in place to reduce the number of cases of plagiarism moving forward this academic year and to increase student awareness. A change in the assessment practice in modules may have also resulted in a greater number of cases, along with the challenges in the external environment.

PQ Social Work Action Plan

The practice for informing students:

- Detailed in module handbooks.
- Detailed in programme handbooks.
- Verbally presented at induction sessions.
- Covered in detail by PiP reps in their agency support sessions.
- Additional 'final' information added at the Turnitin portal.

- Plagiarism is discussed with PiP reps at assessment panels, reviewed again by Chair of Assessment Board with a further report considered at programme Management Boards.

Undergraduate Social Work Action Plan

- The plagiarism strategy was discussed at the team meeting on 9th September.
- This will include a robust message weaved throughout all inductions especially returning students. A high number of plagiarism cases occurred in the final submissions.
- The team will continue to promote the use of BB analytics and making students aware of this at the induction and again this will be tabled at the first staff/ student consultative meeting.
- Copies of the policy/ penalties will be available on Blackboard, Module Handbook and course templates.

School of Arts and Humanities

Academic year 19-20 saw a decrease of approximately 50% in recorded incidents of plagiarism within the School, with only four cases identified. The recorded instances confirm that where staff have detected plagiarism due process has been followed.

The School continues to place great emphasis on best academic practice and advises all students of the seriousness of plagiarism and the penalties imposed if such malpractice is detected. Advice on proper referencing practices is given early across programmes, in accordance with the University's Plagiarism Policy and Procedures. Plagiarism warnings are given in course handbooks and various methods are used across the School, and across year groups, to ensure that students are au fait with referencing protocols and University policy regarding plagiarism in relation to coursework, presentations and examinations. Where plagiarism is detected staff respond efficiently and effectively and we find that the interview process is often enough to deter any further incidents. Full implementation of electronic management of assessment and feedback across the School (Turnitin) provides students with further incentive to comply with best academic practice.

School of Communication and Media

From a review of the plagiarism instances (16) during academic year 19-20, many have been linked back to the alternative assessments under the COVID mitigations. It is felt that in isolated cases, some students did not deal well with the changes in assessments and the conditions that they were required to work and study under. This has led to an increased amount of cases on modules with changes in assessment.

There have been a number of repeat cases in some courses and this has been with students that have struggled to transition from FE to HE, mostly with students that joined the 2nd year of the programs. We are working on some more robust transition processes and partnerships to help prevent this. We have also had some changes in the Learning and Teaching management this year; as these new Course Directors progress (and are supported in) their leadership, this will lead to a culture shift in some areas and the numbers will decrease again going forward.

School of Law:

In academic year 19-20 there was one instance of plagiarism within the school detected in the Intellectual Property Law module of the LLM in International Commercial Law with ADR. As a result of the detection, there was an interview held with the Course Director and Module Co-Ordinator. Following an admission by the student, the appropriate actions were taken.

There are a number of pertinent steps taken within the School of Law to ensure that the students are aware of plagiarism, what it is and how to avoid it. At a course level, there are announcements made at induction sessions in relation to plagiarism and that all submitted work is checked through the use of Turnitin to ensure that the students are not plagiarising work.

At a module level, the University guidelines on plagiarism are detailed within the module handbook and there are announcements made in class (relating to assessments) about plagiarism as well as advising how plagiarism is avoided. For this reason, there is a focus on ensuring that the students are aware of how to reference the sources that they have used and how that avoids plagiarism. Furthermore, within our undergraduate courses the modules of Exploring Law (at JN) and Introduction to Law (MG) focus on conducting research into sources, how they can be used, how they are referenced and avoiding plagiarism.

There were no instances of plagiarism within the School of Education or the School of Art. In both cases, pieces of assessment are highly individualised, applied or portfolios of work that result in assessment outcomes with negligible incidents of plagiarism.

Professor R Fee
Associate Dean (Education)
21 September 2020

FACULTY OF COMPUTING, ENGINEERING AND THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

PLAGIARISM REPORT, 2019-2020

Total number of plagiarism cases reported by Faculty for 2019-2020: 58 plus 26 at QAHE
[Total number of plagiarism cases reported by Faculty for 2018-2019: 56   ]
[Total number of plagiarism cases reported by Faculty for 2017-2018: 80]

SCHOOL	NUMBER OF PLAGIAIRSM OFFENCES
School of Computing	32
School of Computing, Engineering & Intelligent Systems	12
School of Engineering	3
Belfast School of Architecture & the Built Environment	11
QAHE	26

School of Computing

No of plagiarism offences	Undergraduate / Postgraduate	No. of & Level of Offence
31	Undergraduate	31 = 1st Offence
1	Postgraduate	1 = 1st Offence

The School of Computing recorded 32 offences in the 2019/20 Academic Year across a variety of provision:

BSc Hons Computing Science (2132) – 17
BSc Hons Computing Systems PT (6921) – 3
BSc Hons Computing Technologies (7095) – 4
BSc Hons Interactive Computing (7825) – 1
BEng Hons Software Engineering (2076) – 6
MSc Internet of Things FT (7816) – 1

Of the 32 offences, 7 were spread across a range of modules; however, 24 were related to two Year 2 modules – COM400 (n=16) and COM398 (n=8). The COM400 offences related to three syndicates: n=7, n=4 x2 and two offences in the Supplementary Assessment Period.

Action taken within School:
The School continues to implement several steps in an effort to reduce the number of plagiarism offences:

- New Entrants are briefed at Induction on plagiarism and the consequences of detection. Further discussion takes place in Extended Induction (Year 1) and across all Modules (Year 2);
- Discussion and reminder of plagiarism and the consequences of plagiarism at (re)induction and within individual modules;
- All modules discuss the issue and the consequences of detection during the initial presentation of module assessment;
- Module Coordinators will ensure correct referencing is made clear as part of the assessment brief;

- Staff are reminded of the importance of timely and accurate logging of occurrences of plagiarism.
- Ensure consistent application of the Plagiarism Policy in Year 1 to support onward study.

- COM398 – Module Coordinator will make it clear to students that a good report is about a good synthesis that takes account of the topic of the report and is not just a copy-paste kind of analysis which cannot be taken as evidence of understanding. The use and usefulness of quotes will be explained so that overuses of quotes can be avoided. Learners will be reminded of the need for and importance of good citation. The Module Coordinator will monitor the class in the next academic and alert students on the policy on plagiarism and the consequences of detection.

- COM400 – Lecture and BBL material will be enhanced to make it clear copying code verbatim from any source is unacceptable for coursework. The types of plagiarism will be explained for example plagiarism does not necessarily involve copying from another student, copying code from an online source, rather from each other, is plagiarism. Students will be reminded of the need for and importance of good citation. The plagiarism rate for 2019/20 will be mentioned, to emphasise the point that suspected cases will be acted on. The concept of, and penalty for, collusion will be explained. The Module Coordinator will monitor the class in the next academic and alert students on the policy on plagiarism and the consequences of detection.

School of Computing, Engineering & Intelligent Systems

No of plagiarism offences	Undergraduate / Postgraduate	No. of & Level of Offence
12	3 UG	UG (all 1st offences) Year 2 = 2 Year 4 = 1
	9 PG	PG (all 1st offences)

The School of Computing, Engineering & Intelligent Systems recorded 12 offences in the 19/20 Academic Year across a variety of provision:

7090 BEng Hons Mechanical & Manufacturing Engineering FT
7098 BSc Hons Information Technologies FT
7748 MSc Data Science FT
8069 MSc Data Science Applied Research FT

Across 12 instances, all were first offences and spanned a range of modules. All postgraduate offences were related to the MSc Data Science provision, spanning across two modules.

Action taken within School:
All were first offences and students were interviewed as per the policy on plagiarism. The School continues to implement a number of steps in an effort to reduce the numbers of plagiarism offences, including:

- Module co-ordinators will ensure correct referencing is made clear as part of the assessment brief in all programme but particularly, post-graduate courses where detections occurred due to a lack of correct referencing;

- Students across all programmes and years were reminded of the policy on plagiarism and the consequences of detection;
- Two students on the module BMG384 Management Information Systems which is delivered by a partner Faculty were interviewed by UUBS colleagues delivering this module. Where plagiarism was detected the elements of coursework that were plagiarised were discounted from the overall mark. The module co-ordinator will monitor the class in the next academic year and alert students on the policy on plagiarism and the consequences of detection.

School of Engineering

No of plagiarism offences	Undergraduate / Postgraduate	No. of & Level of Offence
3	UG = 3	UG: Year 4: 3

The School of Engineering recorded 3 offences in the 19/20 Academic Year all or which related to the 3279: BSc (Hons) Biomedical Engineering programme. Three of these (all first offenses) related to plagiarism in the literature review section of the final year project module BME503.

Action taken within School:
Standard procedures were followed, with first offences resulting in the plagiarised work in coursework being discounted and a formative interview held.

NB: Additional instances of plagiarism have been detected in 19-20 but due to ISD systems issue relating to remote working, these have not yet been entered on the School's register. When resolved, these will be reported in the School's plagiarism report for 20-21.

Belfast School of Architecture & the Built Environment

No of plagiarism offences	Undergraduate / Postgraduate	No. of & Level of Offence
11 – (Jordanstown)	Undergraduate = 9 Postgraduate = 2	Undergraduate FT • Year 1 = 4 • Final Year = 5 PT • None Postgraduate • FT = 1 • PT (Year 3) = 1
0 – (Belfast)	Undergraduate - 0	Year 0
Total for School = 11		

The Belfast School of Architecture and the Built Environment recorded 11 offences in the 2019/20 Academic Year across a variety of provision:

- BSc Hons Construction Engineering and Management (3239), Full-time = 7 offences
- BSc Environmental Health (3220), Full-time = 2 offences

Postgraduate
- MSc Fire Safety Engineering (3145 and 1286), Full-time and Part-time = 2 offences

One of which was an alternative online assessment in place of a written examination during COVID-19 lockdown. Three of the eleven offences were linked to research / dissertation modules.

Of the eleven instances, ten were first offences and one – at postgraduate level – was a second offence.

As was the case in previous years, there is no set pattern of modules with the majority of plagiarism offences. A small cluster of four offences was detected on one module (BEN128). However, not all four instances linked to BEN128 were connected, with two offences detected at an early assessment point; one towards the end of the semester; and a final offence during the supplementary period.

<u>Action taken within School:</u>

The School continues to implement a number of steps in an effort to reduce the number of plagiarism offences, for example:

- Plagiarism will continue to be flagged by course teams as a serious academic offence.
- New students will again be informed, at Welcome Week activities, of the need to avoid plagiarism; this message will also be reinforced for other years at re-induction.
- Plagiarism and the consequences of plagiarism is also reinforced across various years of study at both module level and also in Course Handbooks; module coordinators in the School are encouraged to use the new module handbook templates which includes information on Turnitin and identification of plagiarism issues.
- Module coordinators will take into consideration the potential for plagiarism when designing alternative online assessments in place of written examinations.

<u>QAHE Plagiarism Report</u>

No of plagiarism offences	Undergraduate / Postgraduate	No. of & Level of Offence
26	Undergraduate BSc Hons Computing Systems QAHE LN FT (6980)	20 = 1st Offence 4 = 2nd Offence 1 = 3rd Offence

Of the 26 offences, 4 were spread across a range of modules; however, 23 were related to four modules – COM133 (n=8), COM351 (n=6), COM116 (n=4) and COM352 (n=4).

QAHE has a robust plagiarism and academic misconduct system in place with zero tolerance for academic misconduct. The Students are educated and supported from the start

of the programme via Induction and throughout the delivery through various channels to educate and inform students on academic misconduct. All tutors emphasise the avoidance of plagiarism during the delivery of the module. During first-year, academic skills sessions are run along with the normal teaching for the students to develop skills in academic writing, academic integrity and, presentation and research skills. There is a separate team – Academic Community of Excellence (ACE), which runs regular workshops and provides guidance to help develop grammar for academic writing, paraphrasing and referencing critical writing.

Course Level Precautions
- All year groups are briefed at initial induction on plagiarism and the consequences of detection;
- All returning students are provided with In-Year induction, reminding them of plagiarism and the consequences of cheating;
- Students found to have plagiarised are formally interviewed by the Course Director and made aware of subsequent penalties;

New Course Level Measures 2020/21
- Any Student involved with academic misconduct will be required to attend a workshop provided by the ACE team and their participation will be logged.

Module Level Precautions
- All modules discuss the issue and the consequences of detection during the initial presentation of module assessment;
- All assignment specifications draw student's attention to Ulster's plagiarism policy.

New Module Level Measures 2020/21
- Module Coordinators will ensure correct referencing is made clear as part of the assessment briefs;
- Module Coordinators will flag students at risk of further academic misconduct at the earliest opportunity, engage with them and highlight the consequences of repeat offences, during the next academic year;
- Close monitoring will be done for those modules where academic misconduct frequency was high during 2019/20. The Course Director will arrange meetings with the tutors at the start of the Semester and again, mid semester, to review measures in place for avoiding plagiarism.

FACULTY OF LIFE & HEALTH SCIENCES

FACULTY REPORT ON PLAGIARISM AND CHEATING 2019/20

OVERVIEW

In the Faculty of Life & Health Sciences, there were 66 reported cases of plagiarism in academic year 2019/20 (Table 1). This represents an increase from 48 cases in 2018/19 and a similar number to 2017/18 (61 cases) and decrease from 2016/17 (91 cases).

The School of Psychology reported 2 cases of plagiarism during 2019/20 (no cases reported in 18/19), while the Schools of Biomedical Sciences and Nursing had increases of 11 in each School during 19/20. The School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Science reported an increase of 3 cases from 18/19. The Schools of Sport, Health Sciences and Geography and Environmental Sciences all reported decreases in plagiarism cases during 2019/20.

Aligned to the Digital Futures Strategy and the introduction of the University Policy on fully online submission of coursework, students are made aware that their assessment will be more robustly monitored for plagiarism. With the disruption of COVID-19 during Semester 2, the removal of on-campus examinations and the introduction of further online assessment, there was a greater need to emphasise the importance of not plagiarising work. Schools worked hard to remind students of the importance of referencing and of adhering to specified word counts. With the introduction of alternative assessment for Semester 2 on-campus examinations, Schools designed alternative assessment similar to the examination papers ensuring word counts were specified and designed the assessment so that it would reduce the opportunity for plagiarism.

Students are well informed of what plagiarism means and the framework of penalties that Schools will enforce and this is carried out an Induction for new and returning students. In the Faculty, Schools are complying with Faculty and University policy on Plagiarism, with Schools educating and supporting students to minimize cases of plagiarism. All Schools report that the plagiarism policy and processes are discussed with students from induction in Year 1 and across different year cohorts. In conjunction with the Library, the Faculty is using the Faculty's Guidelines on Harvard Referencing. The Faculty Guidelines have been disseminated in a short leaflet and a longer version for students and staff and are also available on BbLearn.

Many of our professional programmes have greater external requirements with regards to professional practice, and professional and regulatory bodies to ensure that our procedures and policy are adhered too, for example in the School of Nursing, plagiarism is considered a Fitness to Practice issue.

There were no incidences of contract cheating in the Faculty of Life & Health Sciences during 2019/20.

Table 1: The distribution of reported cases of plagiarism in the Faculty of Life & Health Sciences in 2019/20

Level	Biomedical Sciences	Geography & Environ- mental Sciences	Health Sciences	Nursing	Pharmacy & Pharm Sc	Psychology	Sport	TOTAL 19/20
3/4			4	2			1	7
5	2	2	3	10			3	20
6	5	4	4	2	1	2	1	19
7 Integrated Masters					4			4
PgD/MSc	13				2		1	16
TOTAL	20 (9)	6 (7)	11 (14)	14 (3)	7 (4)	2 (0)	6 (11)	66 (48)

Filter Dates: 20 September 2019– 17 September 2020. Figures in brackets indicate 18/19 totals

During 2019/20, the vast majority (98%) of all recorded plagiarism cases were first offences. At undergraduate level within the Faculty there was one second offence which was recorded in the School of Health Sciences, with the first offence being recorded in 18/19. At postgraduate no second offences were recorded.

Exemplars of School level practices are outlined below.

SCHOOL OF BIOMEDICAL SCIENCES

There were 20 recorded cases in School BMS during 19/20 – all first offences.

7 Undergraduate (NUT506, BMS301, BIO317, BIO509)

13 Postgraduate (BMS879, BMS858, BIO825, NUT711, OPT712, OPT706, BMS859)

Key points

Reported cases returned to a level more consistent with previous years (~16 incidences 17/18, ~30 incidences 16/17) after the brief incidence drop reported in 18/19 (8 incidences). A reporting tool to translate the current hard copy reporting system to a more efficient paperless approach that can interface with existing pipelines and data repositories, is required.

A lecture on avoidance of plagiarism is given to each year group as part of School of Biomedical Sciences' induction processes and will be scheduled in Semester 1, 2020. Currently in the School of Biomedical Sciences at least one module common to all students in first, second and final years uses electronic detection, this ensures a degree of continuity of message regarding plagiarism.

Induction Week. An online plagiarism lecture will be provided to UGs and PGs during the first week. The lecture covers the basics of plagiarism avoidance including University policy, detection, sanction.

SCHOOL OF GEOGRAPHY AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

The plagiarism register is confirmed as being up to-date with final entries being made after the June 2020 assessment period.

The plagiarism register was used on 6 occasions during the 2019-20 academic year which is one less than 2018-19. Of the 6 cases, 4 related to final year undergraduate students while 2 related to second year students. There were no offences registered at postgraduate level this year. All 6 cases were 1st offences. Two students plagiarized material from published sources for their dissertation and noted Covid stress as a factor.

It is clear that the vast majority of our students are taking cognisance of the advice and the good practice promoted through the School's Undergraduate Geography and Environmental Sciences induction and tutorial programme. No offences occurred in 1st year or at postgraduate level. There were no second offences recorded this year.

There are constant reminders during final year induction and throughout the year about the seriousness of plagiarism and the efforts that the School puts in to identifying it. Dissertations (and all assessed components thereof) in particular are carefully scrutinized and are checked through Turnitin and students are advised of this policy at the start of their final year. All student dissertations were submitted electronically and checked through Turnitin by a dedicated member of staff. Likewise, assignments are submitted electronically and routinely checked through Turnitin.

Within the School there continues to be a very clear policy which is aimed at teaching students from the start of their academic careers about good academic habits so that instances of plagiarism are minimized. This commences in first year with a session on plagiarism and referencing during induction week (Week 1) of the first semester. This is followed by a series of adviser tutorials in which sessions on plagiarism and referencing are key components. The School continues to remind and teach students about plagiarism and referencing in second and final year with induction reminders for all returning students. In addition to this, assessment criteria for coursework contain specific and identified mark allocations for referencing (where appropriate) so that students routinely get feedback on their approach to referencing. Students are also referred to the Faculty's Guidelines on Harvard Referencing and links to the guidelines are provided in the student support area for all programmes on Blackboard.

SCHOOL OF HEALTH SCIENCES

Staff within the School of Health Sciences adhere to the University's Plagiarism Policy and Procedures. Instances are dealt with by module coordinators, recorded and logged with the school administrative, and reported at Course Committee meetings. Students were asked to meet with the module coordinator and/or course director to discuss. The interviewers emphasised the seriousness of the offence of plagiarism and the ramifications of repeated offences.

All module handbooks detail the Plagiarism Policy, these can all be accessed through the

Blackboard learn area for each module. All students receive this information in induction period, week 1 of all classes and through rolling induction, particularly in year 1.

Synopsis of report

There have been 11 cases of plagiarism recorded within the School of Health Sciences during the 2019-20 academic year (3 less than the previous year), all at undergraduate level and none at postgraduate level. Four incidences occurred with first year students (one student had 2 offences which are being treated as first offence as submission dates were very close), three incidences in year 2 and four incidences in year 3. All but one incidence was a first offence.

SCHOOL OF NURSING

As per previous years, coursework continues to be submitted online, as per University policy, for both undergraduate and post graduate students. Turnitin remains the preferred method of electronic submission by academic staff. Established incidences of plagiarism are recorded on the central register and the appropriate penalty applied as per University policy. Fourteen plagiarism cases were registered within the School for 19/20. This is an increased number of cases from last year (three), however comparable to the preceding years ranging from six to fifteen. All cases were undergraduate students twelve of which were on BSc Hons Nursing (Adult) and two on the BSc Hons Health and Wellbeing programmes. There were no recorded incidences of contract cheating.

All cases were first offences. Students were interviewed and counselled, with penalties applied as per plagiarism policy (marks deducted based on the exclusion of the plagiarised work) with marks deducted accordingly.

Module coordinators/ course teams continue to guide and advise, to ensure all students are knowledgeable about plagiarism and its prevention, in an effort to continue to reduce all instances of plagiarism. Methods of prevention will continue to include referencing technique and encouraging students to avail of the opportunity to check their work in Turnitin prior to their final submission.

Course directors/ module coordinators /teams continue to alert students to the relevant programme regulations, NMC guidance and the University policy is made available to students at induction, within module booklets and on Blackboard Learn. Students are expected and invited to engage with their studies advisor each semester and are aware they can contact their studies advisor at any time, they also have opportunity for formative feedback throughout the academic year. Module coordinators endeavour to change the assignment titles annually to reduce the risk of plagiarism. Students have library induction; library sessions and REF works booked with the subject librarian and will be made aware of how this can be managed in the online and how to contact their subject librarian. There are resources on VLE and module teams provide clear guidance and advice to students regarding assignment submission, writing skills, plagiarism and use of Turnitin discussed during academic writing sessions and continually reinforced.

SCHOOL OF PHARMACY AND PHARMACEUTICAL SCIENCES

Programmes: 6332 MPharm; 7233 MSci Pharm Biosciences; 7509 / 7510 MSc Pharm Sci; 7769 MSc Pharm Mgmt; 6962 BSc Pharm Sci; 7717 BSc Applied Pharm Sci; MSc Dental programmes

i.   **Plagiarism Policies and Procedures**

All instances of plagiarism that are not formative are dealt with in line with University's Plagiarism Policy. Students are introduced to the University Policy, a paper detailing good practice and highlighting plagiarism, and Turnitin® on their BBLearn course support area and in the Student Handbook. Study Skills in first year of the undergraduate programmes introduces students to academic writing and plagiarism and students are directed to Skills+ on BBlearn as an additional resource. In addition, further resources are provided in modules in which students have significant pieces of academic writing to complete.

Turnitin®

The School uses the plagiarism detection software, Turnitin®, for student submission of all computer-generated coursework assessments, so is used in all modules in all programmes.

Within first year students are introduced to Turnitin® during a workshop on plagiarism, and a session on referencing, both within PHA105 Professional Practice Skills 1 and BIO130 Professional Practice for Biosciences. For other programmes, information is available in Course Support Areas and the library website for students.

ii.   **Issues arising**

Plagiarism Offences

There were 7 plagiarism offences for the School in 2019/20.

A rise from two to five offences was seen on the MPharm programme (6332). These were all first offences and three of these were directly attributable to poor referencing technique rather than a deliberate attempt to cheat. The students had a formative discussion with the MPharm course director, after which they were sent a copy of the Wilmott and Harrison paper which is felt to illustrate clearly how to correctly use reference information (Wilmott and Harrison, 2003. Journal of Biological Education, 37 (3), pp. 139-140) in addition to a verbal explanation of the University Plagiarism policy.

The remaining two offences were identified within the Written Unobserved Structured Clinical Examination (WUSCE), which was an assessment brought in as a response to COVID-19 to replace the OSCE assessment. In one station, the counselling station, students needed to write information for a patient rather than provide verbal counselling to a patient on their prescribed medication. This usually (in an OSCE) involves the student reading off relevant information from the Patient Information Leaflet (PIL) provided with the medication. Two students copied information word-for-word from the PIL.

There was one offence on the MSc Pharmaceutical Science programme (7509) which was unfortunately a second offence. The Course Director got in touch with the student an explained the plagiarism policy again and penalties that would apply, and implications of any

further instances. The students had previously been provided with the Wilmott and Harrison paper.

The other offence was on the MSc Clinical Orthodontics programme (8019). This was a first offence. The student was interviewed by the education lead and relevant staff member at the College of Medicine and Dentistry in Birmingham. They were signposted to relevant sources of information to help with their academic writing.

Penalties imposed

For the first offences, in line with the framework of penalties for plagiarism offences, a reduction in marks was utilised. This reduction ranged from 5% to 20% determined by the quantitative amount of material for each question that was plagiarised. Formative interviews were held with the module co-ordinator and/or Course Director for all first offences. During these interviews, students were shown their Turnitin reports and asked to explain the nature of the plagiarism that took place.

For the WUSCE offences as the plagiarism resulted in a fail in the station due to a fail in professional behaviour, this resulted in an overall fail in the WUSCE. A second attempt was provided.

For the second offence, in line with the framework for plagiarism offences, a mark of zero was awarded for the assignment and a resit opportunity provided.

Plagiarism reports

Plagiarism reports were completed and inputted into the Plagiarism Register by the School Clerical Officer.

Contract Cheating

There were no instances of Contract Cheating for the School in 2019/20.

Trends

In 2018/19 there were 4 recorded plagiarism offences, so this is a slight increase. By embedding the use of Turnitin® into all modules using computer-generated submissions, students have become aware that no instance of plagiarism will be missed. In addition, the suitability of WUSCE for assessing counselling skills is being questioned. The School will continue to monitor the situation. Students are becoming more familiar with the use of the software and realising the importance of correct academic writing technique, which is an important skill for them to learn. Coupled with the Fitness to Practice issues around plagiarism for pharmacy students, the School is confident that by detecting these issues, we are strengthening the development of our students.

SCHOOL OF PSYCHOLOGY

In the School of Psychology, students are informed of the Universities plagiarism policy at induction, and through student handbooks, as well as the completion of exercises in Year 1 tutorials. In the 2019/20 Academic Year, 2 cases of plagiarism were identified in Year 3 of the Undergraduate BSc Hons Psychology programme (3834) (PSY522: Psychopharmacology).

The Course Director (Dr Andrea Furey) was alerted to these cases by the module coordinator (Dr Eun-Mee Kim) and subsequently contacted both students in order to ask them to attend for interview as per University regulations. Dr Furey reported that both students had ongoing health issues and we unable to attend for interview. Interviews were to be held at a later date, but this became impossible due to closure of the University and Covid-19 related restrictions. Students were informed of the penalty of plagiarising.

SCHOOL OF SPORT

The School is Sport adheres to the University's Plagiarism Policy and Procedures across all programmes. Instances are recorded at school level and dealt with by module coordinators and reported at Course Committee meetings.

All module handbooks detail the Plagiarism Policy so that all students receive this information in week 1 of class with module handbooks posted in the module area of BBL.

There have been 6 cases of plagiarism recorded within the School of Sport during the 19/20 academic year, 5 at undergraduate level (all first offences) and 1 postgraduate offences (first offence).

UUBS Plagiarism Report 2019/20

The report for UUBS, and for UUBS related provision in QAHE (as at 18/08/20), covers a total of 48 students and 25 students (with 1 student having 4 and 4 students having 2 'concurrent' cases) respectively (73 students in total). These are summarised as follows:

UUBS

Department	Level/Year	Nature of offence
Accounting Finance & Economics (AFE)	23 cases in total, all at undergraduate level across 5 separate courses, mainly from first (7) and second (12) year. 2 of these offences were exam related (in possession of a mobile phone). The remainder were coursework related.	All but one were first offences (with follow-up support and guidance given). 8 second year students on the BSc Business Technology (Deloitte) programme had been sharing information digitally during an online assessment for COM118 (Databases). All students were met with, Deloitte were also informed and these students received a formal written warning relating to professional misconduct. This was part of a series of tests, which all have now passed. The Module Coordinator is also changing assessment format.
Management Leadership & Marketing (MLM)	16 students, 13 undergraduates, across the 4 courses (and 1 Exchange student) and 3 postgraduate students on the MBA with Advanced Practice. The undergraduates were mainly second years (9) with 3 first year students. The 1 final year student involved had been found in possession of a mobile phone in the exam (Strategic Management).	All were first offences (with further support and guidance given). The 9 undergraduate second years were picked up in relation to the Innovation and Entrepreneurship module, running on 2 courses (MLD, now Management and HRM) and the Module Coordinator and Course Directors for each programme have met with all these students to discuss. All had failed to appreciate what they could/could not do, so the Course Directors have organised subsequent library sessions to focus on plagiarism and how to avoid it. A few students also admitted to leaving the assignment to the last

		minute and having copied and pasted from journals. Time management techniques were also discussed with these students.
Hospitality & Tourism Management (HTM)	1 undergraduate student (year 1)	A first offence on coursework with formative support given.
Global Business & Enterprise (GBE)	9 instances, involving 8 students. These included 8 postgraduates (MSc International Business) and 1 undergraduate (year 2). All were coursework related.	All were first offences, with 1 student being detected on 2 concurrent modules. This student was interviewed, as is the norm, with the seriousness of the offences made clear. At time of writing, 4 potential cases of contract cheating (MSc IB international students) have been identified at supplementary assessment stage, from students who had heavily plagiarised first time round. Two students have been interviewed to date.

QAHE (Birmingham & London). Incidences only recorded for QAHE London students this year (with much larger numbers of students in London)

QAHE Campus/Course	Level/Year	Nature of offence
QAHE, London MSc International Business, Extended (Grad Cert) and Advanced Practice and MSc Marketing.	10 students, across 2 courses, for coursework. All were postgraduate, including 7 on MSc International Business variants (ie 4 Extended and 3 Extended with AP) and 3 on variants of MSc Marketing (1 MSc and 2 Extended with AP). In finalising this report there are a further 15 cases that should be on the Register (the paperwork had been forwarded by QAHE but had not been uploaded – the register will be updated): 3 additional cases on the Grad Cert/Ext MSc IB, 3 additional cases on the MSc	Mainly first offences although 1 student had plagiarised across all 4 modules with a further 4 students plagiarising on 2 modules. These students have been interviewed and the seriousness of the multiple offences emphasised. Significant remedial activity has been put in place, as required. For the remaining students, most were international students and students who have had a notable gap in study. Additional sessions/activities have been designed, to be conducted during induction,

	IB, 1 additional case on MSc IB with HRM and 8 additional cases on the MBA – 25 in total for QAHE.	during designated seminars and through the Academic Community of Excellence (ACE) Team to help students to obtain a clearer (and early) understanding of what academic misconduct is and to help them identify appropriate ways to conduct research as well as appropriately reference sources. Given that many of the interviews highlighted that students resorted to poor practice due to feeling under time pressure, additional support and advisory sessions will be put forward to aid students with organisation, planning and time management. QAHE will also be creating short 'how to' videos to help to act as a quick reference guide for students on academic misconduct to referencing to further support with this matter.

Comments/Ongoing Action

- A few exam-related offences were detected (Semester 1 only as exams moved to remote alternatives in Semesters 2/3).
- Work continues in UUBS and QAHE, both in the detection and reporting of plagiarism (and contract cheating) instances but also in educating students proactively from the outset, and at various points through their studies, in how to source and correctly reference appropriate materials. We have gained more experience in detecting occurrence and more often than not, it is naivety and/or confusion around the sourcing/acknowledgement of material.
- Year 1 skills development modules are cited by a number of Departments as an important starting point but the message is then reinforced throughout the courses/years. The subject librarians play a very important role in this regard and are active and important members of the Faculty team. Increased electronic submission of written assignments through Turnitin (as part of the Electronic Management of Assessment policy) has assisted. Staff are also reminded to ensure assessment is revised on a regular basis and course teams have met (for example joint QAHE/GBE activity in Magee) to consider assessment, consistency of approach and 'designing out' plagiarism.
- Last year, UUBS was liaising with the Office for Digital Learning, to consider a project which we hoped to run jointly between ourselves and QAHE, to pilot the Turnitin Authorship Investigate Tool. It had been agreed by the PVC Education/UUBS ED and QAHE that we would jointly pay for 2 licences and Andy Jaffrey was progressing

this. Following some due diligence conversations with pilot institutions, prior to commencing Procurement, there were a number of issues raised that were not obvious during sales calls with Turnitin. This, combined with the pandemic teaching response, has delayed progressing a pilot.