

**ANNUAL REPORT ON PLAGIARISM OFFENCES IN 2016/17****1 INTRODUCTION**

The Annual Report on Plagiarism Offences in 2016/17 comprises data from the Central Plagiarism Register and Faculty commentaries. The information has been compiled in accordance with the Faculty structure that was in place during 2016/17.

The record of offences for the past five years is set out at Appendix 1. The number of recorded offences in 2016/17 is lower than in previous years, involving just under 1% of the student population. As in 2015/16, more offences occurred at Level 6 than at any other level. Following a notable increase in offences at postgraduate level during 2015/16, the number of incidences of plagiarism reported at this level in 2016/17 was reduced by almost 40%. The vast majority of offences in 2016/17, as in 2015/16, were first offences and there has been a decrease in detected repeat offending. The overall level of plagiarism offences remains low.

**2 RECORDING OF PLAGIARISM OFFENCES ON THE CENTRAL REGISTER IN 2016/17****Plagiarism Offences recorded in 2016/17**

The report generated from the Central Plagiarism Register (central register) for 2016/17 covers the period 10 September 2016 (the day after the deadline for entering offences for 2015/16) to 9 September 2017 (the day after the deadline for entering offences for 2016/17). The following observations are therefore based on that period, unless otherwise stated. The record relates to University students (including those at outcentres and QAHE). The central register does not hold records for Associate Students of Partner Institutions, nor for PhD research students, but the Research Office reports separately on this.

The total number of plagiarism offences (relating to taught courses) recorded on the central register for 2016/17 is **216** (166 undergraduate (77%); 50 postgraduate (23%)). This is significantly lower (33%) than the 324 offences recorded for 2015/16 at 3 October 2016. The total number of cases recorded on the central register for 2016/17 rises slightly to 219 when cases for that academic year recorded after the reporting cut-off date of 8 September 2017 are included (as at 3 October 2017).

**Table 1. Distribution of Plagiarism Offences across Levels of Study comparing Data for 2016/17 and 2015/16**

<b>Level of Study</b>	<b>Number of Cases in 2016/17</b>	<b>Number of Cases in 2015/16</b>
<b>Level 3/4</b>	<b>55 (25.5%)</b>	<b>67 (20.7%)</b>
<b>Level 5</b>	<b>42 (19.4%)</b>	<b>87 (26.8%)</b>
<b>Level 6</b>	<b>69 (31.9%)</b>	<b>90 (27.5%)</b>
<b>Level 7 (Integrated Master's)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Postgraduate Level 7</b>	<b>50 (23.2%)</b>	<b>80 (25%)</b>

There has been a decrease in the number of offences at all Levels recorded on the central register for 2016/17. The number of offences at Level 5 has more than halved and the number of offences at postgraduate level has reduced by over a third. These two levels therefore show a reduction in their respective proportion of the total, with Levels 4 and 6 showing a rise.

**Table 2. Comparison of Type of Offence in 2016/17 and 2015/16**

<b>Offence</b>	<b>Number of Cases in 2016/17</b>	<b>Number of Cases in 2015/16</b>
<b>First Offence</b>	<b>205 (94.9%)</b>	<b>284 (87.7%)</b>
<b>Second Offence</b>	<b>10 (4.6%)</b>	<b>37 (11.4%)</b>
<b>Third Offence</b>	<b>1 (0.5%)</b>	<b>2 (0.6%)</b>
<b>Fourth Offence</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1 (0.3%)</b>

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. While 2015/16 saw an increase in the number of second offences, 2016/17 has seen a substantial decrease in the number of second offences recorded.

**Table 3. Distribution of Type of Offences across Levels of Study in 2016/17**

	<b>1<sup>st</sup> Offence</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Offence</b>	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Offence</b>	<b>4<sup>th</sup> Offence</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Level 4</b>	<b>55 (100%)</b>	0	0	0	<b>55 (100%)</b>
<b>Level 5</b>	<b>39 (92.9%)</b>	<b>3 (7.1%)</b>	0	0	<b>42 (100%)</b>
<b>Level 6</b>	<b>62 (89.9%)</b>	<b>6 (8.7%)</b>	<b>1 (1.4%)</b>	0	<b>69 (100%)</b>
<b>Level 7</b>	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Postgraduate</b>	<b>49 (98%)</b>	<b>1 (2%)</b>	0	0	<b>50 (100%)</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>205</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>1</b>	0	

#### **Level 4 Offences**

While the number of first offences has remained more or less the same (57 first offences were recorded in 2015/16), no second, third or fourth offences were recorded during 2016/17.

#### **Level 5 Offences**

There has been a significant decrease from 76 to 39 in the number of first offences at Level 5 and the number of second offences has also decreased from 11 (in 2015/16) to three. As in 2015/16, there were no third or fourth offences in 2016/17.

#### **Level 6 Offences**

One third offence has been recorded at Level 6. The number of first offences has decreased (from 72 in 2015/16) and the number of third offences (one) has remained the same.

#### **Level 7 Offences**

There were no offences recorded at Level 7 (Integrated Master's degrees) in 2016/17.

#### **Postgraduate Offences**

There has been a significant decrease in the number of offences in postgraduate courses in 2016/17 (80 were recorded in 2015/16). There were no third or fourth offences recorded in 2016/17 and only one second offence.

## **Accuracy of Data**

In earlier years it was necessary to exercise caution regarding the accuracy of the data as there were discrepancies between the figures reported by the Faculties and the number of plagiarism cases recorded on the central register. It is, however, encouraging to note that, in 2016/17 as in 2015/16, there is little or no difference in the two sets of figures for the majority of faculties, as illustrated in the table below. The exception is the Faculty of Computing and Engineering.

Faculty	Art, Design & the Built Environment	Arts	Computing & Engineering	Life & Health Sciences	Social Sciences	Ulster University Business School	Access, Digital & Distributed Learning	TOTAL
Cases reported by Faculty	23	21	25	91	22	26	0	208
Cases recorded on Central Register [as at 3.10.17]	23	21 <sup>1</sup>	35 [+ 2 late]	91 <sup>1</sup>	22	24 [+1 late]	0	216 [+3 late]

<sup>1</sup> One student is associated with two offences.

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

As in previous years, Faculties and Access, Digital and Distributed Learning, and the Research Office were asked to report on issues arising and actions proposed, or taken, in light of the 2016/17 records and on trends since the introduction of the Plagiarism Policy in 2006/07. A summary and full reports are available at the Annex. Faculties continue to highlight preventative and educational measures taken and draw attention to the increase in the use of Turnitin software.

The final two columns at Appendix 2 indicate the proportion of offences recorded in each Faculty as well as the proportion of the student population (head count) in each. While somewhat crude, this serves as a rough indicator, in the context of very low incidences and all other things being equal, of whether records are significantly above or below what might be expected. The two Faculties which sit at the extremes are Life and Health Sciences (13.8% above its population) and Ulster University Business School (12.2% below) as in previous years. There is however no acceptable benchmark level. One may speculate as to the reasons for variability – extent of vigilance, complacency, effective assessment design, opportunity, ‘cultural factors’ - but Faculties will know how these factors relate to the extent of recorded plagiarism and the effectiveness of the measures taken to educate students on the topic and detect incidents.

The Research Office has confirmed that there were no instances of plagiarism identified during the 2016/17 academic year. [Reported for 2015/16: 0]

## 4 CONCLUSIONS

The number of plagiarism offences recorded during 2016/17 has decreased in comparison with the number of offences reported during the previous academic year.

The decrease in the number of plagiarism cases reported during the 2016/17 academic year could be attributed to a number of factors:

- a decrease in plagiarism within the University as a consequence of improved assessment design by staff;
- improved student awareness of the expectations of academic writing and the avoidance of plagiarism and of the plagiarism penalties;
- an increase in the use of Turnitin to make draft submissions of assignments.

Guidelines for the Use of Turnitin were endorsed by the Learning and Teaching Committee at its meeting in June 2016 (Min 16.63). These are introduced to staff and students as part of their induction processes. These guidelines are intended to assist staff in the use of Turnitin and to improve students' understanding of academic writing.

It will be interesting to observe the full impact of the University's Electronic Management of Assessment and Feedback Policy, approved by the Learning and Teaching Committee in June 2016 (Min 16.64), on the number of incidences of plagiarism recorded in future years. This has expected 100% electronic submission, where practicable, of written coursework assignments since semester 2 2016/17.

## 5 RECOMMENDATIONS

- (i) that Faculties ensure that the University's Plagiarism Policy and Procedures and penalties (2012) continue to be observed and rigorously applied across all programmes;
- (ii) that Faculties, Access, Digital and Distributed Learning, and the Doctoral College in respect of MRes candidates, ensure that all plagiarism offences in 2017/18 are recorded at the time the offence is established and no later than the cut-off date of 7 September 2018;
- (iii) that Faculties, Access, Digital and Distributed Learning, and the Doctoral College provide a report to the Academic Office by 21 September 2018, with a commentary on issues arising and actions proposed or taken in light of the 2017/18 records and the use of Turnitin.

## 6 CONTRACT CHEATING

The Quality Assurance Agency published on 9 October its report on 'Contracting to Cheat in Higher Education, how to address Contract Cheating, the use of Third-Party Services and Essay Mills' <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/Publications/Documents/Plagiarism-in-Higher-Education-2016.pdf>.

Faculties should take account of the guidance as they review module assessment strategies and the information they provide to students on academic practice and

integrity. 'Contract Cheating' was explicitly added as an assessment offence to regulation 35 of the Regulations Governing Examinations in 2012 (LTC Min 12.82 refers). It should be investigated and dealt with under the Student Disciplinary Procedures section 2, for offences other than plagiarism in coursework as per clause 2.1 "Where a lecturer, supervisor or other member of staff suspects that a candidate has committed an offence such as engaging another person to undertake the assessment ...", rather than under the process at section 3, Dealing with Offences of Plagiarism.

**TOTAL NUMBER OF PLAGIARISM OFFENCES (TAUGHT COURSES) REPORTED DURING 2016/17, 2015/16, 2014/15, 2013/14 and 2012/13**

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 4	Level 5	Level 6	Level 7 [[Integrated Master's]			1 <sup>st</sup> offence	2 <sup>nd</sup> offence	3 <sup>rd</sup> offence	4 <sup>th</sup> offence	
2016/17	55	42	69	0	50	0	205	10	1	0	216 <sup>1</sup>
2015/16	67	87	90	0	80	0	284	37	2	1	324 <sup>#</sup>
2014/15	93	120	74	5	32	0	296	22	4	2	324 <sup>***</sup>
2013/14	58	130	64	0	31	1	255	23	5	0	284 <sup>^</sup>
2012/13	48	129	60	0	34	0	243	21	7	0	271 <sup>**</sup>

\*\* An additional 9 cases for 2012/13 were entered on the central register after the cut-off date, bringing the total to 280 (as at 2 October 2013).

<sup>^</sup> An additional 11 cases for 2013/14 were entered on the central register after the cut-off date, bringing the total to 295 (as at 1 October 2014).

<sup>\*\*\*</sup> An additional 18 cases for 2014/15 were entered on the central register after the cut-off date, bringing the total to 342 (as at 1 October 2015).

<sup>#</sup> This is the total number of plagiarism offences recorded on the central register as at 3 October 2016.

<sup>1</sup> 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).

**PLAGIARISM OFFENCES RECORDED BY FACULTIES ON THE PLAGIARISM REGISTER FOR 2016/17 at 10.09.17**

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 (2015/16 as at 03.10.16 in parentheses)	% of Total Offences	Student Population (%) 2016/17
	Level 4	Level 5	Level 6	Level 7			1 <sup>st</sup> offence	2 <sup>nd</sup> offence	3 <sup>rd</sup> offence	4 <sup>th</sup> offence			
Art, Design and the Built Environment	14	2	7	0	0	0	21	2	0	0	23 (21)	10.6%	2780 (11.5%)
Arts	6	11	4	0	0	0	19	2	0	0	21 (18)	9.8%	1720 (7.1%)
Computing and Engineering	12	8	15	0	0	0	34	1	0	0	35 (32)	16.2%	3073 (12.7%)
Life and Health Sciences	11	21	27	0	32	0	85	5	1	0	91 (190)	42.1%	6879 (28.3%)
Social Sciences	8	0	8	0	6	0	22	0	0	0	22 (37)	10.2%	3545 (14.6%)
Ulster University Business School	4	0	8	0	12	0	24	0	0	0	24 (22)	11.1%	5656 (23.3%)
Access, Digital and Distributed Learning	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0 (4)	0%	605 (2.5%)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>205</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>216</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>24258 (100%)</b>

\*Student Population 2016/17 (Academic Plan 17/18)



### Summary of Faculty Reports

#### **ACCESS, DIGITAL AND DISTRIBUTED LEARNING**

Total number of plagiarism cases reported by ADDL for 2016/17 **0**

[Total number of plagiarism cases reported by ADDL for 2015/16: no report received]

The report from ADDL states that the non-existence of plagiarism offences is partly owing to the range of programmes for which ADDL has responsibility and the nature of assessment used.

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

#### **Action taken/proposed**

- adoption of online submission for a number of modules across the undergraduate and postgraduate flexible frameworks.

#### **FACULTY OF ART, DESIGN AND THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT**

Total number of plagiarism cases reported by Faculty for 2016/17 **23**

[Total number of plagiarism cases reported by Faculty for 2015/16: 21]

<b>SCHOOL</b>	<b>NUMBER OF PLAGIARISM CASES 2016/17</b>
Belfast School of Architecture	1
Belfast School of Art	1
School of the Built Environment	21

All of the reported cases of plagiarism within the Faculty during 2016/17 occurred at undergraduate level.

#### **Action taken/proposed at School/Faculty Level**

- assessment strategy within the Belfast School of Art is based on the production of individual, creative pieces of work and tutors highlight plagiarism policy and penalties at every stage of learning;
- plagiarism and associated penalties discussed with students at intervals, particularly at induction/welcome back sessions;
- staff continue to design assessment which does not lend itself to plagiarism;
- assessment submission through Turnitin encouraged.

## FACULTY OF ARTS

Total number of plagiarism cases reported by Faculty for 2016/17 **21**

[Total number of plagiarism cases reported by Faculty for 2015/16 19]

SCHOOL	NUMBER OF PLAGIARISM CASES 2016/17
School of Creative Arts and Technologies	9
School of English and History	4
School of Irish Language and Literature	0
School of Modern Languages	2
School of Media, Film and Journalism	6

The Faculty reports that 90% of the plagiarism cases recorded during 2016/17 were first offences and that the majority of offences occurred at Level 5. No offences were reported at postgraduate level.

The Faculty reports that, as in 2015/16, there were no documented cases of plagiarism in the School of Irish Language and Literature.

### Action taken/proposed at School/Faculty Level

- all schools included plagiarism warnings in course handbooks;
- increased use of Turnitin;
- advice on how to avoid plagiarism given in modules.

## FACULTY OF COMPUTING AND ENGINEERING

Total number of plagiarism cases reported by Faculty for 2016/17 **25**  
[35 recorded on the central register]

[Total number of plagiarism cases reported by Faculty for 2015/16: 33]

SCHOOL	NUMBER OF PLAGIARISM CASES 2016/17
School of Computing and Mathematics	20
School of Computing and Information Engineering	0
School of Computing and Intelligent Systems	0
School of Engineering	5

The Faculty reports that the significant majority of all cases recorded during 2016/17 occurred at undergraduate level, with only one reported case at postgraduate level.

### **Action taken/proposed at School/Faculty Level**

- students continue to be informed/reminded of University's plagiarism policy and penalties at programme level;
- Heads of School continue to remind staff of need to update plagiarism register;
- submission of coursework through Turnitin encouraged, where appropriate;
- staff continue to design assessment to avoid opportunities for plagiarism.

### **FACULTY OF LIFE AND HEALTH SCIENCES**

Total number of plagiarism cases reported by Faculty for 2016/17 **91**

[Total number of plagiarism cases reported by Faculty for 2015/16: 109 + 62]

[Note: an additional 62 cases of plagiarism relating to the SAAD programme were entered on the central register after the deadline of 9 September 2016]

<b>SCHOOL</b>	<b>NUMBER OF PLAGIARISM CASES 2016/17</b>
School of Biomedical Sciences	33
School of Geography and Environmental Sciences	4
School of Health Sciences	13
School of Nursing	10
School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences	11
School of Psychology	7
School of Sport	13

The Faculty reports a decrease in the number of cases of plagiarism recorded during 2016/17. The Schools of Health Sciences and Sport reported fewer cases of plagiarism than in the previous year, while there was a rise in reported cases of plagiarism in the School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences. The number of incidences of plagiarism in the Schools of Geography and Environmental Sciences, and Psychology has remained consistent with previous years.

### **Action taken/proposed at School/Faculty Level**

- staff continue to design assessment that avoids opportunities for plagiarism;
- students well informed of meaning of plagiarism and framework of penalties;
- plagiarism is a standing agenda item on Faculty and School Learning and Teaching Committees;
- plagiarism policy and processes are discussed with students from induction in Year 1 and across different year cohorts;
- Faculty Guidelines on Harvard Referencing are disseminated in a short leaflet and available on BbLearn;
- lecture on avoidance of plagiarism is given to each year group as part of School of Biomedical Sciences' induction process;
- widespread use of Turnitin;

- Plagiarism Working Group convened during 2016/17 within School of Health Sciences;
- complete online submission for undergraduate and postgraduate students within the School of Nursing with Turnitin the preferred method of electronic submission;
- module handbooks provide information on plagiarism;
- resources on VLE;
- module teams provide clear guidance and advice to students on assignment submission, writing skills, plagiarism and use of Turnitin;
- assignment titles changed annually to reduce risk of plagiarism;
- plagiarism workshop developed by School of Psychology.

## **FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES**

Total number of plagiarism cases reported by Faculty for 2016/17 **22**

[Total number of plagiarism cases reported by Faculty for 2015/16: 36]

<b>SCHOOL</b>	<b>NUMBER OF PLAGIARISM CASES 2016/17</b>
School of Communication	5
School of Education	1
School of Law	2
School of Criminology, Politics and Social Policy including Economics	5
School of Sociology and Applied Social Studies	9

The Faculty reports an overall decrease in the number of plagiarism offences recorded during 2016/17. Plagiarism offences occurred in all schools.

### **Action taken/proposed at School/Faculty Level**

- increased student awareness of the plagiarism policy;
- increase in electronic submission of assessments via Turnitin.

## ULSTER UNIVERSITY BUSINESS SCHOOL

Total number of plagiarism cases reported by the Faculty for 2016/17 26  
[Note: one offence reported for 2016/17 relates to the academic year 2015/16]

[Total number of plagiarism cases reported by the Faculty for 2015/16: 13]

DEPARTMENT	NUMBER OF PLAGIARISM CASES 2016/17
Department of Accounting, Finance and Economics	7
Department of Business and Enterprise	0
Department of Hospitality and Tourism Management	0
Department of International Business	2
Department of Management and Leadership	1
Department of Marketing, Entrepreneurship and Strategy	4
Business Institute	0
QAHE [Birmingham]	0
QAHE [London]	12

Of the 26 cases recorded within the Faculty during 2016/17, 15 were at undergraduate level and 11 occurred at postgraduate level. All offences recorded during 2016/17 were first offences. One case was recorded on the plagiarism register after the cut-off date.

### **Action taken/proposed at School/Faculty Level**

- work continues in UUBS and QAHE in detecting and reporting plagiarism offences and in educating students at the beginning and at various points throughout their studies in how to source and reference correctly;
- use of Turnitin.

## **Full Reports received from ADDL and Faculties**

### **Access, Digital & Distributed Learning**

#### **Plagiarism Offences Recorded During 2016/17**

The Director of Access, Digital & Distributed Learning (ADDL) has confirmed that no plagiarism offences have been recorded for 2016/17.

The report indicates that the non-existence of plagiarism offences is partly owing to the range of programmes for which ADDL has responsibility and the nature of assessment used.

The Postgraduate Certificate in Professional Practice supports graduate interns in completing projects which are contextualized within their employment, resulting in bespoke responses from students, which relate specifically to individualised work based learning contexts, thus minimizing 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 a number of modules across the undergraduate and postgraduate flexible frameworks, which are offered as curriculum enhancement and or CPD opportunities will enable module tutors to check student work more rigorously in relation to any threat of plagiarism. This will be monitored and reviewed by the respective programme team.

#### **Proposed Action**

No action proposed.

## **FACULTY OF ARTS, HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES**

### **Report on Instances of Plagiarism in Academic Year 2016/17**

As the reporting period for plagiarism is within the Academic Year 16/17, this report is structured under the former Faculty of Arts, Faculty of Social Sciences and Belfast School of Art.

#### **Former Faculty of Arts**

The former Faculty of Arts has reviewed instances of plagiarism recorded on the Central Plagiarism Register during academic year 2016/17 across its five teaching schools. Table 1 summarises the instances, by School, in 2015/16 and 2016/17 for comparison\*.

#### **Faculty Summary**

- In total, 21 instances were recorded, compared with 19 in 2015/16, involving 20 students (1.3% of the total Faculty student population). There were no recorded instances for part-time students:

School of English and History	4
School of Modern Languages	2
Schools of Media, Film and Journalism	6
School of Creative Arts and Technologies	9

- As reported last year, there was a decrease in the number of instances in the School of English and History (4 cf. 8 at undergraduate level), which had recorded the greatest number of offences in the preceding two years.
- There was an increase in the number of cases in the School of Media, Film and Journalism (6 cf. 1).
- As reported last year, there was an increase in the number of instances in the School of Creative Arts and Technologies (9 cf. 6). As in 2015/16, offences were confined to modules in Music and Drama.
- As reported last year, there were no documented cases in the School of Irish Language and Literature.
- In contrast to 2015/16, when offences were relatively evenly spread across the years of study, the majority (57%) of offences were at level 5.
- No offences were recorded by taught postgraduate students, compared with 2 cases in the School of English and History in 2015/16.
- As in 2015/16, the majority (90%) of recorded instances were first offences, suggesting that the response to first offences effectively deterred recurrence.
- All of the schools included plagiarism warnings in course handbooks.

## **Heads of School Commentaries (Issues Arising and Action Taken)**

### School of English and History

The School has placed great emphasis on the detection of plagiarism and in advising all students of the seriousness of this offence and poor academic practice. This was done consistently across all modules and especially in the year one study skills modules. The use of Turnitin was robust across the programmes. The Head of School sees the decline in the reportage of plagiarism as a success of this practice; students avoid an offence that they have been heavily warned about and trained to avoid.

### School of Modern Languages

Turnitin was used in the submission of essays and dissertations for students in modern languages systematically across the subject areas of French, German and Spanish. The number of cases reported in 2016/17 was the same as that of the previous year and represents 2.5% of the appropriate student cohort (2 cases). It was particularly noteworthy that the newly appointed lecturer in German (as part of the teach-out) required all students to submit all coursework to Turnitin for the first time. This has provided a useful incentive to students to ensure compliance with plagiarism policies.

Students taking dissertations all received research methodology preparation workshops at the beginning of their dissertation modules, part of which included advice on plagiarism. It should also be noted that all students of modern languages undertook a year one module at the start of their course, aimed at developing language learning skills and this included advice on referencing and acknowledging research sources.

### School of Media, Film and Journalism

As part of the School's *Digital First* Strategy, an increasing amount of coursework was assessed through Turnitin as the standard means of submission in 2016/17. The students, knowing this was the standard practice, became more aware of the dangers of plagiarism and that offences would be more easily detected. This awareness contributed to a reduction in the number of cases detected via Turnitin. The majority of cases detected by the software involved year one students, who were probably unfamiliar with the likelihood of detection in digital submissions.

The majority of offences were detected through staff vigilance. The three cases in module MED305 were initially detected by the marker and confirmed by Turnitin. This module had a higher than normal enrolment in 2016/17 and there was therefore a higher probability of an offence occurring, in addition to the vigilance of the marker. In the longer term, with full implementation of electronic management of assessment and feedback, all text material in the School (now within the School of Communication and Media) will be subjected to Turnitin.

It is noted that the School receives a significant amount of coursework in the form of artefacts such as photography and that there is no originality checking system as yet for this type of assessment.



### School of Creative Arts and Technologies

Despite an increase in the induction time taken to make students aware of the types of activities which are considered to be plagiarism, and specific sections in course handbooks, the number of instances of plagiarism has increased. This is due in turn to increased staff vigilance around the assessment processes. It is also felt that in the two disciplines where the offences were most apparent, there is for students a tension between the practice work and the understanding of what constitutes acceptable theorisation of this practice. Students are now being made aware that material provided as contextualisation for practice must also follow the same guidelines as any other piece of written work.

As in other practice areas, there is no mechanism, however, for defining and intervention where such practice is felt to be derivative.

### **Former Faculty of Social Sciences 2016/17**

This report is based on offences uploaded to the Central Online Plagiarism Register (COPR) between 21 September 2016 and 28 August 2017 (the report for 2015/16 included offences entered on the system up to 20 September 2016). The COPR records offences by School as follows:

<b>School</b>	<b>No. of Offences</b>			<b>No. of Students</b>		
	2016/17	2015/16	2014/15	2016/17	2015/16	2014/15
Communication	5	0	5	5	0	5
Criminology, Politics and Social Policy (CPSP)	5	13	4	5	13	4
Education	1	0	0	1	0	0
Law	2	6	2	2	5	2
Sociology and Applied Social Studies (SASS)	9	17	14	9	16	14
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>25</b>

There has been an overall decrease in the number of offences from the previous year, with a total of 22 offences reported, as opposed to 34 offences in 2015/16.

All 5 Schools have reported offences, as opposed to only 3 Schools in 2015/16. The 2 Schools with a nil report last year were the School of Education and the School of Communication. The School of Education only has one offence to report for this year, whilst the School of Communication has 5.

The School of Criminology, Politics and Social Policy and the School of Sociology and Applied Social Studies have both seen a significant drop in cases reported. The School of Law has also seen a decrease.

The following table shows the breakdown of plagiarism offences by course.

<b>Course</b>	<b>No. of Offences</b>
BSc Hons Communication with Public Relations (FT)	1
BSc Hons Communication with Advertising (FT)	3
PG Diploma Communication with Public Relations (FT)	1
LLB Hons Law with Criminology (FT)	1
LLB Hons Law (FT)	1
BSc Hons Criminology & Criminal Justice (FT)	4
BSc Hons Criminology & Criminal Justice (PT)	1
BSc Hons Sociology with Criminology (FT)	2
BSc Hons Sociology with Criminology (PT)	1
PG Diploma Professional Development in Social Work (PT)	4
BSc Hons Social Work	2
PGC Further Education (PT)	1
<b>TOTAL OFFENCES</b>	<b>22</b>

The decrease in the number of instances of plagiarism can be attributed to an increased student awareness of the plagiarism policy, and the increase in the electronic submission of assessments via Turnitin.

### **Belfast School of Art**

During 2015/2016, there was one recorded case of plagiarism relating to a final year dissertation. In 2016/17, there was also one recorded case of plagiarism relating to a second-year student's coursework on a web-based project. The plagiarism had been detected by tutors rather than by Turnitin. The low level of plagiarism detection is not a concern as the assessment strategy within the School is based on the production of individual, creative pieces of work, and tutors are knowledgeable about their own areas of specialism and can easily detect plagiarised work and concepts. Tutors underscore the Ulster plagiarism policy at every stage of learning, and students are aware of the consequences of the policy.

**Professor Ruth Fee**  
**Associate Dean, Education**  
**AHSS**

Table 1 Summary of Plagiarism Records in Academic Years 2015/16 and 2016/17 – Faculty of Arts

(Report filter dates for 2016/17: 26/9/16 – 11/9/17)

\* All CW, where practical, submitted online with effect from sem 2 2016/17

**2016/17**

School	UG Year 1		UG Year 2		UG Year 3		-	-	School Total	Faculty Totals	
	1st Offence	2nd Offence	1st Offence	2nd Offence	1st Offence	2nd Offence				Total 1st offences	Total 2nd offences
EH	3		1						4	19	5
LAN			2						2	2	12
MFJ	2		3		1				6	4	
CAT			5	1	2	1			9		
Total all schools									21		

**2015/16**

School	UG Year 1		UG Year 2		UG Year 3		UG Year 5	PG Year 1	School Total	Faculty Totals					
	1st Offence	2nd Offence	1st Offence	2nd Offence	1st Offence	2nd Offence	1st Offence	1st Offence		Total 1st offences	Total 2nd offences	Total UG year 1	Total UG year 2	Total UG year 3	Total UG year 5
EH	1		1	1	3		2	2	10	18	4	6	5	2	2
LAN	1		1						2	1					
MFJ					1				1						
CAT	2		3		1				6						
Total all schools									19♦						

♦ Total as at 9/9/16

# SCHOOL OF THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT AND BELFAST SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE

## PLAGIARISM REPORT, 2016-2017

Total number of plagiarism cases reported by the Schools for 2016-2017: 22

[Total number of plagiarism cases reported by Faculty for 2015-2016]: 21

SCHOOL	NUMBER OF PLAGIAIRSM OFFENCES
Belfast School of Architecture	1
School of the Built Environment	21

### School of The Built Environment

There were 21 instances of plagiarism recorded within the School of the Built Environment involving 21 students in comparison to 20 in the previous academic year. These instances were all within undergraduate programmes as follows: 13 year 1, 1 year 2 and 7 final year students. Two instances at UP2 were recorded.

Plagiarism and the associated penalties are discussed with students at a range of intervals and particularly at induction/welcome back sessions which are held with all years. Staff continue to work to design assessment which does not lend itself to plagiarism and in modules where this is more challenging reinforcement of what constitutes plagiarism, the plagiarism policy and penalties are reinforced. Assessment submission using Turnitin is also encouraged by and widely used in the School.

### Belfast School of Architecture

There was one plagiarism offence recorded within the Belfast School of Architecture including a second year student. This instance was a UP1.

The Schools within this report are now located within a new Faculty. The actions that pertain to the new structures are noted in the report for the Faculty of Computing, Engineering and the Built Environment.

## FACULTY OF COMPUTING AND ENGINEERING

### PLAGIARISM REPORT, 2016-2017

Total number of plagiarism cases reported by Faculty for 2016-2017: **25**  
[Total number of plagiarism cases reported by Faculty for 2015-2016]: **33**

SCHOOL	NUMBER OF PLAGIARISM OFFENCES
School of Computing and Mathematics	20
School of Computing and Information Engineering	0
School of Computing and Intelligent Systems	0
School of Engineering	5

The Faculty has seen a reduction in recorded plagiarism offences in 2016-2017. With the significant majority of all cases recorded occurring at undergraduate level. Indeed, there was only one recorded instance within postgraduate programmes.

#### School of Computing and Mathematics

*From September 5<sup>th</sup> 2016 to September 14<sup>th</sup> 2017*

No of plagiarism offences	Undergraduate / Post Graduate	No. of & Level of Offence
20	All Undergraduates	19 UP1, 1 UP2

The School of Computing recorded 20 offences in the 16/17 Academic Year. All were from undergraduate courses with 19 being UP1 and 1 being UP2.

From these 20 offences 12 were spread across a range of modules; however, 8 were related to final year dissertations. In recent years, the School has made available sample dissertations to students with the intention of assisting them structuring their own work. This has, however, had the potentially negative effect of students copying work which has been available to them electronically.

#### Action taken within School:

Moving forward the School has identified a number of steps that it will take in an effort to reduce the numbers of plagiarism offences:

- students will be briefed at induction on plagiarism and its ramifications;
- all modules where plagiarism have been identified, especially the Project module, will discuss the issue and its ramifications during the initial presentation of the module;
- sample documents which are made available electronically will be prepared in pdf with the feature of "Enable copying of content" disabled.

### **School of Computing and Information Engineering**

The School of Computing and Information Engineering had no recorded cases of plagiarism in 2016-2017 in comparison to one in 2015-2016.

### **School of Computing and Intelligent Systems**

The School of Computing and Information Engineering had no recorded instances of plagiarism in 2016-2017 which mirrors the 2015-2016 position.

### **School of Engineering**

There was a total of 5 plagiarism offenses recorded within the School of Engineering, having recorded 4 in 2015-2016. Within these cases 3 involved final year students with 2 of these involved in the same incident.

#### **Action taken within School:**

The final year project provision has been reviewed and a number of changes made. This should allow for more frequent and structured guidance in an attempt to ensure students understand the seriousness of plagiarism. Students are spoken to about plagiarism from induction day and onwards.

#### **Proposed/Continued Actions:**

- Students will continue to be informed of/reminded of the University's plagiarism policy and penalties at programme level;
- Heads of School will continue to remind staff of the need to update the plagiarism in a timely manner to ensure accurate and ongoing logging of information;
- Schools will continue to encourage the submission of coursework through Turnitin, where appropriate, across modules;
- Staff will continue to work to design assessment that avoids opportunities for plagiarism.

## FACULTY OF LIFE & HEALTH SCIENCES

### FACULTY REPORT ON PLAGIARISM 2016/17

#### OVERVIEW

In the Faculty of Life & Health Sciences, there were 91 reported cases of plagiarism in the academic year 2016/17 (Table 1). This represents a decrease from 109 cases in 2015/16. The Schools of Health Sciences and Sport reported fewer cases of plagiarism than the year previous. A slight rise in reported plagiarism cases was observed in the School of Pharmacy & Pharmaceutical Sciences. The number of incidences in the Schools of Geography & Environmental Sciences, and Psychology has remained relatively consistent over the last few years. School reports are provided below.

All Schools in the Faculty continue to adhere to the University's Plagiarism Policy. Whilst staff continue to design assessment that avoids opportunities for plagiarism, they are also ensuring that students are well informed of what plagiarism means and the framework of penalties that Schools will enforce. Following last year's introduction of the University Policy on fully online submission of coursework, it is imperative that the Faculty continues to adhere strictly to the Plagiarism policy and procedures.

The use of the electronic detection system is voluntary; however, many Schools are using the software in modules across year cohorts, and there is increased use of Turnitin each year. There are greater external requirements and pressures with regards to professional practice, and professional and regulatory bodies to ensure that our procedures and policy are adhered to.

**Table 1:** The distribution of reported cases of plagiarism in the Faculty of Life & Health Sciences in 2016/17

Level	Biomedical Sciences	Geography & Environ Sciences	Health Sciences	Nursing	Pharmacy & Pharm Sc	Psychology	Sport	Total 16/17
<b>3/4</b>	4	0	3	0	0	5	3	15 (17)
<b>5</b>	1	3	1	2	3	2	9	21 (23)
<b>6</b>	6	0	2	7	6	0	1	22 (37)
<b>PgD/ MSc</b>	22	1	7	1	2	0	0	33 (32)
<b>Total</b>	<b>33 (29)</b>	<b>4 (4)</b>	<b>13 (32)</b>	<b>10 (6)</b>	<b>11 (4)</b>	<b>7 (8)</b>	<b>13 (26)</b>	<b>91 (109)</b>

Filter Dates: 10 September 2016 – 09 September 2017. Figures in brackets indicate 15/16 totals

During 2016/17, the vast majority (93%) of all recorded plagiarism cases were first offences. At undergraduate level, two second offences were recorded in the School of Nursing and; one second offence and one third offence were recorded in the School of Health Sciences by the same student. At postgraduate level, one second offence was recorded in the School of Pharmacy & Pharmaceutical Sciences.

In the Faculty of Life & Health Sciences, Schools are complying with Faculty and University policy on Plagiarism, with Schools educating and supporting students to minimize cases of plagiarism. Plagiarism is a standing agenda item on Faculty and School Learning and Teaching Committees. 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 Faculty's Guidelines on Harvard Referencing (generated 2014/15). The Faculty Guidelines have been disseminated in a short leaflet and a longer version for students and staff, and are also available on BbLearn.

Exemplars of School level practices are outlined below.

### **SCHOOL OF BIOMEDICAL SCIENCES**

No of recorded cases in School BMS – 33

11 Undergraduate (BIO509, NUT506, NUT501, BMS516)

22 Postgraduate (BIO825, BIO812, BIO825, OPT700, NUT709)

33 Recorded instances were all first offences.

### **Key points**

Reported cases in 2016/17 remains consistent with previous years.

A lecture on avoidance of plagiarism is given to each year group as part of School of Biomedical Sciences' induction processes and is scheduled in week 1, Semester 1, 2017. 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**

A plagiarism lecture is provided to undergraduate and postgraduate students by Dr C Gill during the first week. The lecture covers the basics of plagiarism avoidance including University policy, detection, sanction.

### **SCHOOL OF GEOGRAPHY & ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES**

1. The plagiarism register is confirmed as being up to-date with final entries being made after the June 2017 assessment period.
2. The plagiarism register was used on four occasions during the 2016-17 academic year, as was the case in 2015/16. Of the four cases, three related to Year 2 undergraduate students and one was postgraduate level. All were first offences.
3. The three undergraduate offences related to copying material from the lab practical handbook in EGM305. The postgraduate offence related to EGM721 and resulted in a fail in the project component of the module. All students were interviewed and taken through the Plagiarism Policy again.
4. From the low level of offences data gathered, 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. It is noteworthy that no second offences were recorded this year.
5. It is also encouraging that none of the undergraduate plagiarism events were recorded at final year level due, in no small measure, to the 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, the vast majority of assignments are submitted electronically, and routinely checked through Turnitin.

6. 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). 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 BbLearn.

### **SCHOOL OF HEALTH SCIENCES**

The tables below summarise the incidents of plagiarism detected and reported during the past six academic years.

#### **2011/12**

The two recorded incidents during 2011/12 occurred within the undergraduate programmes, one in year 2 and one in final year. Both were first time offenders.

<b>Programme</b>	<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Year 2</b>	<b>Year 3</b>
6590 Health Physiology			1
6376 Radiography (Therapeutic)		1	

#### **2012/13**

A total of thirteen incidents were reported during 2012/13, nine in the undergraduate programmes and four in the postgraduate provision. All cases were first time offenders with no evidence of repeat offending. The incidents detected within the undergraduate programmes are relatively evenly distributed throughout all three years of the three-year programmes.

<b>Programme</b>	<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Year 2</b>	<b>Year 3</b>
6375 Diagnostic Radiography and Imaging		1	1
4463 Occupational Therapy	2		
4464 Speech and Language Therapy			3
7030 & 6376 Radiotherapy and Oncology	1	1	
MSc/PGD/PGC	4 students		

### 2013/14

There were a total of five incidences during 2013/14, one within the postgraduate programme and four within second year of an undergraduate provision. All five were first time offenders and all five received formative interviews.

Programme	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
6470 PGC Advancing Practice (PT)	1 student		
7031 Diagnostic Radiography and Imaging		4	

### 2014/15

There was a notable increase in the number of recorded instances of plagiarism during the 2014/15 academic year – a total of seventeen cases. Within the undergraduate programmes the majority of the cases occurred in year 2 and while it is recognised that all were first time offences a concerted effort will be made to reinforce good referencing practice. Following interview, the majority of cases have been attributed to ignorance rather than genuine attempts to deceive.

Programme	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
4460 Physiotherapy		12	
7031 Diagnostic Radiography and Imaging		1	
4463 Occupational Therapy		2	
7027 Health Science (Card Phy)			1
6470 PGC Advancing Practice (PT)	1 student		

### 2015/16

A similar number of cases as the previous year – sixteen in total.

Programme	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
4463 Occupational Therapy	2	5	1
6590 Health Physiology		3	1
6470/6471 PGC/PGD Advancing Practice	4 students		

### 2016/17

A notable reduction in the number of reported instances this year (eight). One programme continuing to experience instances in all three levels of the programme with two instances of repeat offending. One for a third occasion.

Programme	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
4463 Occupational Therapy	3	1	2
6926 PG Dip Sensory Integration	2 students		
1612 PG Cred Bear Modules (OTH817)	5 students		

The widespread use of the Turnitin software assists academic staff with evidence gathering. All programme teams are familiar with and implement the University's Plagiarism Policy and Procedures. The subject is included as a standing agenda item at the School Learning and Teaching Committee meetings in order to ensure that programmes remain vigilant and are familiar with the reporting system. The School of Health Sciences convened a Plagiarism Working Group, during the academic year providing a forum for programmes to share and refresh themselves with respect to best practice.

### **SCHOOL OF NURSING**

This was the first academic year of complete online submission for both undergraduate and postgraduate students. Turnitin was the preferred method of electronic submission by module co-ordinators. In the previous academic year, the School trialled online submission with several modules. Last year the School had six cases registered (outside of SAAD provision); there has been a slight increase with ten cases of plagiarism recorded for 2016/17. All but one of these cases were with undergraduate students on the BSc Hons Nursing Adult programme. The other case was a PgDip student. However, this still remains lower than the academic year 2014/15 and could possibly be attributed to the increased use of Turnitin across the School.

From the cases detected two were level 5 students (first offence) and the remainder (seven students) were level 6 students, of which two were a second offence. One was a level 7 student (first offence). Students were interviewed and counselled and penalties applied as per plagiarism policy. As the BSc Hons Adult Nursing and the PG Diploma courses are aligned to the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC), PRSB regulations/ standards have to be taken into account. Students were interviewed by the Head of School and the year 3 students were referred to the School's 'Fitness to Practice' in light of the professional implications of plagiarism.

#### **(i) How the University's Plagiarism Policy and Procedures are applied across all programmes;**

As in previous years within the School, reference to programme rules and regulations, NMC guidance and the University policy is made available to students at induction, module booklets and BbLearn. Established incidences of plagiarism are recorded on the central register, in the student's personal file and the appropriate penalty applied as per University policy. Students have the potential (particularly in the final year of their programme) to be referred to a 'Fitness for Professional Practice panel' whereby the student is interviewed to ascertain the circumstances and for the panel to identify if any sanctions are required. It may also impact on the students place on the programme.

#### **(ii) Issues arising and actions taken or proposed in light of the records and trends since the introduction of the Plagiarism Policy in 2006/07, and the use of Turnitin.**

Students are made aware as part of course induction about plagiarism, what it is, NMC requirements and University policy. Module handbooks provide information regarding plagiarism. As part of the infoliteracy policy all students have library induction, library sessions and REF works booked with the 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. 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. Module co-ordinators endeavour to change the assignment titles annually to reduce the risk of plagiarism.

### **SCHOOL OF PHARMACY & PHARMACEUTICAL SCIENCES**

<b>Programmes:</b>	7509 MSc Pharm Sci
6332 MPharm	6642 PgDip Pharm Mgmt
7233 MSci Pharm Biosciences	6962 BSc Pharm Sci
7509 MSc Pharm Sci	

#### **(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.

#### **Turnitin**

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

Within first year Turnitin is used to provide formative feedback to the students on a Lifelong Learning formative assessment submission. This follows a workshop on plagiarism, and a session on referencing, both within PHA105 Professional Practice Skills 1 and BIO130 Professional Practice for Biosciences. The students obtain their plagiarism report and can take this to develop their competency in scientific writing.

#### **(ii) Issues arising**

##### **Plagiarism Offences**

There were a total of eleven plagiarism offences for the School in 2016/17.

Six of these were MPharm students and were first offences. They were all in the same module and was a statistics report that had been shared amongst a group, all attributed to poor academic writing skills in relation to referencing. The group were met together and they admitted the offence.

Three offences were for students on the MSci Pharmaceutical Biosciences programme. They were all first offences. The three students concerned had worked in a group for a laboratory class but were to submit individual reports – parts of each student's individual report were identical.

The other two offences were for the same student on the MSc Pharmaceutical sciences, for the same piece of coursework – a first and second offence.

This is an increase on 2015/16 and reflects the strong vigilance on behalf of staff in checking for plagiarism.

**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 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. Students were also reminded that plagiarism is a Fitness to Practice issue.

The MSc student also met with the Course Director and School Learning and Teaching Co-ordinator, and referencing styles were discussed. On the second offence, in line with the framework of penalties for plagiarism offences, the student unfortunately got zero for the assignment and therefore failed the module.

**Plagiarism reports:** Plagiarism reports were completed and inputted into the Plagiarism Register by the School Clerical Officer. Paper copies were placed on student files.

**Trends:** This year saw an increase in the number of incidences of plagiarism seen on the MPharm and MSci programmes. 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. 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**

### **Plagiarism Offences**

There were a total of seven incidences of plagiarism reported within the School of Psychology during 2016/2017, all of which were first offences. The majority of recorded offences were at level 4 (n=5), with two cases reported at level 5. At a course level, there were four cases reported on the BSc Hons Psychology programme at Coleraine, one case reported on the BSc Hons Social Psychology programme and two cases reported on the BSc Hons Psychology programme at Magee. Sanctions applied were consistent with the School's policy, a copy of which is provided to students during induction and in the course documentation.

**Current Procedures:** The number of incidences reported in 2016/17 represents less than 1% of students enrolled on programmes within the School and is consistent with those reported in previous years. All recorded incidences were first offences, which suggests that procedures within the School have been effective in preventing repeat offences. The School has a fully online submission process, which has allowed the introduction of Turnitin drop boxes across all modules on our undergraduate and postgraduate programmes. This has provided students with the opportunity to review draft Turnitin reports before their final submissions and has served to facilitate their understanding of the issues.

**Actions:** The number of reported incidences at level 4 indicates the importance of continued support amongst our first year students in order to aid their understanding of plagiarism. With that in mind, the School will engage in a number of activities this year. This includes the

continued use of a Turnitin seminar within the undergraduate study skills programme. This process allows students to submit a draft of an assignment and produce a report, which they then subsequently work through with their studies advisor. In addition to this a plagiarism workshop has been developed and will be introduced into our studies advice system, within which students will be presented with a number of scenarios and asked whether they consider them to be plagiarism or not. It is hoped these various activities will help to raise awareness and understanding among students, but also aid staff in the detection of plagiarism offences.

### **SCHOOL OF SPORT**

#### **An overview of how the university's plagiarism policy and procedures as applied in the School of Sport:**

In the School of Sport all course and module handbooks at both undergraduate and postgraduate level contain guidance for students on plagiarism and referencing. It is also covered as part of the induction programme for all year groups. All students are informed of the university policy to deal with offences of plagiarism and they are made aware of the contents of the university framework.

In year 1, our undergraduate students are required to undertake a module in Effective Learning which covers the issue of plagiarism and which aims to increase students' knowledge and understanding of appropriate ways to reference and how to acknowledge sources used in their coursework and research projects. In addition to these measures in year 1, Turnitin is widely used across all year groups and programmes at undergraduate and postgraduate level, and staff in the School of Sport are confident that detection measures in place are rigorous.

Building on measures put in place in 2016/17 to enhance monitoring and management of plagiarism issues, this year we sought to introduce an online / record of incidents of plagiarism to assist staff dealing with plagiarism offences (in addition to the records held in the School Office). It was felt that staff could benefit from some context around previous offences, in other modules, or handled by another member of staff, before interviewing an offender. This document was held securely in a shared Learning and Teaching space and was accessible only by academic members of staff. This additional reporting requirement proved unpopular and was not effective in achieving its aim, so we will revert to the central record keeping via the school office only.

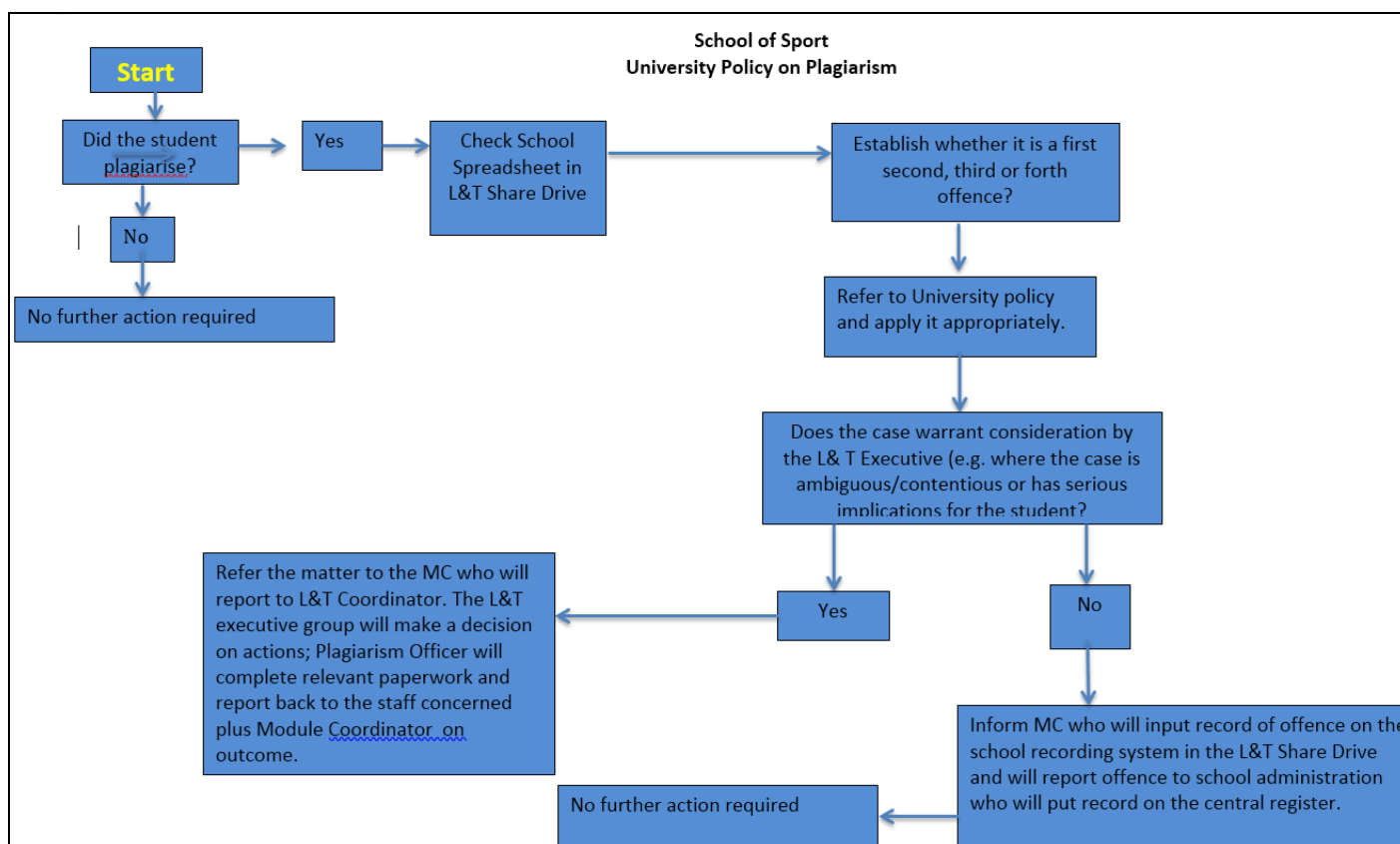
We also sought to increase staff engagement with the process in place for dealing with Plagiarism by circulating a simple Flowchart of the actions to be taken when offences are suspected.

We continued to work with our year 1 student in particular via our 'Cross Curricular Theme' that focuses on creating a supportive learning environment to help students make the transition to university by nurturing independence, building confidence and developing the essential basic academic skills of sourcing, reading, writing and referencing. By developing these skills in year 1, we believe that it will provide a good foundation for students to build upon over the course of their studies and it will help to instil positive behaviour in students when it comes to academic writing and referencing.

Module Co-ordinators continued to provide details/commentary on module report forms regarding issues and reporting of plagiarism at the end of each semester. The use of the module report form at the end of each semester has been commended by external examiners and is something that we feel is an example of good practice.

**Issues arising and trends since the introduction of the plagiarism policy:**

Academic year	Number of offences
2012/13	25 offences
2013/14	12 offences
2014/15	0 offences
2015/16	24 offences (22 x 1 <sup>st</sup> time, 2 x 2 <sup>nd</sup> offence)
2016/17	13 offences (12 1 <sup>st</sup> time, 1x 2 <sup>nd</sup> offence)



## UUBS Plagiarism Report 2016/17

The reports for UUBS and for QAHE (which have to be run separately) cover a total of 14 and 12 student plagiarism cases, respectively. These are summarised as follows:

### UUBS

Department	Level/Year	Nature of offence
Accounting Finance & Economics	7 undergraduate students, across 5 separate courses; 4 first year students and 3 final year students	All first offences
Management & Leadership	1 undergraduate, first year student	First offence
Marketing Entrepreneurship & Strategy	3 undergraduate students (all PT students) and 1 postgraduate student	All first offences
International Business	2 undergraduate students on 2 different programmes, both final year	First offences

### QAHE (all in London)

Course	Level/Year	Nature of offence
MSc International Business	5 students	All first offences
MSc Marketing	5 students	All first offences
BSc Hons Business Studies	2 (second year) undergraduate students	First offences

### Ongoing Action

Work in regard to this area continues in UUBS and QAHE, both in the detection and reporting of plagiarism instances but also in educating students from the outset, and at various points through their studies, in how to source and correctly reference appropriate materials. As more written assignments are submitted electronically through Turnitin, this should also assist in both regards.