Document 017_23

Recognising and Avoiding Plagiarism Policy and Procedure

Version History					
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Version	**Change Originator**	**Document Owner**	**Approver**	**Approval Date**	**Effective Date**
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	Details of Change	***New code format: The policy code changed from Doc_017_v3 to Doc_017_22 to reflect the date of amendment.** ***Reference style was changed from Harvard Reference Style to British Harvard Reference Style.** ***The Plagiarism Process Decisions and Actions section was amended and elaborated.** ***The percentages of plagiarism and respective penalties were included.** ***Support to Students is indicated.** **** For all new programmes launched beyond this date.**			
Doc_017_23	**Deputy Principal Academic Affairs**	**Deputy Principal Academic Affairs**	**Principal**	**05 October 2023**	**05 October 2023**
	Details of Change	**Included AI constructive use, misuse and sanctions.**			
	IDEA College Logo	**New College logo was changed on 24/06/2024**			

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Contents

1. Scope of Document

IDEA Academy promotes a positive learning academic experience whereby students are given opportunities to learn to know and present their views with good argumentation. The learning opportunities offer guidance and inspirations to the students towards producing work of highest quality. Hence, the learning process at IDEA Academy seeks to stimulate the student not only to avoid plagiarism but primarily to reap the benefits of working towards mastering the skills of academic writing.

Students who plagiarise jeopardise personal educational growth and development and at the same time undermine the principles of academic honesty and integrity. IDEA Academy takes seriously cases of plagiarism, and AI-misuse, and the appropriate disciplinary actions are enforced whenever this is discovered. Therefore, the Academy's main objective for this policy is to guide lecturers and students, towards quality teaching and learning ensuring that students are given the opportunity to learn how to avoid plagiarism, and accidental plagiarism, inform about adequate use of AI. The policy also makes clear the sanctions related to the aforementioned elements of cheating.

1.1 Academy Measures to Avoid Plagiarism

1.1.1 IDEA Academy has adopted an official Referencing style which is communicated to all staff and students and is reinforced with the support of plagiarism and AI detection software. IDEA Academy follows the British Harvard Reference Style and uses Turnitin as its official plagiarism and AI detection software.

1.1.2 All assessable coursework, assignments and examinations (including open book assessments) are to be submitted online via Turnitin except in cases where the Academy together with the lecturer inform otherwise due to the nature of the assignment or the examination.

1.1.3 Long Essays, Dissertations and Theses are to be submitted online via Turnitin except in cases where the Academy together with the Tutor inform otherwise due to the nature of the project.

1.2 Overview of Turnitin software:

1.2.1 Turnitin **allows multiple uploading before submission**. The Academy opens Turnitin on the day when the assignment is issued and weeks before the deadline is due, hence students have access to Turnitin while preparing their work and have the possibility to check their level of plagiarism multiple times prior to the final submission date (in the case of assignments/dissertation only and not examinations). Hence, the student receives a similarity report from Turnitin plagiarism detection software and is allowed time to amend, improve and upload multiple times before final submission. The possibility for multiple submissions also applies in the case of Dissertations/Theses.

1.2.2 Turnitin provides % similarity report before submission (in the case of assignments and dissertations only and not examinations). In the case of AI, the student will not receive

any feedback from Turnitin but AI generated % will be indicated to the Academy, and further investigation is conducted. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the student to ensure that AI is not used to replace their academic efforts. Copying and pasting AI generated material will be detected by the Academy and sanctions will be enforced.

1.2.3   Turnitin provides an indication of whether/not the work submitted is work done by the student by giving two percentages, one for plagiarism and one for AI generated material.

1.2.4   The student is given training how to make good use of the software to check and improve the tasks prior to submission. And recorded tutorials are also made available for students to access online.

1.2.5   While Turnitin provides a % similarity report it is the responsibility of the lecturer/tutor to evaluate the plagiarism report and the percentage of potential AI use, determine the level of plagiarism and AI misuse, and mark the students' work accordingly as per sections 5 and 7 below.

1.2.6 In case of examinations, students are allowed to submit only once.

2. Definitions

Assessment	'Assessment' includes all forms of assessment to award a mark and/or grade that contributes towards the final award of any IDEA Academy qualification.
Assessor	An Assessor is a Faculty Member assessing the work of the student.
Faculty Members	Faculty Members refer to all the educators involved in the teaching and learning of the IDEA Academy students which includes teaching and learning face-to-face and online. Thus, these may also be referred to as Teaching Staff / Lecturers / Supervisors / Mentors / Tutors and other terms as applicable to the study programme.
Student Coursework	Student Coursework refers to work performed and required of a student. Coursework may encompass a wide range of activities which may include but not limited to e.g., writing (e.g., assignments, reports, dissertation), research, practices.
Learning Management System (LMS)	The online application used to manage the student-faculty interaction.

3. Acronyms

AI	Artificial Intelligence
QA	Quality Assurance

4.   What is plagiarism?

Plagiarism covers offences that could be intentional or unintentional or at times may be the result of academic incompetence. The following are all instances which although not limited to, are considered as cases of plagiarism:

4.1   Cases of plagiarism include:

1. Failure to compile a references section despite having citations within text.

2. Entries in a reference list are not referenced according to British Harvard Style resulting in the reader's inability to create a correspondence between the entries in the reference list and citations within text.

3. Inconsistent citation style, resulting in the reader's inability to identify sources.

4. Significant unacknowledged copying of text, drawings, tables, images and ideas or other material from any published or unpublished material, lecture slides or handouts, whether such material is in manuscript, print or electronic form.

5. Commissioning or buying work from third parties (sometimes professional agencies) to prepare assignments and present this work as own.

6. Significant amounts of patchwriting (i.e., Replacing only some of the words, or changing their order etc.) with or without citation. To avoid patchwriting, students are encouraged to paraphrase (i.e., Expressing the meaning by using own words and so rewording of ideas present in a source text). Paraphrasing reflects maturity in academic writing.

7. Repeated forgetting to enclose copied text within quotation marks and failing to correctly acknowledge (using British Harvard Referencing Style) the source of the text, diagram, or ideas.

8. Present the result of group activity as one's own work without acknowledging the rest of the group with appropriate citation and referencing.

9. Referring to own previous work without proper citation and referencing.

4.2   AI Misuse

1. AI-misuse refers to assisted writing by AI software to generate essays or other written assessed work. Students using AI to do their work for them without critically engaging with peer-reviewed literature, conceptual theories, real life experiences, reflection, and analysis etc. or otherwise, as indicated by the assessment brief will be heavily penalised. This is considered cheating and can result in serious consequences, such as failing grades or potential expulsion from studies.

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4.3 Academic Incompetence

4.3.1 Developing mastery in academic writing gives the student an opportunity to learn to incorporate the following main principles in one's writing: clarity, cohesion and logical order, consistency and unity, conciseness, and completeness, while developing skills in researching, evaluating information, organizing and building an argument.

4.3.2 Academic writing incorporates the use of a variety of academic sources which are cited and referenced using British Harvard Referencing Style.

4.3.3 The Academy admits that it may take time for students to master the skills of paraphrasing, referencing, and citation. A student might plagiarise unintentionally owing to his/her academic incompetence. At the discretion of the institution, this will be considered for the assignments on the initial modules. With support, students are expected to be better equipped for academic writing and become more familiar with the Academy practices, policies and procedures as they progress through their studies.

5. Quality Assurance

5.1 Detecting plagiarism and AI misuse

The Academy provides students and academics with access to plagiarism detection software e.g., Turnitin. This software is synchronized with LMS e.g., Canvas LMS, so that students can check and submit their assessment/dissertation via software producing an originality report indicating which parts of the written work may have been plagiarised, together with a list of probable sources. All submitted work, including open book tests/examinations, presentations are to be submitted through the plagiarism detection software (Turnitin), unless otherwise advised by the lecturer/tutor or the Academy. In the case of AI, the student will not receive any feedback from Turnitin, but AI generated % will be indicated to the Academy, and further investigation is conducted. Therefore**, it is the responsibility of the student to ensure that AI is not used to replace their academic efforts.**

5.2 Reporting suspected plagiarism and AI misuse

5.2.1 Assessor should verify the automatically generated originality reports as part of the assessment process in line with the Academy's quality standards.

5.2.2 Assessors shall only assess or grade students' work after viewing the originality report generated by Turnitin and taken the related decisions as per Section 7 below.

5.2.3 Assessors who, upon checking and evaluating the Turnitin report, identify a level of AI misuse and/or a 15% plagiarism level or beyond, are to determine the level of cheating, act accordingly (refer to Section 7) and mark, affecting the related sanctions where deemed appropriate and assigning the deserved mark.

5.2.4 If the student is at the initial stage of studies and the level and gravity of plagiarism is minimal and less than 30%, then the assessor needs to notify the student concerned in his feedback and **may** treat the case as an instance of 'academic incompetence' by advising the students concerned, giving them a copy of the plagiarism report for learning purposes and indicating how to avoid repeating the error in future assessments. In such cases **marks may be deducted according to rubric with no additional plagiarism penalties**. In the case of any AI misuse detection the same procedure applies.

5.2.5 If the level and gravity of plagiarism is persistently high exceeding 30% then the assessor should treat the submission as a failed attempt and set off the plagiarism process. The same procedure applies when AI misuse is deemed to be very high, to the extent that the student's voice is completely missing and no evidence of the below is present in the work:

- any critical engagement with peer-reviewed literature,
- conceptual theories,
- real-life experiences,
- reflection,
- and analysis etc., or
- any other criteria/instruction as indicated in the assessment brief.

6. Handling cases of suspected plagiarism

6.1   Responsibility of Lecturers

6.1.1   It is the Lecturer's responsibility to check and evaluate the plagiarism and AI reports of each student on Turnitin before proceeding with the marking. Prior to marking, the lecturer should consider these issues, including but not limited to:

• The seriousness and the magnitude/extent of alleged plagiarism and AI misuse with reference to the Turnitin reports following filtering exclusions for cheating (e.g., assignment questions, Academy template, technical terms).

• The likely intent of the student to cheat.

• The case when the work is accurately referenced and cited but owing to technical jargon resulted in a high percentage similarity report.

6.1.2   Following the required filtering, the lecturer rates the magnitude/extent of cheating to determine whether/not to apply cheating sanctions before marking.

6.1.3   In cases where plagiarism exceeding 30% (after filtering and exclusions e.g., assignment questions, Academy template, technical terms) is detected, the student fails the first attempt, the lecturer does not give feedback nor corrects the first attempt and the plagiarism procedure as per Section 7 is followed.

6.1.4   If the level and gravity of AI misuse is persistently high, to the extent that the student's voice is completely missing and no evidence of the below is present in the work:

- any critical engagement with peer-reviewed literature,
- conceptual theories,
- real-life experiences,
- reflection,
- and analysis etc., or
- any other criteria/instruction as indicated in the assessment brief,

the assessor should treat the submission as a failed attempt, the lecturer does not give feedback nor corrects the first attempt.

7. Plagiarism and AI Misuse Processes, Decisions and Actions

The Lecturer has the responsibility to check for Plagiarism and AI misuse before marking students' work. The QA office has the responsibility to review an identified sample of the lecturers' decisions and feedback and students' work as part of the Quality Assurance process.

7.1 Plagiarism Level

The seriousness and the magnitude of alleged plagiarism refers to the percentage (%) similarity report issued by the plagiarism software detector e.g., Turnitin, following a process of filtering to exclude percentages amounting from sources e.g., assessment questions, Academy template, technical jargon.

7.2 Alleged plagiarism did not occur

7.2.1 No further action and eligible grade is given

No further action and eligible grade is given – if the plagiarism level doesn't exceed 15% (after exclusions (e.g., assignment questions, Academy template, technical terms) including direct quotations and bibliography. It is to be noted that quotations are only acceptable within reasonable quantities and only if they are adding value to the work presented.

7.3 Plagiarism occurred in Assessment/Examination

7.3.1 A reduction in the grade for the assignment – if the plagiarism level amounts to 16-30% as follows:

- Mark reduced up to 10 marks (all Rubric Referencing Section Marks) for work indicating plagiarism of 16-20%
- Mark reduced up to 20 marks (all Rubric Referencing Section Marks plus an additional 10 marks) for work indicating plagiarism of 21-25%
- Mark reduced up to 30 marks (all Rubric Referencing Section Marks plus an additional 20 marks) for work indicating plagiarism of 26-30%.

7.3.2 Fail with no credit for the assignment - if the plagiarism level exceeds 30%.

- In such instance, the attempt is considered as a fail and a zero mark is assigned.
- Student is permitted to re-submit the assignment and this will be treated as a second attempt.
- The second attempt will be marked according to the usual procedure including the lecturer's feedback, but the mark will be capped to a pass mark.
- If multiple incidences occur in the course of the whole programme of study, the institution reserves the right to stop the student from continuing the studies.

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7.4 Plagiarism occurred in Dissertation/Long Essay/ Theses

- In cases of plagiarism below 30% after filtering, mark is reduced according to the related Dissertation rubric.
- In cases of plagiarism exceeding 30% after filtering, the Dissertation/Long Essay/ Theses will fail the first submission and will be directly referred for resubmission following major changes. In such cases once the resubmission is marked, the score will be capped to a pass.

7.5 Table showing Plagiarism Penalties – Taught Modules Assessment

Plagiarism Penalites - Taught Modules Assessment	
Level of Plagiarism as indicated from the Turnitin % Similarity Report	
% Similarity Report#	**Decisions and Actions**
0% - 15%	Level of similarity is not treated as Plagiarism
16% - 20%	Mark is reduced up to 10 marks.
21% - 25%	Mark is reduced up to 20 marks.
26% - 30%	Mark is reduced up to 30 marks.
Higher than 30%	*Fail - first submission. *Student is required to re-do/re-submit the assignment. *The assessment will be treated as a second attempt which is the final attempt. *The second attempt is marked according to the usual procedure and the lecturer provides appropriate feedback. *The mark is capped to a pass mark.

#Academic Incompetence
*At the initial stages of studies, assessor takes into consideration the possibility of academic incompetence of the student and may treat the case as an instance of 'academic incompetence'.
*In such cases when the % Similarity Report is minimal and less than 30% the assessor notifies the student, giving him/her a copy of the plagiarism report for learning purposes and indicates how to avoid repeating the error in future assessments.
*In such cases marks may be deducted according to the rubric with no additional plagiarism penalties.
*The QA office needs to be informed of similar decisions.

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7.6   Identification of AI Misuse and Sanctions

7.6.1   If the level of AI misuse is detected.

Lecturer is to determine the level of cheating. The AI use is not hindering the recognition of the student's voice and any critical engagement with:

- peer-reviewed literature,
- conceptual theories,
- real-life experiences,
- reflection,
- and analysis etc., or
- any other criteria/instruction as indicated in the assessment brief.

The lecturer is to act accordingly and mark, affecting the related sanctions where deemed appropriate and assigning the deserved mark.

7.6.2   **If the level and gravity of AI misuse is persistently high** to the extent that the student's voice is completely missing and no evidence of the below is present in the work:

- any critical engagement with peer-reviewed literature,
- conceptual theories,
- real-life experiences,
- reflection,
- and analysis etc., or
- any other criteria/instruction as indicated in the assessment brief.

The lecturer is to treat the submission as a failed attempt, the lecturer does not give feedback nor corrects the first attempt.

8. Support to Students

8.1   Avoiding plagiarism

IDEA Academy is committed to provide students with education about good writing and referencing style and how to avoid plagiarism. This is provided to students before they embark on their studies as follows:

- The British Harvard Referencing Guide is sent to students before the commencement date. They will be asked to familiarize themselves with it. The British Harvard Referencing Guide sets the required standards by bringing examples of how the proper referencing and citations should and should not be done.

- During the intake students will receive a briefing from the Lecturer pertaining to The British Harvard Referencing Guide followed by discussion. They are provided with feedback for their assignments to be able to avoid making the same mistakes again.

8.2   Basic guidelines for good writing and referencing

Students may find the following list useful to check if their work is written to the standard expected by the Academy.

Does the assignment have a good introduction and conclusion?	
Does the assignment include section markers (sub-titles) to enhance clarity and facilitate reading?	
Are sections adequately linked to provide a cohesive and structured assignment?	
Are the arguments you presented backed by adequate reference to scholarly articles, journals, textbooks etc.)	
Have you engaged critically with the work including your opinion backed by readings and research.	
Does the assignment have a references section?	
Does references section have an identifier so that it can be referred to from the main body of text?	
Do your citations show consistency by appearing in the main body of text and entries in the references section?	
Is the citation style consistent?	
Is all the information provided relevant to the assignment question, or does it go 'out of point'?	
Is the writing style consistent? Or were you using the wording in/phraseology of your sources?	

8.3   Definitions of Primary and Secondary Sources

8.3.1   Source refers to the place or space where the information is found. This includes, the print material sources e.g. books, journals, articles, newspaper and any other material published on paper or electronic sources e.g. webpage, journals, articles, data, images, recorded material, spoken material, emails, social media and any other material published or made available on the internet. All source types need to be cited.

8.3.2   Primary sources are the sources that make an original (authenticated) claim or observation.

8.3.3   Secondary sources comprise a second-hand explanation of the information with reference to the primary source.

   o   For example, Couchia (2000) makes an original claim and Schembri (2001) repeats this claim and references it, together with an observation about it. In this case, Couchia

(2000) is the primary source and Schembri (2001) is the secondary source. However, Schembri (2001) is the primary source for his/her observation about the claim. If a student reads Schembri and repeats Schembri's observation about the claim but cites the primary source (Couchia) only, then that is plagiarism. Hence the correct in-text citation would be Schembri's claim (2001, cited in Couchia, 2000, p.172) sums up …

  o In the reference list, you then need to provide the details of the article you actually used (Couchia):

Couchia, T. (2000) 'Conversational voice', *Journal of Communication*, 59(1):172–188, doi:10.1111/j.1460-2466.2008.01410.x.

8.4   Self-plagiarism

8.4.1   Self-plagiarism is the use of one's own previous work in another context without citing that it was used previously. It refers to recycling or reusing one's own specific words from previously submitted work. Self-plagiarism is any attempt to take previous work and make it appear brand new.

8.4.2   Students are prohibited the submission of the same piece of work for assessment in more than one instance.

8.4.3   Students may make requests to the tutor to make use of one's own previous work and if granted permission to do this, it has to be referenced. (e.g., the student is Ann Attard, in-text citation would be as usual (Attard, 2022). In the reference list it has to read (Attard, A. (2022) *Name of Assignment.* Unpublished Assignment submitted to IDEA Academy 24th March 2022

8.4.4   In-text citation: When you refer to, summarize, paraphrase, or quote from another source. For every in-text citation in your work, there must be a corresponding entry in your reference list. For direct quotations, include the page number as well, for example: (Field, 2005, p. 14)

8.4.5   Reference List: The detailed list of all sources that are cited directly in your work which is presented at the end of your work. Each reference includes, the author(s), date of publication, the publisher and the city/country of publication.

9. Constructive Use of AI

Idea Academy approves of the use of AI tools to:

- Aid students with brainstorming,
- Enabling identification of further concepts, perspectives, research areas and/or readings, etc.,
- Research AI generated ideas further using peer-reviewed articles, and other readings such as policies, books etc.,
- Identify what types of assignments and assessments can be AI-assisted with teacher approval and which must be completed without GenAI support.

10. Supporting Documents

- Doc_008_22 Grievance Policy and Procedure
- FRM_068_22_The Assessment/Examination Result Appeal Form
- Doc_009_22_The Student Disciplinary Procedure
- Doc_029_22_Code of Academic Honesty and Honesty Declaration
- Doc_031_22_Student Rights and Responsibilities