Implementing a plagiarism detection service: ways of working with staff and students

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Drivers for change 2005/2006

- Concern over perceived growth in plagiarism
- Formation of the University working group on plagiarism
  - Revised University regulations
  - Purchase of plagiarism detection software in 2006
Preparing for change

• Establishing good practice
  ➢ Visiting speaker
  ➢ Visits to other sites

• Establishing resources and pilot groups
  ➢ Writing guidelines and Academic Integrity website
  ➢ Pilot in two Academic Schools: Economics, Law
  ➢ Case study and students responses
Visiting speaker

• Jude Carroll:
  ➢ www.judecarroll.co.uk
  ➢ A Handbook for Deterring Plagiarism in Higher Education

• Holistic approach
  1. Shared understanding
  2. Assessment design
  3. Induction/guidance
  4. Teaching skills early
  5. Range of detection strategies
  6. ‘No blind eyes’ to cases
  7. Fair, consistent procedures
Visits to other sites 2006

Alternative approaches…
- ‘Zero tolerance’ policing policy
- Formative ‘induction into academia’ policy
Establishing our resources

- **Academic Integrity**
  
  http://www.kent.ac.uk/ai/

- **Turnitin Guidelines**
  - Ensure student equity
  - Develop a clear understanding of the issues and procedures involved
  - Promote academic integrity
  - Encourage the development of good academic practice
  - Support the development of good academic scholarship and learning
  - Avoid a punitive, policing approach to the improvement of student academic writing
Pilot and case study on Turnitin

- **Staff concerns**
  - Managing hard/soft copy
  - Concern over workload
  - Confusion over the originality report percentage
  - Support when pursuing cases of plagiarism

- **Student concerns**
  - Insecurity about how the software worked
  - Worry that staff rely on the originality reports
  - Acceptable minimum/maximum percentages for matching text
  - Concerns over fair treatment of students
Student comments

• Use it on every student and every module
• Helpful way to avoid plagiarism
• It seemed daunting at first but it’s beneficial
• I realised that I had plagiarised unknowingly
• It’s a useful tool and should be used often
• It should be available to students
• It should be a policing tool with only one copy to be handed in
Staff comments...

- Academic judgement is key
- It saves time when establishing evidence
- Turnitin is useful but is not the only tool to detect plagiarism
- It can be a good deterrent to students
- Plagiarism cases initially went up (just finding more?) but then reduced/stabilised
- Turnitin is useful to detect students ‘recycling’ their work
Five years later ...

- Managing plagiarism cases
  - Individual Disciplinary Committees follow University procedures
  - Cases brought to Disciplinary hearing
  - Some areas of inconsistency in definitions, penalties

- Plagiarism Working Group 2012
  - Plagiarism reference tariff (AMBeR project)
  - Pilot a University of Kent Tariff
Reflecting on change

- Review of Turnitin use

- Plagiarism Forum
  16 January 2013

- Considerations:
  - Centralised/decentralised approaches
  - Establishing a ‘champion’ in each School
  - Central access for students?
  - Introducing a tariff?
Resources and information

  http://www.brookes.ac.uk/services/ocsld/books/plagiarism.html

- University of Kent
  - Academic Integrity website www.kent.ac.uk/ai
  - Turnitin guidelines: .../ai/staff/Turnitinguidelines.html
  - Academic discipline flow chart:
    http://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/documents/quality-assurance/credit-framework/appendix1annex10flowchart.pdf
Resources and information

JISC resources:

- Briefing paper on Deterring detecting and dealing with student plagiarism:

- Academic Misconduct Benchmarking Research (AMBeR) project:

- AMBeR Tariff: