



## Plagiarism Policy

Letterkenny Institute of Technology supports academic honesty and integrity. This document outlines the Institute's policy on Plagiarism and procedures for dealing with it. Plagiarism is a serious offence and consists of submitting work which includes parts from other sources which are not acknowledged. The approach of LYIT is to

1. Make it very clear what plagiarism is,
2. Actively work to prevent plagiarism
3. Provide a clear framework for dealing with cases of plagiarism

These three sections are dealt with below:

### **1. Definition of Plagiarism**

The Quality Handbook defines plagiarism:

The act of presenting as your own, the words or ideas of someone else, whether published or not, without proper acknowledgement, within one's own work is called plagiarism.

There are three main types of plagiarism, which could occur within all modes of assessment (including examination):

- a. Direct copying of text, images and other materials (electronic or otherwise) from a book, article, fellow student's essay, handout, web page or other source without proper acknowledgement
- b. Claiming individual ideas derived from a book, article etc. as one's own and incorporating them into one's work without acknowledging the source of these ideas
- c. Overly depending on the work of one or more other sources without proper acknowledgement of the source, by constructing an essay, project etc., extracting large sections of text from another source and merely linking these together with a few of one's own sentences.

All students at LYIT will have plagiarism explained to them, what it is and how to ensure that their academic work does not contain it. Individual assignments may have specific requirements. An addendum to this policy with additional discipline specific guidelines on plagiarism may be provided by individual Schools / Departments.

### **2. Prevention**

The Institute actively supports the prevention of plagiarism by ensuring that all students are fully informed about plagiarism, and its serious consequences. In particular both Academic staff and students have access to software for detecting plagiarism.

Heads of Department will ensure that plagiarism is explained to students at student induction. In addition, academic staff members are responsible for re-enforcing students' understanding of plagiarism. Departments will, in conjunction with the library, ensure that appropriate training in citation and citation software is provided to students.

LYIT will provide training for Academic staff in

- Assessment design to avoid plagiarism
- Use of software for detecting plagiarism to both detect plagiarism and also to foster awareness of plagiarism with the emphasis on how to avoid it.



### **3. Procedures**

Alleged or suspected plagiarism should be reported to the relevant Head of Department in writing. A meeting with the academic member of staff, the student concerned and the Head of Department takes place where the student is given the chance to explain. If, in the judgement of the Head of Department, a satisfactory explanation has been given, caution and further guidance/advice on plagiarism can be given to the student. If no satisfactory explanation is given, then the plagiarism disciplinary procedures are started.

When a plagiarism incident is reported the Head of School will decide if this is a minor, medium or serious incident. Minor and Moderate plagiarism are dealt with at School level.

In judging the level of plagiarism, the Head of School will consider the following criteria:

- The student's intent. If there is evidence of a deliberate attempt to deceive, to disguise plagiarism, this is considered very serious.
- History of Academic misconduct, i.e. more serious for a repeated offence
- The extent of the plagiarism, i.e. considerable textual plagiarism or plagiarism of critical ideas is considered serious
- the level of Academic study, i.e. plagiarism by a student on a level 9 course is considered more serious than a student on level 7
- Location of the plagiarism. More serious in the core part of the assessment / argument / conclusions, less so in the background or appendix
- Time the student has spent studying at the Institute

It is the role of the Head of School to convene the School Plagiarism Committee if required, and to communicate about the plagiarism incident to the student.

The School Plagiarism Committee consists of a minimum of:

- Head of School / Nominee
- Academic staff member – not involved directly in the Plagiarism allegation
- Student– nominated by the Head of School, not involved directly in the Plagiarism allegation, and if possible a student representative from another course within the School.

The student involved in the plagiarism incident may, if they wish, bring another student enrolled at LYIT to accompany them to this meeting.

Each case would be considered individually, taking into account the particular circumstances. The aim is always to educate the student on the seriousness of this offence and prevent it happening in the future.

Possible penalties for minor or medium plagiarism may include:

- Caution and guidance / advice on plagiarism
- Require resubmission of assessment with no penalty
- Require resubmission of assessment with mark capped at 40%
- Marks penalty for that assessment
- Failure in that assessment



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Students who are assigned either of the first two penalties listed above should not have the breach retained on their permanent record.

Serious Plagiarism is dealt with by Assessment Regulations Committee as detailed in the Quality Handbook

Possible penalties for serious plagiarism may include:

- Zero mark for the module
- Exclusion from examinations and assessment for a specified time
- Temporary suspension of academic progression
- Suspension from the programme