

**Title:**            **A Staff Development Programme Addressing Staff and Student Concerns about Plagiarism**

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## **Abstract:**

### **Session learning outcomes and overview**

The aims of this session are to:

- report on current literature on student and tutor attitudes to plagiarism;
- outline on-going research in plagiarism;
- discuss options for staff development programmes addressing plagiarism.

At the end of this session, participants should be able to:

- discuss, with colleagues, different approaches to staff development on plagiarism.

Plagiarism has become a 'hot topic' in the media but whilst many academics agree that it is increasing (Park, 2003), some writers state that this may be a perception more than a reality (McKeever, 2006). This is indicative of the confusion surrounding the term 'plagiarism' amongst tutors and students and has resulted in, for example, an unevenness in institutions in their treatment of suspected cases of plagiarism and students avoiding certain kinds of work because of fear of plagiarism (Ashworth, Bannister and Thorne, 1997). In some cases, this has led to a 'battle' or conflict situation between institutions and their students (Leask, 2006) with a focus on detecting and punishing rather than instilling a culture of good scholarship amongst the student population.

Against this background, we present the results of a small research project into staff and students' perceptions of plagiarism that has been part of our trial of the JISC Detection Service. This research has informed the development of a staff development programme on plagiarism which seeks to:

- provide a forum for an institutional debate about definitions of plagiarism;
- support students to develop a clearer understanding of good scholarship;
- help tutors in planning out plagiarism through alternative approaches to assessment and improve their understanding of institutional policies.

Participants will be invited to discuss this programme and its application for their own institution.

### **Session activities and approximate timings**

- Activity: Ice-breaking exercise on definitions of plagiarism (5 minutes)
- Presentation:
  - overview of the literature on staff and student attitudes to plagiarism (10 minutes)
  - overview of project findings (10 minutes)

- Activity: Discussion on staff development activities addressing plagiarism (15 minutes)
- Feedback and overview of proposed staff development activity at QMUC (5 minutes).

## References

Ashworth, P. Bannister, P and Thorne, P. 1997. Guilty in Whose Eyes? University students' perceptions of cheating and plagiarism in academic work and assessment. *Studies in Higher Education*, 22 (2), 187 - 203.

Leask, B. 2006. Plagiarism, cultural diversity and metaphor – implications for academic staff development. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, 31 (2), 183 - 199.

McKeever, L. 2006. Online plagiarism detection services – saviour or scourge? *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, 31 (2), 155 - 165.

Parks, C. 2003. In other (people's) words: plagiarism by university students – literature and lessons. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, 28 (5), 471 - 488.