Academic Integrity in On-line and Distance Learning Programmes
Securing Authentication and Verifying Authenticity of Assessment

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Agenda

- Summary of recent research
- Research findings from South-Eastern Europe
- Applying Research findings to quality assurance and academic integrity requirements of on-line and distance learning provision
- Recommendations on the way forward
Summary of recent research

• Principal Investigator for EU funded project *Impact of Policies for Plagiarism in Higher Education Across Europe (IPPHEAE)*
• Partner in Council of Europe funded project *South-Eastern Europe Project on Policies for Academic Integrity (SEEPPAI)*
• Development of benchmarks and tools for evaluating institutional policies for academic integrity (AIMM, SAID)
• ICAI working group on Contract Cheating: *International Day of Action 19th Oct 2016 18th Oct 2017*
• Partner in EU funded *European Network for Academic Integrity (ENAI)*, Vice President of ENAI
• Member QAA working group on Contract Cheating- *QAA report*
• Expert witness to the *Advisory Statement on Corruption in Higher Education Daniel (2016)*
• Principal Investigator CHEA / CIQG global study on AQAB* responses to Corruption in HE (2017-18)

*AQAB = Accreditation and Quality Assurance Bodies*
Academic Integrity, Research Integrity, Educational Integrity

• Different aspects of practice, ethos, culture, strategy, values and policy for maintaining the security of standards and conduct within an institution, nationally and internationally

• Converse of academic malpractice, dishonesty and misconduct

• Comprising honesty, trust, responsibility, respect, fairness, transparency, courage (ICAI)

• Integrity or not? “How you behave when nobody is watching”
Challenges to authentic assessment

- Plagiarism – deliberate and accidental
- Working together - inappropriate collusion
- Contract cheating
- Self-plagiarism
- Exam cheating
- Impersonation
- Data fabrication, manipulation, selectivity
- Bribery
- Coercion, bullying
- Aiding others to be dishonest
What is Contract Cheating?

What levels?
- School work
- Undergraduate
- Postgraduate
- Doctoral theses

Types of service?
- Bespoke coursework, essays, reports
- Drafts provided
- Exam completion, impersonation
- Research, analysis

Quality of work?
Costs more for higher grades

Who does the work?
- Family, friends
- Colleagues, students
- Alumni
- Commercial company employees or contractors
- Web-based services globally

How fast?
Pay more for faster turnaround – same day possible

How is contact made?
- Web-based services
- Personal, family, colleagues
- Presence on campus
- Social media
- Advertising

What does it cost?
- Personal favours, Commercially starting as low as US$50
SEEPPAI 2016-2017

• South East European Project on Policies for Academic Integrity – study of 6 countries
• Mendel University in Brno CZ, Coventry University UK
• Funded by the Council of Europe (CoE)
• First of several regional studies to extend IPPHEAE research to more European countries
• Building on IPPHEAE results (Impact of Policies for Plagiarism in Higher Education Across Europe 2010-15)
• Survey: institutional, national – local languages; workshops, resources, report, dissemination
South East European Project on Policies for Academic Integrity

- Albania
- Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Croatia
- Montenegro
- Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
- Serbia
Higher Education in SE Europe

- Culture of corruption in the region
  - Transparency International Corruption Perception Index (CPI 2017): Croatia 57th, Bosnia & Herz, Albania 91st, FYR of Macedonia 107th (of 180 countries)

- Large universities, autonomous faculties - institution-wide policies uncommon

- Big differences within and between universities within in countries and across region

- Relaxed attitude to serious forms of cheating

- Awareness, openness and willingness to discuss the problems with academic integrity but not everywhere
Evidence from SEEPPAI 2016-7

• Perception that corruption in society makes it difficult to tackle corrupt practices in education

• Ghost-writing, essay mills, contract cheating very common

• Student assessment relies too heavily on rote learning, critical thinking not valued by professors

• Major problems with exam cheating, lax invigilation, repeat assessments, questions

• Reports of professors taking bribes from students

• Almost all respondents wanted more training and guidance

• Some examples of good practice documented

• Keen interest and desire to improve
SEEPPAI: Academic Integrity Maturity Model results for South-Eastern Europe
SEEPPAI Project: Academic Integrity Maturity Model results for South-Eastern Europe
Evidence from IPPHEAE & SEEPPAI

COMPARISON OF ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICIES IN 33 COUNTRIES
Based on ~5800 survey responses (CoE SEEPPAI report 2017, AIMM)
Applying findings to On-line and Distance Learning provision

- Establishing the identity of students not on campus for admissions and assessment
- Educating students about academic integrity
- Creating assessments that both challenge and measure learning and achievement
- Controlling the assessment process
- Ensuring students are doing the assessments themselves
- Consistency of approach from tutors
Oversight and quality assurance

• Internal moderation and oversight for consistency pre- and post-assessment
• Internal quality assurance process – eg double marking, anonymous marking
• External examining – independent monitoring
• External accreditation, validation
• External quality assurance, scrutiny, audits, visits, self-evaluation
Academic integrity: institutional

- Institution-wide strategy, policies, procedures for
  - Discouraging academic misconduct
  - Handling accusations of academic misconduct
- Decisions on misconduct
  - sanctions / penalties available
  - who decides?
- Records of misconduct cases & outcomes
- Consistency from academic tutors
- Academic misconduct not detected or not penalised
- Academic integrity of academic staff
Teaching, learning and assessment

• Contact time and methods, class sizes
• Rote learning / assessment design?
• Teacher-led / student-led
• Discourage / Invite critical thinking
• Practical, project-based, problem-based (PBL)
• Individual / group work / collaboration
• Diversity of student population
• Extra-curricular activities / campus culture
International Day of Action against Contract Cheating

19th Oct 2016, 18th Oct 2017

#ExcelwithIntegrity
#DefeattheCheat
http://contractcheating.weebly.com/
Deterring misconduct

- View students as allies, know your students
- Education on academic writing & consequences
- CPD for academic tutors: on the front line for detecting and correcting students’ problems
- Encourage transparency, consistency
- Whistle-blowing policy - students & staff
- Provide opportunities for formative learning
- Don’t repeat the same assessments
- Robust policies and sanctions
Consequences of condoning or ignoring academic misconduct

- Threat to quality and standards
- Insecure academic qualifications
- Professional incompetence of graduates
- Research results unreliable
- Unfair advantages / disadvantages
- Institutional reputation
- Waste of public money
Priorities globally informed by Europe

• Establish a common understanding of acceptable academic practice: convince academic leaders to make this a priority
• Roles of quality assurance & accreditation bodies
• Outlaw services that facilitate cheating
• Guide and support students and academics to follow academic integrity values and principles
• Encourage aspirations for scholarship and high standards
• Collect examples of effective policies & managing change (eg Morris 2011, Bretag et al 2014, QAA 2017, TEQSA 2017)
• Support HE institutions to develop effective, workable policies through guidance, training, funding and monitoring
• Protect whistle-blowers identifying poor practice
• Engage students as partners in the process of reform
• Start education on integrity at school level
References, resources

Academic Integrity Rating System on-line: http://www.academicintegrity.org/icai/assets/AIRS.pdf [10/10/2017]


IPPPHEAE project results: http://www.plagiarism.cz/ippheae/ [10/10/2017]
References, resources


JISC Electronic Plagiarism Project (2001):


https://www.transparency.org/news/feature/corruption_perceptions_index_2017?gclid=CjwKCAiA24PVBRBvEiwAyBxfYGtGwvIjpNBGldlw1QGkM1co4JNLI5ftrpmLgy347dAfDvwkHSdBoCtwRQAvDV_BwE#table [accessed 08/03/2018]

Research collaborators and funders
Impact of Policies for Plagiarism in Higher Education Across Europe

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