

ADDRESSING STUDENT PLAGIARISM IN THE UK, TEN YEARS ON

Gill Rowell

Abstract: UK higher education institutions have been on a 10 year long journey to establish a clear and effective response to student plagiarism and develop a proactive model of academic integrity awareness. Created as a government-funded project in 2002 against a background of growing concerns over the originality of student work the Plagiarism Advisory Service (forerunner of PlagiarismAdvice.org) sought to ignite institutional thinking on plagiarism, underpinned by considered and integrated use of the Turnitin plagiarism detection software.

During this time there have been many challenges and triumphs, with many institutions developing academic integrity policies and procedures where none previously existed and rethinking the whole assessment and student learning process.

Accordingly general awareness of the problem in the UK, although difficult to accurately gauge, has improved dramatically and policies and guidelines are in place at most universities. Turnitin is employed by 98% of UK universities and there is recent evidence to suggest that instances of unoriginal content as flagged by Turnitin are decreasing.

Alongside these successes the last decade has also confirmed what we have always known about plagiarism and how we address it, ie it's complex; no one size fits all solution exists and most definitely, technology alone isn't the answer.

Author

Gill Rowell, Academic Advisor, Turnitin/PlagiarismAdvice.org