Addressing student plagiarism in the UK, 10 years on

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(Leeky-Boy, 2006)
Genesis of academic integrity in the UK

• In September 2002: JISC formed the Plagiarism Advisory Service and made Turnitin available at no cost to HE and FE institutions.
  – Raise awareness of plagiarism within institutions.
  – Unite pockets of existing good practice.
  – Develop a national strategy for plagiarism detection.
  – Offer pedagogic and institutional support for implementation of technology.
“The JISC Electronic Plagiarism Detection project was established to review electronic solutions to the issue of plagiarism. However, it became clear that, as with most things in life, technology can only assist us, it will never replace the expertise of humans and that the answer to problems usually lies in process and procedures not technology alone.” (JISC, 2000)
The UK academic integrity cycle

Culture of honesty

- Clearly defined policies and procedures
- Assessment tasks which encourage creativity & originality
- Integrated plagiarism detection strategy
- Study skills and information literacy
- Transparent penalty tariffs
Fast forward 10 years...

- What has the impact been on institutional and assessment practice?
- What has the impact been on student behaviour?

Ultimately…
  - Has plagiarism reduced in UK institutions?
After 10 years...

- Arguably more instances of plagiarism identified as more robust measures exist for checking.

- Deterrent effect of using Turnitin.
  - “Over half of the staff surveyed who use turnitin thought it had directly contributed to reduced plagiarism, improved referencing and better writing. One lecturer asks all new undergraduate students to bring in a marked A level essay from their recent school days and runs them through turnitin – students are said to be shocked at the amount of non-original material in their work.” (Graham-Matheson & Starr, 2013)
Matched content in Turnitin reports

**Percentage of essays with high similarity**

- Red: Essays where 75-100% is...
- Orange: Essays where 50-74% is...

% of essays submitted

- Year of use:
  - 2006
  - 2008
  - 2010
  - 2012
Students’ views and expectations

- Awareness of plagiarism/academic misconduct.
  - Information literacy and general information handling skills.
  - Academic writing skills.
- Reliance on social networking sites and Wikipedia for research.
- Students are generally in favour of use of Turnitin.
  - “Students must have a formative experience of Turnitin before it is used summatively” (Graham-Matheson & Starr, 2013)
- Expectation for online feedback.
“Academic and homework” sites was largest category in 2003/4 (62%), slightly less in 2010/1 (54%).

Social and networking sites not on map in 2003/4, although in 2010/1 account for 14% of matches.

Use of encyclopaedias has increased exponentially, due to increasing popularity of Wikipedia, top match in 2010/1 in 2004/3 it was ranked 30/100.

Use of paper mills has also doubled.

Dead links account for 16%, ie sites which were live in 2003/4 but are no longer live.

Corporate sites prominent in 2003/4 (11%) includes sites such as finance, company and publishers’ sites.

News sites much more readily used in 2010/1 (11% from 4% in 2003/4). Only news site which appears in both lists is the Guardian.
Impact on institutional and assessment practice

- Institutional approach to addressing plagiarism is (arguably) more cohesive and transparent.
- Guidance specifically on **how and when** Turnitin should be used.
  - Turnitin is embedded in policy and procedure
- Movement from pilots to full institutional implementation although use is still varied, often fragmented with multiple modes of use.
- Formative use is largely encouraged.
- Huge movement towards online submission and feedback.
- Guidance on interpreting the Originality Report is key.
Models of Turnitin use in the UK

- **Students** submit their work to TurnitinUK (screen all).
- **Tutors** submit *all* students' work to TurnitinUK (screen all).
- Tutors submit work which *looks suspect* to TurnitinUK (suspicion triggered).
- Tutors submit a *sample of papers* to TurnitinUK as part of a QA process (sampling).
- Tutors submit work of *specific groups* of students whose work may be problematic (profiling).
- Tutors make it clear to students that they have the *option of using TurnitinUK to check work* (deterrent).
- Tutors *demonstrate* TurnitinUK to students in order to *stimulate discussion* about academic integrity and attribution (formative demonstration).
- Tutors *provide students with access to their Originality Reports*, but offer *no* follow up on interpreting the report or issues of academic integrity or attribution (formative unsupported).
- Tutors *provide students with access to their Originality Reports*, and *offer follow up on interpreting the report* and issues of academic integrity or attribution (formative supported).
“The use of Turnitin has become embedded into the student learning experience at Northumbria University. In 2011/12 there were 1,383 Turnitin assignments created within 3,500 modules. The university has had a policy for a number of years that Turnitin should be primarily used as a teaching tool. **In particular as a way of helping first year students develop their academic writing skills** by submitting a formative assignment and then analysing the originality report with peers and staff to highlight strengths in referencing as well as identify areas for improvement.” (Turnock, 2012)
The other stuff...

• UK approach replicated in other countries
  – Discussions on plagiarism now global
• Wealth of research generated via 5 international conferences.
  – via PlagiarismAdvice.org
• Cohesive global approaches (IAAIC for example).
• Arguably this qualitative stuff is just as valuable?
International Association of Academic Integrity Conferences

The International Association of Academic Integrity Conferences (IAAIC) is an alliance of key academic integrity and plagiarism conferences worldwide, formed to facilitate international conversations on educational issues ranging from cheating and plagiarism to pedagogy and best practices. The IAAIC currently has members from academic integrity bodies in the UK, US and Australia and supports research initiatives from practitioners and institutions throughout the global academic community.

Asia Pacific Forum on Educational Integrity

The Asia Pacific Forum on Educational Integrity (APFEI) was founded in 2001 as a multi-institutional and trans-disciplinary organisation that would collaborate towards the research and promotion of educational integrity. The Forum aims to provide a platform for educators across all sectors to investigate, collaborate and access resources in the field of educational integrity. In addition, APFEI also aims to provide an opportunity for teachers, scholars and practitioners in the Asia-Pacific region to take a leadership role in the relatively new field of educational integrity.

Gill Reeswell

Gill’s background is in Information management, and prior to joining the Information Services Committee (ISC) at Victoria University of Wellington, she was the Information Librarian at the National Library of New Zealand. Currently, Gill is involved in research projects to develop information literacy skills for students and the use of online resources in education.

Tracy Bunting

Tracy has an academic background in English Literature, gender studies, Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages, and education. Her research focuses on affective and professional development across the University of Victoria, and the Centre for Educational Innovation and Engagement, a national centre for excellence in higher education. Tracy’s research is focused on the development of a comprehensive approach to informed teaching and learning.

Ruth Walker

Ruth is a Senior Lecturer in the University of Victoria, and a PhD student in the Language and Education Program. Her research focuses on the role of language in education, particularly in relation to academic integrity and the development of critical thinking skills.
Above all: embrace the positives!

(Cipido, 2009)
Save the date...

6th International Integrity & Plagiarism Conference

June 16-18th 2014
The Sage, Gateshead, UK

More Information
Thank you!

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References


• Turnock, C. (2012) Email to Gill Rowell, 11 June.