

PLAGIARISM, POLICY AND PEOPLE: EXPLORING TENSIONS

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Abstract:

In this workshop qualitative data will explore tacit attitudes among lecturers towards how different stakeholders engage with academic integrity. Subjects drawn from Lecturers at our university engage in a creative feedback task to pictorially explore how they perceive the state of plagiarism as it pertains to themselves, their colleagues, the students and the institution (the stakeholders). They then reflect on that process and the interpretation of this visual and written data is analysed against institutional policy and cultural trends. The aim is to uncover tacit and explicit assumptions among the academic community of our institution and consider the implications of this for the awareness, prevention and further study of plagiarism. In the literature, the formation of policy and cultural adjustment of students towards that policy predominate but assumptions are made about intentionality, transparency and cultural transition. In reality, the embracing of cultural diversity struggles against a need for cultural adjustment and the rigidity of expectations tussles with the aims of British higher education to nurture independence and innovation. As a university with one of the most diverse student and lecturer bodies in London, our context provides a rich case study in which to explore these tensions and how disparate interests and attitudes impact on this. We take a holistic, reflective and critically aware approach to investigate practice, policy and stakeholder involvement in handling plagiarism and managing diversity. We argue for a cohesive community of practice through reflection and exploration of tacit attitudes which impact on all stakeholders.

Key words: Plagiarism; Policy; Tacit and Explicit Attitudes; Constructive Alignment; Holistic

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