



Impact of Policies for Plagiarism in Higher Education Across Europe

Plagiarism Policies in Lithuania

Executive Summary

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ES 1 Background

- ES 1.1 The survey of Higher Education (HE) in Lithuania was conducted between June 2011 and June 2013 using on-line questionnaires (students, teachers and senior managers) and national level interviews. The purpose was to check the existence and to explore the effectiveness of policies and systems for assuring academic integrity at bachelor and masters level studies in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) of this country.
- ES 1.2 The research findings for Lithuania were based on responses from over 140 survey participants from 10 Higher Education Institutions: 119 students, 22 teachers, 4 senior managers and one representative from a national institution.
- ES 1.3 In Lithuania there are 47 HEIs, 23 of which are universities. 14 universities are public and 9 are private. There are also 24 Colleges of which 13 are owned by state and 11 are private. In 2012 about 174,800 students studied in higher education in Lithuania.
- ES 1.4 According to the data of National Statistics in 2012 in Lithuania about 174,800 students, studied in higher education of which 71.5% were in universities and 28.5% in colleges. The profile of university students according study level is 76.3% bachelor's level, 19.7% master's level, 2.1% doctoral level and 1.9% residency and special professional level students.
- ES 1.5 The number of international students in Lithuania is comparatively low – only 2.5% from total number of students. 24.5% are residents of UE member states countries, 61.8% from other European countries and 13.7 % from other countries over the world.
- ES 1.6 From 1st September 2011 HEIs in Lithuanian introduced the new European study credit (ECTS) concept.
- ES 1.7 Institutional and individual academic autonomy of HEIs in Lithuania is preserved by the law. But according to legal regulation of functioning of these institutions, HEIs and members of academic community, including students, have to follow the legal regulations on academic integrity and intellectual property protection.
- ES 1.8 Lithuania delegates the organisation of external evaluation of HEIs to the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education (SKVC). The institutional quality audits include assessment of self-improvement capability and oversight of regulatory functions in the internal quality assurance systems.

ES 2 Findings

- ES 2.1 No statistical data was collected at state level about cases of academic misconduct or plagiarism, but in 2012 and in 2013 a survey was conducted about the Academic Integrity Code. According to the results of this survey 25.3% of students pointed out that plagiarism is a common phenomenon in HEIs of Lithuania.
- ES 2.2 Regulation of copyright, processes of studies and research and functioning of higher education and research institutions in Lithuania is provided in following legal acts: The Law on Copyright and Related Rights and The Law on Higher Education and Research.

- ES 2.7 74% of students and 50% of teachers that participated in the IPPHEAE survey, agreed that their institution has policies and procedures for dealing with plagiarism, but 25% of students and 41% of teachers were not sure about that.
- ES 2.8 Students in Lithuania were familiar with consequences for plagiarising in their assignments: 78% expected only verbal warning, 45% zero mark and 68% a request to rewrite the assignment. For plagiarism cases in their projects and final works 66% of students expected zero mark for the work and 45% expected to fail the whole programme or degree.
- ES 2.9 Although a national e-library of theses has been created for the Lithuanian language, to date only one university in Lithuania uses specialised software tools for searching text for similarities. Some teachers in other universities are using open source software tools or information search by keywords via the Internet.
- ES 2.10 72% of students, who participated in the survey, pointed out that they *“became aware of plagiarism”* before they started their undergraduate/bachelor degree studies, but to the question *“when they learned to cite and reference?”*, only 37% of students chose the answer *“Before I started my undergraduate/bachelor degree studies”* and 48% chose the answer *“During my undergraduate/bachelor degree”*.
- ES 2.11 Most student respondents said the Internet (60%) is their main source of information about plagiarism and only 35% chose workshops, classes and lectures. Students chose workshops, classes and lectures (91%) and leaflets or guidance notes (50%) as their main source of information about other forms of academic dishonesty.
- ES 2.12 Answering the question *“What leads students to decide to plagiarise?”* most students in Lithuania pointed out the following choices: *“They think they will not get caught”* (63%), *“They run out of time”* (62%) and *“They can't express another person's ideas in their own words”* (60%). Teachers, answering the same question, as most important reasons for plagiarism pointed out the following reasons: *“Plagiarism is not seen as wrong”* (100% of respondents), *“It is easy to cut and paste from the Internet”* (95% of respondents), *“They can't express another person's ideas in their own words”* (77% of respondents) and *“They don't see the difference between group work and collusion”* (72% of respondents).
- ES 2.13 Answering the question *“What are the reasons for using correct referencing and citation in scholarly academic writing?”* most students chose the following answers: *“To avoid being accused of plagiarism”* (80% of respondents) and *“To strengthen and give authority to your writing”* (63% of respondents).
- ES 2.14 All the teachers, who participated in the survey, were able to identify the most obvious case of plagiarism presented in six scenarios but only about two thirds of teachers saw necessity for punishments for this type of conduct in student work.
- ES 2.15 Over 77% of students, who participated in the survey, were able to identify the most obvious case of plagiarism, presented in the six scenarios, but only 32% of students saw the necessity for punishments for this type of conduct in student work.
- ES 2.16 Teacher and student participants were less certain whether unacknowledged copying was plagiarism where a few changes had been made to a written piece of work-.
- ES 2.16 Almost 46% of students participants provided suggestions for how to avoid plagiarism in students' work, for example to raise awareness about plagiarism, to improve teaching, training and consulting; to provide more information about penalties, to strengthen the control, to improve the study process and tasks of assignments. Some of the proposals are worth taking into consideration by administration of HEIs, for example: *“Workshops are needed so that students understand what is plagiarism and how it should be avoided, or*

how to properly cite another author's idea or to express it in their own words”, “It is worth avoiding tasks that require rewriting textbook articles or restating what is in texts and requesting assignments that require creativity” and “It is necessary to motivate students to work independently and to allow development of their own ideas”.

ES 3 Recommendations

ES 3.1 Nationally and internationally

ES 3.1.1 It is recommended that a state legal regulation is adopted for encouraging the development and use of digital text matching tools. All HEIs should be obliged to allow the collected written work of students and other academic papers and documents that could be used for plagiarising to be accessed when checking newly uploaded work.

ES 3.1.2 A definition for plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty should be agreed at state level and assistance should be available to encourage HEIs to create an ethical culture of academic integrity.

ES 3.2 Institutionally

ES 3.2.1 It is recommended that institutions define more clearly their understanding of plagiarism and the penalties for plagiarism cases in students' written works. Examples should be provided of possible manifestation in works of particular study programs and clearly described cases when these penalties have been applied.

ES 3.2.2 Fair and consistent procedures for handling allegations of potential academic misconduct should be prepared, adopted and made accessible to students and teachers. The procedures should include maintaining oversight, punishment for plagiarism and hearing of students' appeals.

ES 3.2.3 HEIs in Lithuania are advised to build on the IPPHEAE research to better understand why students are plagiarising, what difficulties students' meet preparing their written works. The findings should be used to improve the teaching and training process on avoiding plagiarism.

ES 3.2.4 HEIs in Lithuania need to apply more effort to improving teaching and training for students on correct academic writing practices, including citing and referencing and understanding the essence of formal requirements.

ES 3.2.5 It is recommended that HEIs in Lithuania make more visible the information about policies and procedures for plagiarism prevention and punishment, about services available for students and teachers on plagiarism avoiding, the divisions and persons, responsible for provision for students of services on plagiarism prevention.

ES 3.2.6 Institutions are advised to conduct regular monitoring and maintain oversight of teachers' use of procedures for fair handling of misconduct and applying penalties. The academic community have been regularly familiarised about results of such monitoring and invited to discuss new challenges on this issue.

ES 3.2.7 In the longer term institutions should consider adopting more sophisticated policies, such as those advocated by institutions elsewhere, where trained academic conduct officers are responsible for considering accusations and deciding on penalties according to a consistent

institutional systems and sanctions frameworks (for example Carroll 2005, Park 2004, Macdonald and Carroll 2006, Morris and Carroll 2011, Tennant and Rowell 2010).

ES 3.3 *Individual academics*

ES 3.3.1 Teachers are advised to provide advice and guidance on aspects of academic integrity, including: academic writing, internet addresses and other sources of information on requirements for citing and referencing, policies and guidance about sanctions and consequences for academic misconduct, services, available inside institution on these issues, internal divisions and individuals responsible for provisions of these services.

ES 3.3.2 Student respondents listed among their main reasons for plagiarism lack of time for preparation of assignments (62% of students who responded) and lack of ability to express another person's ideas in their own words (60% of students who responded). Therefore teachers are advised to pay more attention to time management skills of students, allowing sufficient time for preparation of written assignments and training on proper academic writing.

ES 3.3.3 Teachers are requested to be more principled when applying penalties according to the regulations and precisely follow procedures of punishments. According the survey 63% of students believed they would not get caught for plagiarism and 29% believed the teacher would not care about that.

ES4 Conclusions

According to national legislation, HEIs in Lithuania are responsible for development and implementation of study quality systems. An external evaluation of their achievements in this respect is made during institutional accreditation.

There are no policies on plagiarism prevention and procedures on discouraging of plagiarism in students' written works common to all members of the academic community, within or across institutions in Lithuania. HEIs in Lithuania are currently in the process of creating a study quality assurance system, in which measures for prevention of plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty should be included.

Most students in Lithuania believe the institutions, in which they are studying, have serious approach to the problems of plagiarism, know about penalties which should be applied when plagiarism is found, but 69% of students, who participated in the survey, agreed they have had plagiarised and 41% of students said they don't understand how to cite and reference. These figures demonstrate the necessity to improve the process of teaching and training on correct academic writing and avoiding plagiarism.

Student participants provided some serious and rational proposals for reducing plagiarism in students' work. This suggests it is worth involving motivated students in the process of study quality improvement and the search for effective plagiarism prevention measures.

It is strongly advised that all student work at bachelor and master's levels from all HEIs in Lithuania is collected and stored in the state-wide repository eLABa. The repository should be made accessible to digital text matching tools for identification of possible plagiarism cases in students' written works. All HEIs should be required to use the digital tools.

HEIs in Lithuania are advised to define and communicate more clearly what they understand by plagiarism, their policies for reducing the number of incidences and the procedures for handling accusations.

The combination of initiatives recommended at national, institutional and individual levels should serve to drive up academic standards by promoting good scholarship across the whole of the higher education sector in Lithuania.

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Lifelong Learning Programme

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Annex LT-1: Responses to Question 5

Statement	1. Strongly Disagree		2. Disagree		3. Not sure		4. Agree		5. Strongly Agree		6. Not applicable	
	S	T	S	T	S	T	S	T	S	T	S	T
Students receive training in techniques for scholarly academic writing (s5a;t5a)	24/ 20%	0	23/ 19%	3/ 14%	16/ 13%	2/ 9%	31/ 26%	11/ 50%	19/ 16%	6/ 27%	6/ 5%	0
This institution has policies and procedures for dealing with plagiarism (s5c;t5b)	5/ 4%	1/5%	11/ 9%	0	25/ 21%	9/ 41%	57/ 48%	8/ 36%	17/ 14%	3/ 14%	4/ 3%	1/ 5%
I believe this institution takes a serious approach to plagiarism prevention (t5c)	-	0	-	1/5%	-	7/ 32%	-	8/ 36%	-	5/ 23%	-	1/ 5%
I believe this institution takes a serious approach to plagiarism detection (t5d)	-	0	-	1/5%	-	13/ 59%	-	5/ 23%	-	2/ 9%	-	1/ 5%
Plagiarism policies, procedures and penalties are available to students (s5d;t5e)	4/ 3%	1/5%	10/ 8%	1/5%	37/ 31%	9/ 41%	44/ 37%	9/ 41%	12/ 10%	2/ 9%	12/ 10%	0
Plagiarism policies, procedures and penalties are available to staff (t5f)	-	0	-	1/ 5%	-	6/ 27%	-	12/ 55%	-	3/ 14%	-	0
Penalties for plagiarism are administered according to a standard formula (s5e;t5g)	4/ 3%	0	15/ 13%	4/ 18%	50/ 42%	11/ 50%	37/ 31%	6/ 27%	7/ 6%	0	6/ 5%	1/ 5%
I know what penalties are applied to students for different forms of plagiarism and academic dishonesty (s5f;t5h)	3/ 3%	0	8/ 7%	3/ 14%	51/ 43%	6/ 27%	30/ 25%	9/ 41%	9/ 8%	4/ 18%	18/ 15%	0
Student circumstances are taken into account when deciding penalties for plagiarism (s5g;t5i)	3/ 3%	1/ 5%	6/ 5%	0	27/ 23%	9/ 41%	55/ 46%	8/ 36%	17/ 14%	2/ 9%	11/ 9%	2/ 9%
The penalties for academic dishonesty are separate from those for plagiarism (t5j)	-	1/ 5%	-	2/ 9%	-	14/ 64%	-	4/ 18%	-	1/ 5%	-	0
There are national regulations or guidance concerning plagiarism prevention within HEIs in this country (t5k)	-	1/ 5%	-	4/ 18%	-	6/ 27%	-	6/ 27%	-	2/ 9%	-	3/ 14%
Our national quality and standards agencies monitor plagiarism and academic dishonesty in HEIs (t5l)	-	2/ 9%	-	3/ 14%	-	6/ 27%	-	5/ 23%	-	1/ 5%	-	5/ 23%
The institution has policies and procedures for dealing with academic dishonesty (s5h;t5m)	3/ 3%	0	12/ 10%	2/ 9%	50/ 42%	3/ 14%	33/ 28%	13/ 59%	5/ 4%	2/ 9%	16/ 13%	2/ 9%
I believe one or more of my teachers/colleagues may have used plagiarised or unattributed materials in class notes (s5i;t5n)	4/ 3%	0	7/ 6%	0	39/ 33%	5/ 23%	44/ 37%	14/ 64%	9/ 8%	1/ 5%	16/ 13%	2/ 9%
I have come across a case of plagiarism committed by a student at this institution (s5j)	2/ 2%	-	7/ 6%	-	33/ 28%	-	43/ 36%	-	25/ 21%	-	9/ 8%	-
I believe I may have plagiarised (accidentally or deliberately) (s5k;t5o)	3/ 3%	1/ 5%	5/ 4%	4/ 18%	26/ 22%	8/ 36%	52/ 44%	8/ 36%	30/ 25%	0	3/ 3%	1/ 5%
I would like to have more training on avoidance of plagiarism and academic dishonesty (s5b;t5p)	0	3/ 14%	12/ 10%	3/ 14%	25/ 21%	5/ 23%	62/ 52%	3/ 14%	15/ 13%	2/ 9%	5/ 4%	6/ 27%
I believe that all teachers follow the same procedures for similar cases of plagiarism (s5l;t5q)	2/ 2%	0	15/ 13%	5/ 23%	44/ 37%	12/ 55%	43/ 36%	3/ 14%	7/ 6%	0	8/ 7%	2/ 9%
I believe that the way teachers treat plagiarism does not vary from student to student (s5m;t5r)	6/ 5%	0	14/ 12%	4/ 18%	51/ 43%	11/ 50%	34/ 29%	4/ 18%	3/ 3%	2/ 9%	11/ 9%	1/ 5%
I believe that when dealing with plagiarism teachers follow the required procedures (s5n;t5s)	5/ 4%	0	11/ 9%	4/ 18%	46/ 39%	13/ 59%	37/ 31%	2/ 9%	10/ 8%	1/ 5%	10/ 8%	2/ 9%
It is possible to design coursework to reduce student plagiarism (s5o;t5t)	5/ 4%	0	14/ 12%	1/ 5%	35/ 29%	1/ 5%	46/ 39%	12/ 55%	12/ 10%	8/ 36%	7/ 6%	0
I think that translation across languages is used by some students to avoid detection of plagiarism (s5p;t5u)	9/ 8%	0	19/ 16%	1/ 5%	43/ 36%	11/ 50%	28/ 24%	8/ 36%	12/ 10%	1/ 5%	8/ 7%	1/ 5%
The previous institution I studied was less strict about plagiarism than this institution (s5q)	14/ 12%	-	13/ 11%	-	31/ 26%	-	38/ 32%	-	5/ 4%	-	18/ 15%	-
I understand the links between copyright, Intellectual property rights and plagiarism (s5r)	2/ 2%	-	7/ 6%	-	33/ 28%	-	60/ 50%	-	13/ 11%	-	4/ 3%	-