Impact of Policies for Plagiarism in Higher Education Across Europe

Plagiarism Policies in the Netherlands

Full report

Irene Glendinning

April 2014

Impact of Policies for Plagiarism in Higher Education Across Europe

Plagiarism Policies in the Netherlands

1. Information sources

While implementing the survey there were many difficulties in obtaining responses from students, teachers and managers in the Netherlands. Despite numerous attempts to communicate with Dutch HEIs the project team did not obtain consent to conduct research on students or teachers from the institutions contacted. However it proved possible to obtain responses from four respondents, two teachers, one senior administrator and two significant national spokespeople, on the basis of personal contacts and recommendations. Unfortunately this is not the representative sample we would have liked to capture and it is very difficult to make generalisations on the basis of their answers.

It is a particular disappointment that there were no responses from students studying in Holland. However questionnaire responses have been extracted from Dutch students studying elsewhere in Europe, as their answers on particular questions about previous study are of some relevance to this study.

A further important source of information for this report was in the form of publications on research into plagiarism conducted by Dutch researchers typically about ten years ago. One paper (Pieters et al 2005) included surveys of students in a Dutch university.

Although it is impossible to generalise from this tiny sample, the anonymous responses provide some interesting viewpoints about higher education in Holland.

The report begins with a brief overview of factual information about the higher education sector in Holland together with the system of quality assurance, drawing on publications about research into quality assurance in Holland and some on-line material available on web sites and blogs. This will allow comparison between the Dutch higher educational system and systems in other countries in which the research was conducted.

2. Higher Education in the Netherlands

According to the "Studyinholland" web site "Higher education in Holland is known for its high quality and its international study environment. With more than 1,800 international study programmes and courses, it has the largest offer of English-taught programmes in continental Europe". In common with many other European countries, Holland has both research-oriented universities and universities of applied sciences (UAS).

The University of Leiden, founded in 1575, is the oldest of 14 public research universities in Holland. A further 5 privately funded universities are also classified as research-oriented. Depending on web different sources, Holland has between at least 39 universities of applied science and a further 9 specialist Higher Education institutions including an American accredited university, Websters (private non-profit).

In 2011-12, according to the eurogate.nl web site, 666,859 students were enrolled in Dutch universities, with roughly two-thirds studying at UAS and one third at the research-oriented universities. This number included 87,100 international students (13%), with roughly 73% of these students from elsewhere in the EEA, with the balance of 27% from outside Europe. Interestingly

30% of all the international students came from Germany with the second largest group, 3% coming from China (http://www.eurogates.nl/news/a/2373/). No statistics were found detailing the languages of study for the international students, but for some students part of the attraction of Holland is the availability of English language programmes.

In addition to the in-coming international students a substantial number of Dutch students chose to study at least one year overseas, for example in 2008-9 46,300 students chose to study in another country (ibid).

To comply with the European higher educational framework the bachelor's-master's degree structure was introduced in Holland in 2002 in both research universities and universities of applied sciences. Students first obtain a bachelor's degree (first cycle) and then may continue to study for a master's degree (second cycle). After completing a master's programme, students may enrol to study for a doctorate (third cycle).

3. *Quality Assurance in Dutch Higher Education - teaching, learning and assessment*

The NVAO is a Dutch-Flemish organisation responsible to accrediting higher education study programmes in Holland and also across the Belgian border in Flanders. Separate guidelines on accreditation in both areas are downloadable via the organisation's web site. NVAO activities include:

- Assessing institutional quality assurance systems
- Accreditation of new and existing programmes
- "Assessment of distinctive (quality) features of programmes and institutions at the request of the relevant institution"
- Publishing decisions, guidance and information
- "Internationalisation activities related to quality assurance in higher education"

(http://NVAO.com/accreditation)

The high proportion of international students studying in Holland and the outgoing mobility of Dutch students raises the importance of quality for the internationalisation agenda, covered by the last point.

When the two university teachers in Holland were asked to respond to the statement: *our national quality and standards agencies monitor plagiarism and academic dishonesty in HEIs*, one teacher said they *did not know* and the other *agreed* with the statement. However no mention of plagiarism, misconduct, dishonesty or ethics was found in any of the documentation and guidance available about the accreditation process. Therefore it has to be assumed that checking policies for academic integrity or misconduct is not normally part of the accreditation process. The agency was asked to comment on the IPPHEAE research, but no response was received before this report was completed.

A code of conduct exists relating to international students, which was developed by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (Ministerie van OCW). However this document focuses on the responsibilities of institutions towards the students and associated processes, including availability of information, appeals processes and procedures (Gedragscode 2013). Again no mention was found of policies for academic integrity or misconduct.

The two teacher survey respondents were asked about assessment practices in Holland. One respondent (an engineer) said that individual work was about 75% of the assessment load and group work accounted for the remaining 25%. The second respondent (languages) said work was 100% individual. Table 1 provides their responses about the typical types of assessment students are given. These responses show that in parts of Holland at least, students are required to complete a variety of different types of work, with some formal examinations, independent study and some students have team-based assessments.

Table 1: Typical breakdown of assessed work in the Netherlands				
Subject	Formal exams	assignments	Project work	other
Engineering	60%	15%	25%	
Languages	25%	25%	25%	25% presentation

4.   Activities concerning academic integrity in the Netherlands

4.1 National policies and information

A national respondent confirmed that a survey was conducted in 2004 at national level in Holland on incidents of plagiarism and academic misconduct, but no recent figures are available. It was not possible to ascertain whether any statistics were kept by institutions, either centrally or at faculty or departmental level, but "*the general belief in Dutch HE is that there is an increase in the incidence of student plagiarism*" (national interview).

However some activity was apparent at the national level in the area of guidance on policy development. The organisation SURF ("collaborative organisation for ICT in Dutch higher education and research") (http://www.surf.nl/en) encourages innovative use of technology within Dutch higher education institutions (HEIs) and also provides funding to HEIs for developing resources. It emerged that part of the remit of SURF is to provide "*generic information to Dutch HE on plagiarism tools, detection and deterring policies*" (national interview).

Several very useful reports, guidance notes and course materials were available for downloading via the SURF web site in Dutch language and some are available in English, including a fact sheet and a blended learning course for teachers. However not all links provided were still working.

It is interesting to note that neither of the teacher respondents was aware of any national regulations or guidance on this subject. This suggests more could be done to promote the work of SURF to raise awareness among teachers and students.

The national respondent reported on a national initiative to aid detection of plagiarism: "*Recently, a feasibility study has been done by 'Stichting Rechten Online", exploring how all Dutch law faculties can work together on the aim of realizing a national database in which all papers produced by Dutch law students all submitted. The primary aim of a national plagiarism detection system is a national database which is indexed by all the plagiarism software tools used in law departments in the Netherlands (SafeAssign, Urkund, CODAS, Turn-it-in, Ephorus)*".

This is an excellent starting point assuming decision will be taken to implement, but the initiative should not just apply to Law faculties. Ideally the repository should be extended to cover all academic subjects and HE levels, including research papers and other academic publications in Dutch.

4.2 Institutional policies

One of the teacher respondents *disagreed* with the statement that *this institution has policies and procedures for dealing with plagiarism* and the other respondent *strongly agreed*. However both agreed their institution had *policies for academic dishonesty*. When asked about whether their *institution takes a serious approach to plagiarism prevention* and to *plagiarism detection*, one respondent *did not know* and the other agreed.

Responses from the two teachers about the *level at which policies are monitored, reviewed and revised* generated consistent responses of *don't know* for one respondent and *at faculty or subject level* from the other. This tells us that in at least two institutions there appears to be no central coordination of policies and perhaps inadequate communication. Both these traits are likely to lead to inconsistency of approach and in decisions and confused students. The author's view about this was confirmed by this comment from a national respondent:

> "*In my own institution, this issue is addressed mostly at departmental level. This means you get a lot of variation on the quality of training and the amount of attention this gets. I think more could be done at university level in my case to provide teachers and students with resources and training*".

Teachers' responses to a different set of questions also suggest consistency is a problem. Both teachers *disagreed* with this statement: *I believe that all teachers follow the same procedures for similar cases of plagiarism*, but neither of them knew whether *the way teachers treat plagiarism* [varies] *from student to student*. These responses suggest more could be done to make the process fairer to students and more transparent for everyone.

Two Dutch students studying overseas were asked to compare their previous (Dutch) HE institution with their current institution through this question: *The previous institution* [where] *I studied was less strict about plagiarism than this institution*. One student *disagreed* and the other *strongly agreed* with the statement. Consideration of responses to some other questions is needed to interpret the underlying message from these responses. Both students were very positive about the policies and procedures in their current institution, therefore we can assume one student is saying the Dutch institution had relatively lax policies and the other is saying their Dutch institution had stricter policies.

Although factoring in the very scant dataset, the above discussion about institutional policies suggests that there may be great variability in different HEIs about what policies and systems have been developed and how they are applied.

4.3 Sanctions, penalties

Neither of the teachers knew *what penalties are applied to students for different forms of plagiarism and academic dishonesty* in their institution. When teachers were asked what would happen to a student found guilty of plagiarism in either assignment or final dissertation, several options were selected from the list, as summarised in Table 2. These responses suggest some systematic

approach may be taken in the respondents' institutions according to the scale of the misconduct and that any repetition of the offence would cause a more serious response.

Table 2: Sanctions for plagiarism			
Action:	assignment	dissertation	Comments from teachers
No action	0	0	
Verbal warning	2	2	Some lecturers do this
Formal warning letter	1	1	upon first reported offence by board of examiners
Request to rewrite it properly	1	1	
Zero mark	2	0	Automatic
Repeat module or subject	2	0	Automatic
Fail module of subject	2	0	Automatic
Repeat the whole year	0	0	
Fail whole programme or degree	0	0	
Expose student to school community	0	0	
Suspended from the institution	1	1	in case of repeat offense
Expelled from the institution	0	0	
Suspend payment or grant	0	0	
contact with PhD supervisor	1	0	

It should be noted that although the IPPHEAE research was primarily aimed at policies for bachelor and masters level, it is clear from some responses that this is an issue for doctoral level and research in general that is being recognised and addressed by some people.

The cross-border nature of education in the Benelux region connects this report to the IPPHEAE report on Belgium that includes mention of the retraction of a PhD thesis by the Free University of Brussels after plagiarism was found, leading to the suspension of the author Professor of Criminal Law Patrick van Calster by University of Groningen (Glendinning 2013a, p3). The action by both universities is indicative of a strong culture of integrity and ethical values, but unfortunately these were applied retrospectively.

The most notorious of scandals was raised by the national respondent: "*In recent years there has been a very serious case in the Netherlands of a social psychologist (Diederik Stapel) who plagiarised extensively and forged most of his research results. The case generated very broad media attention*". The range of high ranking journals and co-authors involved in Stapel's research publications meant this this case resonated far beyond the Netherlands, leading to many retractions (Borsboom and Wagenmakers 2013).

Cases such as Calster and Stapel have served to raise awareness throughout the world about the need to enforce ethical values and research integrity throughout academia. This evidence of lax procedures, affecting research and publication, demonstrates the urgency for institutions to strengthen their policies, procedures and available sanctions.

Regarding incidents of misconduct and plagiarism in education rather than research, one national respondent clarified that "*There has never been a national programme* [about academic misconduct], *it hasn't really come up, seems to be relatively under control*", which could be an accurate reflection or, given the high profile cases of research fraud above, this may indicate a culture of complacency.

4.4 Research and development on academic integrity in the Netherlands

Although no current research into plagiarism was identified for the Netherlands, some really relevant investigations took place between about 2002 and 2006. The conclusions and

recommendations from the related publications, roughly translated from the Dutch language, appear to align very closely with the findings from the IPPHEAE research elsewhere in the EU.

In 2005 a team of researchers from the organisation Onderwijs Evaluarie Rapport Foundation (OER) based at University of Utrecht carried out a survey of 888 university students, 63 teachers and some university administrators (Pieters et al 2006). The survey revealed that despite over half the students receiving guidance on how to avoid plagiarism, 78% of student work was found to be copied verbatim from the internet. Only half the students surveyed demonstrated awareness of the consequences. Of the teacher respondents 11.1% said they had not encountered any plagiarism (Pieters et al 2006 p4).

The OER research report by Pieters and colleagues stated that often plagiarism was unintentional or "unconscious", quoting the Royal Dutch Academy of Sciences (Koninklijke Nederlandse Akademie van Wetenschappen 2005). The report also contains a useful set of definitions reproduced below which were quoted directly from a University of Utrecht "checklist" that appears to be no longer available via their web site:

> Different forms of plagiarism:
> *1. The direct cut - and - paste text from digital sources, Internet and printed material without quotation marks and references.*
> *2. The inclusion of a translation of those texts without quotation marks and references.*
> *3. The inclusion in your text a paraphrase of the above texts without reference. Note that a paraphrase should never consist of mere replacement some words by synonyms.*
> *4. The use of pictures, videos or sound clips without permission and reference.*
> *5 . The copying work of other students and let go of their own by job. If this is done with the consent of the other student are both guilty of plagiarism.*
> *6. Submitting essays without the express permission of the teacher or workpieces that have already been used in another course.*
> *7. Rather use their own work as a basis for a new piece without going to the original work to refer.*
> *8. The submission of papers obtained from a commercial source (such as a Web site with abstracts or papers) or against beta assessment by someone are written differently.*

> Utrecht University's five phases around plagiarism.
> *1.   The information / awareness phase. Give instructions to the students the difference between quoting, paraphrasing and pirating.*
> *2. The prevention phase. University policy on plagiarism, which is established in various OER, should be carefully explained, both on the basis of information as well as by teachers.*
> *3. The discovery phase. On the basis of plagiarism detection software plagiarism can be detected.*
> *4. The proof stage. The indisputable determination of plagiarism by a student.*
> *5. The penalty phase. The submission of the plagiarism to a panel or committee which acts on commonly known guidelines.*
> (quoted in Pieters et all 2005 from original source: G. Bloothooft, University of Utrecht, 2004).

Earlier research conducted by Hans Roes during 2003 and 2004 on behalf of the organisation SURF is cited in much of the other research from this time (Roes 2005). The research involved a literature review and telephone interviews with university teachers. This evidence formed the basis of a

seminar held at University of Tilburg in May 2004. The research showed that academic integrity policies within HEIs were variable. Only one of the universities surveyed had institution wide policies for handling plagiarism and academic misconduct. Three other universities were found to have "a more policy-oriented approach" when compared to three universities that were making use of digital scanning tools "but the embedded policy is not clear".

Three major priorities emerged from the May 2004 seminar:

- *Prevention*
- *The relationship with information skills*
- *The embedding of policy*
  (Roes 2005 p3)

This research explored the UK model of JISC and the Plagiarism Advisory Service, who were responsible for free licences for anti-plagiarism software. The report suggested that SURF could take a similar role for the Netherlands. Another recommendation made was that institutionally based repositories of academic work should be made accessible to all institutions (Roes 2005 p3-4).

In 2005-6 a research team from the Digital University (DU) studied the policies for plagiarism adopted in four Dutch universities, drawing on the work of Roes and Pieters and colleagues mentioned above (Brent et al 2006). The research report advocated education of students, development of student guidelines, reducing the opportunities for plagiarism, effective use of "detection systems" and support for teachers in the use of such systems.

The overarching final recommendation from this research was the need for institutions to develop "an effective policy to consistently execute the agreements on plagiarism including sanctions". It was further asserted that "to avoid arbitrariness, it is also wise for the same penalties and procedures to be used in all courses of an institution". The report Resume concludes by stating that it was found to be uncommon in Dutch universities to have "a consistent anti-plagiarism policy … for managing and discouraging plagiarism" (Brent et al 2006 p4).

The commission of the above research and the results summarised above demonstrate that as early as ten years ago there was a clear appreciation in the Netherlands of the challenge presented by student plagiarism and some of the institutional policies that need to be in place to address and discourage it.

5. *Findings from the IPPHEAE survey*

5.1 Support and guidance

The two Dutch student respondents currently studying overseas confirmed that they became aware of plagiarism and learned to cite and reference either before they started university or during their undergraduate studies.   One student agreed and the other disagreed with the statement that (Question 5a) *I have received training in techniques for scholarly academic writing and anti-plagiarism issues*. The one negative response has implications for both the current country of study and Dutch education, prior to the student going overseas, but the positive response could apply to current or previous experience. Of the teachers one *did not know* whether students received such training and the other *strongly agreed* that they did get training. Both students *strongly agreed* that they *would like to have more training on avoidance of plagiarism and academic dishonesty*. One of the teachers *disagreed* and the other *agreed* that they would like to *receive more training on avoidance of plagiarism and academic dishonesty*.   It is difficult to draw any conclusions from these

limited data, but it is encouraging the three of these four respondents recognised the need for more information.

5.2 Incidence of plagiarism

One of the students *agreed* and the other *strongly disagreed* that they *may have plagiarised (accidentally or deliberately)* and both *strongly agreed* that *translation across languages is used by some students to avoid detection of plagiarism*. One of the teacher respondents *agreed* and the other *disagreed* with this same statement. However when asked about *plagiarism by colleagues*, one teacher *strongly agreed* and the other *strongly disagreed*. These questions are very pertinent to Holland, with a strong international culture. It is difficult to ensure that everyone is equally clear about study expectations and academic standards in a multi-lingual and multi-cultural environment.

One of the teacher respondents put forward a point about language skills in second-language study, particularly affecting international students: "*most students have not had writing instruction in their first language; in English they are faced with problems of citation development, writer's block, everything--on top of second language issues!*". A related problem that was not raised by the Dutch respondents, but came up in the IPPHEAE study on Sweden: teachers are less likely to detect plagiarism if they are not native speakers in the language of the work they are marking (Glendinning 2013b, p9).

A national respondent spoke of a culture of downloading: "*Many students have not developed a responsible approach to downloading, they don't regard this as something that should be banned, easy to do, easy to find. They think that if it is on the Internet it is free. The average Dutch person regards this type of behaviour as normal*". This view is prevalent in young people from other parts of Europe.

5.3 *Use of software tools for aiding plagiarism detection and prevention*

According to national sources, the use of software tools is very common in Dutch HEIs and a variety of tools are deployed in different institutions; this was confirmed by the teacher respondents. However the availability of an open national repository of academic sources in the Dutch language, made accessible to all the tools, would greatly increase their effectiveness at finding matches. "*Most universities have a system*", "*Of 40 former Polytechnics 16 are using the same software and server repositories*" but this alone does not guarantee that tools will be used consistently or that cases of plagiarism will be detected. Concerning the acquisition of digital tools, it was stated that "*the cost of systems is not very high relatively speaking*" (national interviews).

One teacher explained that "*as a language teacher, I can quickly tell if writing is at an inappropriately high level--a quick Google usually reveals the plagiarized text*". The other teacher respondent said "*we use SafeAssign in Blackboard*". Both teacher respondents said it was *up to the lecturers* to decide whether and how to use the tools; one teacher said students use the tools to *submit for some assignments* and also agreed that *students may use the tools*. When asked about different language submission to software tools one respondent *did not know* and the other said it was *not applicable*.

Although the use of digital tools is widespread for submitting and checking student work, there was no indication from the limited survey responses that academics in Holland are making use of technology formatively to teach good practice.

The role of the organisation SURF was initially to provide the underlying technological infrastructure on which educational resources can be based, through subsidiary SURFNET. However, a more recent goal of the organisation is to "*use tools and information to raise the quality of education and research"* (national interview).

5.4 Understanding plagiarism

All survey respondents were asked provide their views by selecting from a list of possible reasons for plagiarism or suggesting other reasons. A summary of responses is given in Table 3. There is an interesting mismatch between many of answers from the two students and the other responses. This suggests some dialogue might be helpful between students and teachers about how to discourage plagiarism.

Student	Teacher	national	Possible reason for plagiarism
Table 3: Reasons student plagiarise – student and teacher questionnaires			
0	0	0	They think the lecturer will not care
0	2	0	They think they will not get caught
0	2	1	They run out of time
0	0	0	They don't want to learn anything, just pass the assignment:
0	1	1	They don't see the difference between group work and collusion
0	2	1	They can't express another person's ideas in their own words
0	2	1	They don't understand how to cite and reference
0	0	0	They are not aware of penalties
0	0	1	They are unable to cope with the workload
0	1	0	They think their written work is not good enough:
0	0	0	They feel the task is completely beyond their ability
1	1	1	It is easy to cut and paste from the Internet
2	0	0	They feel external pressure to succeed
2	2	0	Plagiarism is not seen as wrong
0	1	1	They have always written like that
1	0	1	Unclear criteria and expectations for assignments
2	1	0	Their reading comprehension skills are weak
2	0	0	Assignments tasks are too difficult or not understood
2	0	0	There is no teacher control on plagiarism
0	0	0	There is no faculty control on plagiarism
1	1	1	The consequences of plagiarism are not understood

An interesting difference in Table 3 was picked up in another question about views on citing and referencing skills. Students were asked to assess their own capabilities in academic writing and suggest what they found most difficult, responses are summarised in Table 4.

Table 4: Student capabilities and understanding	yes	no
I understand the links between copyright, Intellectual property rights and plagiarism	1	1
Are you confident about referencing and citation?	1	1
What are the reasons for using correct referencing and citation in scholarly academic writing?		
To avoid being accused of plagiarism	2	0
To show you have read the literature	2	0
To give credit to the author	2	0
To strengthen and give credibility to my writing	1	1
Given credit/marks for adding sources	1	1

One of the students expressed more confidence than the other about the concepts, which may reflect the fact that one student had received training and the other had not.

A set of scenario-based questions was included with the on-line questionnaires, designed to check how well students and teachers understood plagiarism. This has proved useful for capturing participants' understanding of what plagiarism is and this served as a diagnostic measure for how to interpret respondents' other responses to the survey. One of the teachers responded accurately to two key questions describing this as *serious plagiarism* (cases a and d), but the second teacher only identified case (a) and was convinced case (d) was *definitely not plagiarism*.

Both student respondents identified case (a) as *serious plagiarism*, but one student believed case (d) was less serious plagiarism than case (a) and the other was not sure whether or not case (d) was plagiarism.

In cases (a) and (d) although no quotation marks were in the text and no relevant citations and references had been included, 40% of the text matched to other sources. The only difference between (a) and (d) was a few changed words in the text, perhaps as a weak attempt to differentiate the work from the source or to paraphrase, but 3 of the 4 respondents appeared unaware that acknowledgement and reference was still required in such a case and that the seriousness of this offence had not been diminished by minor edits to the text.

6. Examples of good practice

The extent of empirical research into plagiarism in the Netherlands is commendable, although no recent evidence has emerged of follow-up studies about progress since 2006. The clear identification of the need to develop sound institutional policies for academic integrity is fully consistent with the findings of the IPPHEAE research.

Use of software tools in many HEIs in the Netherlands for detecting and discouraging plagiarism is to be commended. However the use of such tools must be underpinned by an institutional policy framework for their application.

The national initiatives mentioned earlier in the report, particularly the work of SURF are clear examples of good practice that other countries can learn from. Most of the information created by this organisation has been made available for download in both Dutch and English to provide access to the guidance notes to the majority of teachers and students studying in Holland.

The downside is that the two teacher respondents were not aware of the available materials and one of the students, although then studying at an HEI in a different EU country, had not received training about academic writing conventions and avoidance of plagiarism from his "home" Dutch HEI before departing.

7. Discussion

The limited amount of new data from the Netherlands makes it difficult to draw conclusions directly from the responses, but the supporting research and information helps to provide a more rounded picture. The evidence indicates that Dutch universities are keen to uphold their good reputation for educational quality. The establishment of SURF and the range of support it provides for HEIs is a demonstration of the recognition at the highest level that technological solutions are critical to learning, teaching, governance and policy in HEIs.

It is generally recognised in every country receiving international students that more resources need to be devoted to their support and guidance, particularly just after their arrival. All new students need to acclimatise not just to the local weather, but also to the new academic culture, values and educational expectations. However, this is a particular challenge for students who previously studied under regimes where plagiarism is not discussed and unacknowledged copying of text is condoned.

The inconsistencies and uncertainties about policies and practices seen in this small sample highlight deficiencies observed previously in Holland and elsewhere in Europe, based on much larger samples of data. There is a clear need in at least some institutions to check centrally for adequacy and consistency of policies, procedures and penalties and to ensure they are being applied as intended. Urgent corrective action is needed where it is found that students are being treated unfairly, whether too lenient or overly strict.

It was not determined whether the national agency includes oversight of policies for academic conduct within institutional audits, but no evidence was found that this was part of the normal process. The agency's quality audits would provide an ideal vehicle for scrutiny of institutional practices and supportive discussions on how institutions can improve their standards by encouraging good scholarship and deterring malpractice.

One of the most surprising findings from the IPPHEAE survey for the researchers was the revelation that academics have very different views on what is acceptable academic practice and particularly what constitutes plagiarism. This phenomenon was in evidence in this small sample of data. If academics cannot agree on where the borderline lies and when and how to penalise plagiarism and poor academic practice, it is not surprising that students can be confused.

Although there is some evidence of good practice, much more could and should be done in Holland to continue to develop policies for reducing plagiarism in student work and in research and to address other forms of academic dishonesty.

8. Recommendations

The following recommendations have been designed to draw on good practice elsewhere to strengthen policies and procedures at all levels. Where feasible the activities should apply across both the Netherlands and Flanders.

8.1 Actions at national and international levels

8.1.1 The remit of the Netherland Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (NVAO) could explicitly include oversight and assessment of policies and procedures for academic conduct with institutional audits.

8.1.2 The national government should consider the development of a freely available Dutch language digital repository of academic sources and student work that can be accessed by digital tools for text matching.

8.1.3 It is recommended that the Dutch government commissions further research into plagiarism policies in Dutch HEIs, possibly using the IPPHEAE research instruments, to build on the very

limited IPPHEAE data and establish more definitive and generalizable information that can be used as evidence for policy reform.

8.1.4 There appears to be no statistical evidence about trends in academic misconduct cases arising in Dutch HEIs. The government should consider a national policy of transparency and disclosure for institutions about such matters. This would be predicated on the assurances from institutional audits that institutional policies are fit for purpose and that data collection methods are comparable across institutions.

8.1.5 The excellent work and resources developed by SURF need to be more effectively disseminated to academia to allow teachers and students to take advantage of what is freely available. Perhaps one approach would be to offer national seminars or workshops targeting different levels, particularly aimed at HE managers and also separately for academic teachers.

8.2 Actions for institutions

8.2.1 HE Institutions should conduct internal audits to explore how current policies, penalties and practices for detecting academic misconduct and for dealing with plagiarism are implemented and understood by stakeholders (managers, teachers and students).

8.2.2 Where inconsistencies of approach become apparent, the evidence should be applied to inform the development of more robust and transparent policies and systems.

8.2.3 A range of measures should be considered for discouraging plagiarism and academic misconduct and conversely for encouraging good academic practice. This should apply to the whole academic community, not just for students.

8.2.4 Institutions should initiate academic discussions about concepts of ethical values, plagiarism, academic dishonesty and misconduct in order to try to reach a common consensus of what is and is not acceptable practice. These important conversations should be both within and between institutions, nationally and internationally.

8.2.5 Institutions should ensure information, materials, training and development is provided for all members of the academic community on good academic practice and policies relating to academic conduct.

8.2.6 Additional support and guidance should be made available to all students, bachelor level and above. However it is especially important for international students to ensure they are given time and information to adjust to the new academic environment and to have clarity about expectations on standards and values in academic writing and about plagiarism.

8.2.7 Institutions should develop policies for use of digital tools for submitting and checking similarities in text-based student work, to ensure all staff and students appreciate the value and limitations of such tools.

8.2.8 Institutions should encourage academics to engage in research into academic integrity and plagiarism in order to better inform institutional policies and procedures.

8.3 Actions for individual academics

8.3.1 Academics should familiarise themselves with institutional policies and procedures for academic conduct and understand how to identify and respond to possible cases of dishonesty and misconduct.

8.3.2 All academic teachers and tutors are responsible for supporting students and also junior colleagues, to develop skills in scholarship, appropriate use of academic sources, research practices, ethical values and writing skills.

8.3.3 Academics should remain aware that:

a) It is possible for student assignments, essays and different forms of assessment to be designed in ways that discourage student plagiarism;

b) Conversely if the same essay topic or assignment is repeated in subsequent years, or if a standard solution can be downloaded to the set problem, students are more likely to plagiarise.

8.3.4 There is great value and reward in conducting research into the complex areas of academic integrity. The research tools developed for the IPPHEAE project are available on request for use in conducting surveys and audits at institutional and national level.

9 Conclusions

The IPPHEAE project team is very grateful for to the participants from the Netherlands for the valuable insights in to academic integrity in their country. However it was disappointing that so few of the individuals and institutions contacted were prepared to respond to the survey. It is hoped that further research can be conducted in Holland to establish in a more conclusive manner what has been achieved already by HEIs and what remains to be done to assure academic standards and integrity throughout this region.

References

Borsbook, D., Wagenmakers, E. (2013) Derailed: The rise and Fall of Diederik Stapel, Association for Psychological Science Vol 26, 1 January 2013. On-line at http://www.psychologicalscience.org/index.php/publications/observer/2013/january-13/derailed-the-rise-and-fall-of-diederik-stapel.html [accessed 01/12/2013]

Eurogates web site:http://www.eurogates.nl/en_study_abroad_education_in_holland_netherlands/

Drent, M., Boxem, B., Griep, E., Hilderink, M., van Helden, H., Reumer, C. (2006) *Op weg nar een instellingsbreed plagiaatbestrijdingsbeleid*, Eindrapport DU-project plagiaatpreventie in de praktijk Versie 3.0 November 2006, Digitale Universiteit. On line: https://plagiaat.rechten.uvt.nl/upload/2622007165832622927427272.pdf [accessed 1st April 2014]

Gedragscode (2013) Code of conduct international student higher education, revised 1 March 2013, www.ru.nl/publish/pages/539547/gedragscode_2013_engels.pdf [accessed 18/12/13]

Glendinning, I. (2013a) Plagiarism Policies in Belgium, on line http://ippheae.eu/project-results
Glendinning, I. (2013b) Plagiarism Policies in Sweden, on line http://ippheae.eu/project-results

Koninklijke Nederlandse Akademie van Wetenschappen (Royal Dutch Academy of Sciences), (2005). *Wetenschappelijk onderzoek: dilemma's en verleidingen*. Amsterdam.

Netherlands Agency for Quality Assurance: http://nvao.com/

Nuffic.NL web site: http://www.nuffic.nl/en/library/country-module-netherlands.pdf

Pieters, F., Frijhoff, L., Brenters, L., Jacobs, F. (2005) *Citaat of Plagiaat? Een Onderzoek naar Palagiaat onder studenten aan de Universriteit Utrecht*, University of Utrecht June 2005., on-line: http://stichting-oer.nl/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2010/10/0405-plagiaat.pdf [accessed 1st April 2014]

Roes, H. (2004). *Plagiaat en antiplagiaat in het Nederlands Hoger Onderwijs*, SURF

StudyinHolland: http://www.studyinholland.nl/education-system/

SURF web site: http://www.surf.nl/en/Pages/default.aspx [accessed 18/12/13]

SURF flyer on avoiding plagiarism (in Dutch): http://www.surf.nl/binaries/content/assets/surf/nl/kennisbank/ouder/Flyer_SURFdirect_plagiaatpreventie_pdf_def.pdf [accessed 1st April 2014]

SURF guidelines with regards to plagiarism: http://www.surf.nl/nl/themas/digitalerechten/plagiaatpreventie/Pages/default.aspx (in Dutch) [I did not find this document].

SURF (2008) Legal aspects of plagiarism in higher education and rules for re-use of existing sources: http://www.surf.nl/SFDocuments/SURFdirect_Geoorloofd_Hergebruik_rapport08_OZ.08.1695.pdf [link broken 18/12/13]

SURF Factsheet (in Dutch and English) for HE, *Unintended plagiarism? Here's how to prevent it: know the rules for reusing material* http://auteursrechten.surf.nl/SiteCollectionDocuments/Flexflyer_plagiaat_engels_%20SURFdirect_pdf.pdf [accessed 18/12/13]

SURF academy (2013) 'blended-learning' course about web 2.0 for teachers and educationalist from Dutch HE. http://www.21edingen.nl/eding-13-plagiaat/ (in Dutch) [accessed 18/12/13]

Wiki entry about Diederik Stapel: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diederik_Stapel