



Impact of Policies for Plagiarism in Higher Education Across Europe

Plagiarism Policies in Poland

Full Report

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1. Information sources

The information on plagiarism in Poland is based on a three-level online survey translated into Polish language, with separate questions for students, academic teachers and senior managers of Polish HEIs. Qualitative and quantitative analysis was conducted. Additionally, opinions were collected from people who have influence in policies for higher education including quality assurance policy. Views and opinions collected provided evidence about the awareness and approach to plagiarism in Poland. The report presents results and analyses the data, supplemented by examples of respondents' voices giving individual views.

Table 1 summarises the responses received to different elements of the survey.

Table 1: Breakdown of Survey responses								
Country	Student responses	Teacher responses	Senior Management and National	Student Focus Groups	Organisations and Institutions			
Poland	633	68	17	1	7			
Breakdown of student responses		Home students	Other EU students	Non-EU students	Not known	Bachelor, diploma	Master, doctor	Blank, other
Poland	633	633	0	0	0	365	244	24

Data in Table 1 shows that the majority of student respondents (58%) were enrolled on bachelor degree programmes, with students from second-cycle programmes comprising 37% of the responses. Students from doctoral programmes made up only a small fraction of the total number of respondents (2%).

This summary of evidence draws on information on the official web site of the Ministry of Higher Education and Research about the higher education system and quality assurance in Poland. The report also refers to on-line material available on other web sites and blogs.

2. Respondents

Most of the respondents that provided location of study or employment information (99%) were from one Polish university: #115, therefore, it is predominantly their views that will be discussed here. Only 2% of the student respondents had studied at other European universities and only 1 person studied at an HEI outside the EU (Ukraine). This information indicates that there were minimal opportunities for student respondents' views to have been influenced through studying under other educational systems.

Of faculty (teaching staff) respondents more than half held *adiunkt* (associate professor) positions and 20% *asystent* (assistant professor) positions. Such distribution is representative of the general structure of academic staff in Polish HEIs.

The senior and national level manager respondents consisted of rector's administration (3 respondents), dean's administration (12 respondents) and 2 researchers into academic integrity in Poland.

3. Higher Education in Poland

Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in Poland are divided into state (*public*) and private (*non-public*) institutions. There are two main categories of higher education institutions: *university* and *non-university institutions (colleges)*. In universities at least a few units offer at least six to ten doctoral programmes in different specialisations and are authorised to confer academic doctor degrees (*PhD*).

The higher education institutions run full-time, extramural, evening and external courses. Poland conforms to the guidelines from the Bologna Process in European higher education. The degree system based on the three-cycle structure has been successfully implemented together with the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS). At present in Poland approximately 1.5 million students in total are enrolled in all modes and types of study across all higher education institutions. In the academic year 2012/2013 about 1.67 million students were enrolled and gradually during the nearest ten years this number will reduce to 1.25 million.

According to teachers' estimates on average about 48% of student assessment in the institution studied is conducted as formal written examinations. How the remainder of the assessment is conducted varies significantly according to subject and programme. Teacher respondents also provided an estimate of how much assessment is in the form of group or team-based work. The weighted average of the teachers' estimates indicates that just under 70% of student work in institution #115 is individually assessed.

4. Quality Assurance in Polish Higher Education

The Polish quality assurance system for HE was formally and legislatively introduced in 2007. However many HEIs had introduced components of their educational quality assurance system much earlier. At present, most quality assurance actions taken are focused on accreditation processes and compliance with European Qualification Frameworks, verification methods, adequate tools and infrastructure, adequate teaching staff with proper qualifications and competences. The accrediting agencies (Polish Accreditation Committee and other higher education accreditation bodies) show no indication that they view anti-plagiarism policies as an important component of the system of quality assurance.

Codes of conduct have been defined nationally for research and for teaching. In 2001 *Good manners in science*, in 2004 *Good practices for scientific research* and in 2005, *National regulations on ethics and research in Poland* were published. Each university has Study Rules and Regulations that should contain provisions on intellectual property rights and consequences of plagiarism.

According to one respondent, University #115, whose students constitute the majority of respondents, *“has had an anti-plagiarism policy in place for over 10 years”*.

When talking about quality assurance systems in education, and especially about plagiarism, it needs to be kept in mind that the political system in Poland only began to change in 1989. Polish people’s system of values and their attitudes have significantly evolved since that time. According to a senior manager, *“these aspects are of crucial importance and have a great impact on attitudes across Poland to academic integrity and intellectual property rights”*. However, as the results from this survey will demonstrate, the pace of change is slow. A much more proactive approach is desirable to accelerate and consolidate these urgent reforms.

5. Academic Integrity and Plagiarism in Poland

5.1 Anti-Plagiarism measures nationally in Poland

On 9th May 2012 an “anti-plagiarism” seminar took place in Warsaw that was organised by strikeplagiarism.com and plagiat.pl. Speakers included Dr Andrej Kurkiewicz representing the Ministry of Science and Higher Education, Dr Sebastian Kawcznski, representing his company selling an “anti-plagiarism” software system. Also presenting at the conference were Dr Debora Weber-Wulff professor of Computer Science at HTW Berlin and Dr Marek Wroński, a medical doctor, journalist and Research Integrity Officer for Warsaw School of Medicine.

The seminar contents were well documented in an article written during the event for the Copy-Shake-Paste blog (Weber-Wulff 2012), providing useful views from different perspectives of the situation, in Poland and surrounding countries at that time, relating to policies for managing plagiarism and misconduct in research and higher education.

In giving the government’s position, Dr Kurkiewicz explained that all Polish universities were required to implement regulations or “by-laws for dealing with plagiarism” (Weber-Wulff 2012a). To aid the identification of plagiarism the Ministry had purchased different digital tools for text matching, that they were encouraging universities to adopt. Dr Kurkiwwicz explained that a repository of academic papers and materials was being established that would be made openly accessible to the general public (Pol-on).

Dr Kawcznski confirmed that, in common with many other countries across the world, they had identified a growing problem with ghost-written student work in Poland. However as pointed out in the blog, there was no acknowledgement by the speaker that *“software is useless [in detecting] custom-made papers”* (Weber-Wulff 2012a).

Also at the seminar, Professor Hubert Izdebski, representing the Board of Central Commission of Academic Degrees and Titles in Poland, spoke about how the rescinding of degree titles is handled in Poland, when plagiarism is found in doctoral theses, using some current and some historical cases. Their approach appeared to be far more pragmatic than that adopted recently for similar cases in Germany; according to Weber-Wulff: in Poland *“they decided that there is no statute of limitations on this, since when they decide that the thesis is invalid, it is not rescinded - it is considered never to have been granted”* (Weber-Wulff 2012a).

Dr Wroński lamented the dearth of statistics for misconduct cases in Poland, but received no reassurance from the government representative present, who explained that the responsibility for information release is delegated to HEIs. There is more in section 5.3 of this report about Dr Wroński’s work.

5.2 Responses to the IPPHEAE survey on institutional policies

Well over third of IPPHEAE survey respondents (40% of students and 43% of teachers) had no knowledge of any available information aimed at raising student awareness of plagiarism. When asked about information sources on other forms academic dishonesty 32% of students and 53% of teachers said they were not aware of this type of resource. Teacher and student respondents disagreed to some extent about the sources for information provided to alert students about forms of plagiarism and academic dishonesty during their classes/lectures/tutorials, as can be seen in Table 2. It is interesting to note how students appeared to rely on web-based information and leaflets that most teachers were not aware of.

Information about plagiarism		Information about academic dishonesty		<i>Source of information</i>
students	teachers	students	teachers	
56%	16%	33%	7%	<i>Web site</i>
22%	19%	19%	18%	<i>Book or course guide</i>
20%	3%	15%	1%	<i>Leaflet, notes</i>
44%	40%	37%	32%	<i>Workshop/class/lectures</i>
44%	43%	32%	53%	<i>Not aware of any information</i>

Table 2: Comparison of student and teacher responses about sources of information on plagiarism and academic dishonesty

In a related question (Student Qu 12, Teacher Qu14) there were again differences between the teacher and student perceptions of what resources were provided for learning academic writing skills, as illustrated in Table 3. In particular 52% of teachers believed that *tutors and lecturers* were the main source of such information compared to only 7% of student respondents, with 35% of teachers opting for *advice during class or module* compared to just 26% of students. The most popular answers to this question from students were *academic writing unit* (45%) and *additional lectures or workshops*(38%).

Student	Teacher	<i>Where</i>
5%	3%	<i>Academic Support Unit</i>
26%	35%	<i>Advice in class or module</i>
38%	6%	<i>Additional lectures or workshops</i>
7%	52%	<i>Advice from tutors or lecturers</i>
11%	37%	<i>Guidance from the Library</i>
19%	7%	<i>University publisher</i>
45%	19%	<i>Academic writing unit/Study skills unit</i>

The responses shown in Tables 2 and 3 suggest that teachers over-estimate the impact of their contributions. The support for students would be improved by more dialogue between students and teachers about what is available and where and what would be the most effective type of resource provision.

Students and teachers were asked whether there was an option or requirement for students to sign statements about personal honesty or originality of their work prior to or during their study time (Table 4). Although 60% of teachers and 29% of students said that this applied to just some assignments, 7% of teachers and 20% of students believed this was a requirement for all assignments. 8% of student and 7% of teacher respondents said there was a requirement to sign a

statement of honesty on starting a degree programme, but in contrast 33% of students and 20% of teacher respondents were unaware of any institutional policy about this. Some academic staff indicated that there was a requirement for students to sign to verify originality and integrity only for certain categories of project work. It is not clear why the observed variations exist within the same institution, but they could be accounted for by local policy differences according to subject. These inconsistencies may confuse students about the perceived importance for the integrity of assessment.

Student	Teacher	When
8%	7%	<i>On starting their degree</i>
20%	7%	<i>For every assessment</i>
35%	60%	<i>For some assessments</i>
5%	3%	<i>Never</i>
33%	20%	<i>Not sure or not applicable</i>

Question 7 of the student and teacher questionnaires asked about sanctions: *What would happen if a student at your institution was found guilty of plagiarism in their assignment or final project/dissertation?* The responses are summarised in Table 5.

The most popular option chosen both by students (55% for assignment and 42% for dissertation) and teachers (65% for assignment and 66% for dissertation) was *Request to rewrite it properly*. However a verbal warning appears to be a common outcome for plagiarism in assignments according to 48% of students and 44% of teachers.

Assignment		Project or Dissertation		Sanction
Student	Teacher	Student	Teacher	
21%	6%	4%	0%	<i>No action would be taken</i>
48%	44%	12%	21%	<i>Verbal warning</i>
21%	16%	24%	15%	<i>Formal warning letter</i>
55%	65%	42%	66%	<i>Request to re write it properly</i>
44%	34%	29%	19%	<i>Zero mark for the work</i>
38%	29%	17%	19%	<i>Repeat the module or subject</i>
42%	28%	17%	19%	<i>Fail the module or subject</i>
10%	6%	21%	6%	<i>Repeat the whole year of study</i>
10%	3%	39%	18%	<i>Fail the whole programme or degree</i>
13%	15%	24%	19%	<i>Expose the student to school community</i>
16%	12%	37%	16%	<i>Suspended from the institution</i>
10%	0%	37%	0%	<i>Expelled from the institution</i>
21%	0%	30%	0%	<i>Suspend payment of student grant</i>
13%	6%	13%	9%	<i>Other</i>

The teachers' responses suggest that, for institution #115 at least, the penalties for plagiarism are likely to be fairly lenient compared to those applied in some other EU countries. The more draconian penalties suggested in the question options were more likely to be selected by students than teachers, implying that there may be an element of deterrence where there is the perceived threat of more serious penalties.

It is of note that 21% of student respondents selected *no action would be taken* for plagiarism in an assignment, compared to only 6% of teachers, perhaps implying that some cases of plagiarism are either not being detected or ignored by some tutors.

36% of student respondents said they had experienced plagiarism by academic teachers in the use of unacknowledged sources in teaching materials and class notes (Appendix PL-1 Qu S5i). Of student respondents 33% said they had *come across a case of student plagiarism* and 31% believed they *may have plagiarised (accidentally or deliberately)* at some time previously (Appendix PL-1 Qus S5j, S5k). Considering teachers' responses to equivalent questions, 43% believed they had witnessed plagiarism by other teachers, but positive responses reduced to 34% when asked if they believed they may have themselves committed plagiarism (Appendix PL-1 Qus T5n, T5o). It must be noted that there is likely to be some under-reporting in these responses, either to protect personal or institutional reputations, or due to lack of clarity about exactly what constitutes plagiarism. All such reasons may be reflected in the relatively high percentages of "don't know" responses.

The survey explored the use of software tools both to aid in the detection of plagiarism and to educate students about good academic practice. Student and teacher Question 8 asked: *What digital tools or other techniques are available at your institution for helping to detect plagiarism?* A thematic analysis of the responses is summarised in Table 6.

Table 6: Software Tools	Student	Teacher
Software for checking thesis, antiplagiat, plagiat.pl, Turnitin	232 (42%)	30 (51%)
Website, Internet, search engines, Google	24 (3%)	1 (2%)
Database of scientific text, masters work, source-code repositories	4 (1%)	0
Library	2 (0.4%)	0
Cameras, student registration system	0	1 (2%)
Don't know, nothing	281 (51%)	26 (44%)
Teachers, Lecturers' knowledge	5 (1%)	1 (2%)

Student and teacher Question 9 asked: *How are the tools you named above used?* A summary of the responses is given in Table 7.

Table 7: Use of software tools	Student	Teacher
<i>It is up to the lecturers to decide whether to use the tools</i>	43%	32%
<i>For some courses students must submit their written work using the tools</i>	19%	21%
<i>Students must submit all written work using the tools</i>	4%	7%
<i>Students may use the tools to check their work before submitting</i>	15%	21%

Table 6 shows a clear split between those students and teachers who are aware what specialist software is available and those who have no knowledge of this. Responses to both questions imply there is no institutional policy for how and when to use the tools and that these may be seen by some lecturers as only useful for checking theses rather than seeing the potential for apply both formatively and punitively to all text-based student work.

It is evident that the institution is not fully capitalising on either the deterrent effect or the educational benefits from deploying such tools. More communication to the whole academic community and systematic adoption of such tools institution-wide may help to move the institution forward in its quest to promote academic integrity.

According to the Copy-Shake-Paste blog article by Professor Deborah Weber-Wulff there were then “*149 public universities in Poland (32%) that use a plagiarism detection system regularly*” (Weber-Wulff 2012). She posted the message during the “anti-plagiarism” conference in Warsaw on 9th May 2012.

It is hoped that the Polish government’s recent decision to purchase software tools for HEIs to adopt will in time lead to an increase in this percentage. However, it is well understood that plagiarism prevention and detection cannot simply rely on having software tools to aid identification. None of the currently available tools can actually detect plagiarism; all require academic judgement to interpret matched results. All tools rely on access to incomplete repositories of academic and research publications and student work. Digital academic papers and resources in languages such as Polish are quite sparse compared to the English language resources available within repositories accessed by all digital matching tools, including the leading commercial software, Turnitin.

The UK experience confirms that more take-up and systematic use of software tools will gradually improve their reach and effectiveness. However, these results suggest there is a policy in institution #115 for allowing tutors to decide whether and how to use the tools. Feedback suggests they are mainly applied for more significant final projects and theses rather than to all written assessments.

It is notable that just 14% of the teachers and 18% of the students agreed with the statement that *all teachers follow the same procedures for similar cases of plagiarism*, with 35% and 28% respectively disagreeing with the statement (Annex PL-1 Qu S5l, T5q). 25% of the teachers agreed with the statement *I believe the way teachers treat plagiarism does not vary from student to student*, with 29% disagreeing and 44% not sure. 26% of the students agreed with the same statement, with 26% disagreeing and 45% not sure (Annex PL-1 Qu S5m, T5r). These responses suggest more needs to be done in terms of institutional policies and practices to ensure consistency of outcomes when cases of plagiarism and cheating arise.

5.3 Research into academic misconduct in Poland

Input to this research from academics teaching in Poland outside institution #115 helps to throw more light on how similar the culture and policies of this institution are compared to other HEIs in Poland. In common with counterparts in several other countries, respected academic scientist and journalist, Marek Wroński, MD, PhD, has been fulfilling the role of whistle-blower about misconduct in research and education in Poland since 1997.

According to a USA-based blogger writing about their meeting in 2010 “*Wroński is a medical doctor and a journalist, who after returning from 18 years of medical research work in the United States, nine years ago turned into a defender of academic ethics, and had become Poland’s top expert in hunting down, researching and exposing scientific fraudsters who lace their academic research with someone’s original work*” (Dabrowski 2010).

In his current role as Research Integrity Officer at the Warsaw Medical School and also as investigative science journalist Dr. Wroński has exposed and dealt with many cases of academic and research misconduct. However his activities are not confined to his own institution and he is not deterred by the elapsed time or the level of seniority of the person responsible.

Again from Dabrowski, there is more information in the blog-posting concerning their meeting in 2010: “*The day we met will be remembered by many people by a removal of a Wroclaw Medical Academy president, Dr. Ryszard Andrzejczak for his act of plagiarism. The case was all over the media. As we talked, Wroński expressed his added concern that academic dishonesty referred to also*

as scientific perjury, adds a different flavor if discovered among religious academics or in theological doctoral dissertations. His current case involves a charge exposing a sizable academic misconduct with a majority of doctoral thesis text “borrowed” from authors of a historical symposium from 1976, whose research was later published in a book” (Dabrowski 2010).

In a series of more than 130 articles under the heading “From the Archives of Scientific Misconduct” (Z archiwum nieuczciwości naukowej), published since 2002 in the Polish language in a monthly magazine for academics called *Academic Forum*, Marek Wroński contributed several hundred opinion pieces exposing details of specific cases of research misconduct and plagiarism involving Polish academics (Forum Akademickie, 2012). The translation into English of one of Professor Wroński’s articles by an academic researcher, provided as evidence towards the IPPHEAE research, revealed the nature of his research and investigation activities (Wroński 2012). The translated article highlighted inconsistencies and discrepancies in handling allegations of multiple plagiarisms by the eminent professor of church history at the Catholic University of Lublin.

In direct conversations the author had with Wroński for the IPPHEAE research, he expressed awareness of how unpopular and feared he has become in academic circles in Poland. However he also asserted his determination to continue to pursue his important work, exposing cheating and fraudulent and unprofessional conduct in order to raise standards in research and education throughout Poland.

6 Perceptions and understanding of plagiarism

The IPPHEAE survey included several questions designed to highlight how respondents perceived and understood aspects of academic misconduct and plagiarism.

The majority of student respondents (74%) said that they had become aware about plagiarism before they started their bachelor degree programme. 17% of students said they learned about plagiarism during bachelor degree studies and 4% during postgraduate studies. When asked about their academic writing skills 40% of students said they learned how to *cite and reference* sources before starting their bachelor degree, 41% said they acquired these skills during their bachelor degree studies, 4% said they learned this as a postgraduate student and 15% said they were still unsure about how to reference academic sources.

Those students who said they were still not sure about either plagiarism (5%) or referencing and citation skills (15%) or both (2%) were mostly bachelor degree students, but included 7% of the postgraduate student respondents. Although these percentages are small it is important in terms of academic standards to ensure that all students studying at a university become confident in correctly applying necessary academic skills.

According to 15% of the students and 37% of teacher respondents, training was provided for students *in techniques for scholarly academic writing and anti-plagiarism issues* (Annex PL-1 Qu S5a, T5a). However 52% of students and 61% of the teachers said that they would like to have more training in *avoidance of plagiarism and academic dishonesty* (Annex PL-1 Qu S5b, T5p).

All four levels of survey included questions that explored respondents’ understanding about what constitutes plagiarism and the underlying reasons why it occurs. The responses to the question about why students plagiarise are summarised in Table 8.

Unpacking the responses summarised in Table 8 reveals that there is broad agreement between the student and teacher percentages of responses for most options relating to student motivation for plagiarism. However there were some differences. A higher number of teachers than students chose the options about collusion (15% students, 40% teachers), weak comprehension skills (29% students, 59% teachers) and lack of faculty control (18% students, 26% teachers). However more students than teachers opted for reasons relating to student pressures: coping with workload (44% students, 22% teachers), tasks beyond their ability (26% students, 19% teachers), external pressures (26% students, 0% teachers) and assignment tasks too difficult (28% students, 4% teachers). These different views again suggest it would be valuable to have more communication between teachers and students about these issues.

Student Question 14 and teacher Question 17: *What leads students to decide to plagiarise?*

Table 8. Reasons student plagiarise – student and teacher questionnaires		
Student	Teacher	Possible reason for plagiarism
31%	29%	<i>They think the lecturer will not care</i>
62%	76%	<i>They think they will not get caught</i>
69%	63%	<i>They run out of time</i>
51%	51%	<i>They don't want to learn anything, just pass the assignment:</i>
15%	40%	<i>They don't see the difference between group work and collusion</i>
53%	51%	<i>They can't express another person's ideas in their own words</i>
47%	56%	<i>They don't understand how to cite and reference</i>
54%	47%	<i>They are not aware of penalties</i>
44%	22%	<i>They are unable to cope with the workload</i>
44%	41%	<i>They think their written work is not good enough:</i>
26%	19%	<i>They feel the task is completely beyond their ability</i>
69%	78%	<i>It is easy to cut and paste from the Internet</i>
26%	0%	<i>They feel external pressure to succeed</i>
52%	62%	<i>Plagiarism is not seen as wrong</i>
42%	31%	<i>They have always written like that</i>
21%	10%	<i>Unclear criteria and expectations for assignments</i>
29%	56%	<i>Their reading comprehension skills are weak</i>
28%	4%	<i>Assignments tasks are too difficult or not understood</i>
28%	28%	<i>There is no teacher control on plagiarism</i>
18%	26%	<i>No faculty control on plagiarism</i>
46%	44%	<i>Consequences not fully understood</i>

Table 9. What students find difficult about academic writing	
Finding good quality sources	70%
Referencing and citation	27%
Paraphrasing	31%
Understanding different formats and styles	30%

Student respondents were asked what they found difficult about academic writing and asked to select any of the options applicable to them (Table 9). The most common response, selected by 70% of respondents was difficulty in *finding good quality academic sources*. These responses suggest that most student respondents believed they had no problems paraphrasing and correctly applying referencing conventions. However this implication was contradicted by responses to a separate question, which asked students directly: *are you confident about referencing and citation?* Only 37% of Polish student respondents said they were confident, with 60% either indicating uncertainty or saying they were not confident about their ability to cite and reference.

A further question explored students’ appreciation of why referencing and citation was required for academic writing, by asking respondents to select any applicable reasons from five options. The responses are summarised in Table 10.

To avoid being accused of plagiarism	88%
To show you have read some relevant research papers	50%
To give credit to the author of the sourced material	71%
To strengthen and give authority to your writing	63%
Because you are given credit/marks for doing so	5%
I don’t know	4%

The most common reason selected (Table 10) indicates that some students see referencing as a way to avoid plagiarism and may not fully understand more scholarly reasons for acknowledged of sources. However it is encouraging that the majority of respondents demonstrated a more rounded view.

When asked about “house styles” for referencing formats, 56% of students and 66% of teacher respondents said students were expected to use a specific referencing format for their academic writing, with 17% and 12% respectively saying there was no standard format and 23% and 19% not sure. The responses may vary according to different subject disciplines, or be applied at different educational stages, but such differences are likely to confuse rather than help students.

The validity of many of the questionnaire responses depends on how concepts such as dishonesty and plagiarism are understood by the respondents. The final question on both the teacher and student questionnaire was a complex multi-part question designed to explore respondents’ understanding of how plagiarism is defined. The question was made up of six different scenarios all of which involved a student submitting work to be assessed or graded with 40% content that matched other sources.

Respondents were asked for each of the scenarios whether this was case of plagiarism and if so how serious was the offence and should any punishment be applied. All cases provided describe aspects of plagiarism, but some are more serious than others. Part (a) describes a straightforward case of direct copying, constituting serious plagiarism, with no attempt to acknowledge sources, either by using quotation marks of referencing. Part (d) is the same as part (a), except that a few words had been changed in the directly copied text. Comparing the responses for (a) and (d) provides a very useful indicator of how well respondents understand how to use and when to acknowledge sources. The responses from student participants are summarised in Table 11 and responses from teacher participants are summarised in Table 12.

Examination of the responses to these questions reveals that although, as was expected, almost all respondents were confident about case (a) being plagiarism, the level of uncertainty (don't know) was much higher for both students and teachers for the other scenarios. It is particularly surprising how many teacher respondents were reluctant to commit to a response on these questions.

Student Question 15: *Examples of possible plagiarism, with 40% matching text.*

Table 11. Student responses to identifying possible cases of plagiarism					
Qu	Is it plagiarism?			Punishment?	Assuming that 40% of a student's submission is from other sources and is copied into the student's work as described in (a-f) below, indicate your judgement on plagiarism
	Yes	No	Don't know		
a	92%	1%	5%	67%	word for word with no quotations
b	71%	3%	23%	43%	word for word with no quotations, has correct references but no in text citations
c	44%	16%	36%	21%	word for word with no quotations, but has correct references and in text citations
d	47%	9%	41%	26%	with some words changed with no quotations, references or in text citations
e	25%	20%	51%	8%	with some words changed with no quotations, has correct references but no in text citations
f	15%	42%	39%	6%	with some words changed with no quotations, but has correct references and in text citations

Teacher Question 19: *Examples of possible plagiarism, with 40% matching text.*

Table 12. Teacher responses to possible case of plagiarism					
Qu	Is it plagiarism?			Punishment?	Assuming that 40% of a student's submission is from other sources and is copied into the student's work as described in (a-f) below, indicate your judgement on plagiarism
	Yes	No	Don't know		
a	94%	0%	6%	66%	word for word with no quotations
b	87%	1%	12%	57%	word for word with no quotations, has a correct references but no in text citations
c	55%	13%	32%	28%	word for word with no quotations, but has correct references and in text citations
d	74%	3%	24%	47%	with some words changed with no quotations, references or in text citations
e	50%	9%	41%	22%	with some words changed with no quotations, has correct references but no in text citations
f	23%	31%	44%	10%	with some words changed with no quotations, but has correct references and in text citations

Focusing specifically on parts (a) and (d) in tables 11 and 12, the dramatic reduction in the student responses (92% reducing to 47%) and substantial shift in teacher responses (94% reducing to 74%) of those who believed case (d) was plagiarism compared to case (a) indicates that many students and teachers who participated in the survey do not understand how and when to acknowledge sources in scholarly work. These responses imply that students are likely to be (inadvertently) committing plagiarism and teachers may be both condoning plagiarism in student work and providing inappropriate instructions, and through personal example, on how and when to use quotation marks and cite and reference academic sources.

The responses to these questions in tables 11 and 12 also suggest an apparent lack of appetite by teacher respondents to “punish” cases of student plagiarism, which is of concern. At the very least this could be viewed a lost opportunity for correcting inappropriate student research and writing practices. There are several different reasons behind decisions taken by institutions that choose to apply punitive sanctions to students for plagiarism and academic misconduct. These are explored further in the discussions that follow.

It can be asserted that the responses in Tables 11 and 12 are indicative of a very lax approach to academic writing and to penalising plagiarised work. However because almost all the respondents were from one institution, it is impossible to know whether this profile is typical of all HEIs in Poland.

7 Examples of good practice

Despite clear limitations of the dataset of evidence collected for Poland, some examples of good practice have emerged from this research that deserve to be noted in this report.

Firstly the national government has taken the forward-looking decision to invest in a national repository of doctoral and master’s theses with software platform that can be utilised for aiding the detection of plagiarism in work submitted by students for assessment leading to credits and qualifications. Although this is just a first step and much more needs to be done, if fully exploited this service could provide useful deterrent to student misconduct and open the door for the development and implementation of more comprehensive systems and solutions.

Several events were organised in Poland within the timescale of the IPPHEAE project, that highlighted threats and challenges to academic quality through lack of initiatives in institutions to respond to threats from unchallenged plagiarism in student work at all levels, research fraud and other forms of misconduct in both education and research. Again these events represent a small beginning, but send an important signal that at national level at least, Poland is beginning to take academic dishonesty seriously.

The most courageous example of good practice in research and education in Poland today that has emerged from this research is the activities of Professor Marek Wroński. In common with other “whistle blowers” and activists trying to promote scholarly values and improvements to academic quality and standards (as discussed in IPPHEAE reports on Germany, France and Finland), Wroński has been the target of much criticism for exposing serious cases of plagiarism and fraud. It is in the interests of the Polish higher educational sector as a whole to support this important work. If left unchecked, these cases of academic dishonesty will serve to discredit other excellent research being conducted in Poland in the perception of international players. Wroński deserves to be listened to and his research should be taken seriously. Ideally his important efforts should be afforded national prominence and funded accordingly.

8 Discussion

Despite the limitations of this research, the message emerging from these results is that there is far too much complacency in Polish education regarding tolerance of student plagiarism and academic dishonesty. Although it was claimed that institution #115 had had policies for managing and discouraging plagiarism for over ten years, clearly, there has been no consistency in application of such a policy across the institution. Further, the impact of effective policies was not apparent in responses from students and teachers. One key area for attention is to establish a set of institution-wide values and standards that all members of the community (staff and students) should be asked to subscribe to.

When survey participants were asked to identify cases of plagiarism from scenarios, the responses indicated that no common basis had been established within the institution for where the borderline was between acceptable and unacceptable practice. If no standards exist then there will be variations on how people interpret and apply the rules. However it must be acknowledged that these results from one HEI in Poland are similar to those for many of the other EU countries surveyed for IPPHEAE.

The survey responses indicate that sanctions for student violations to academic integrity are light or not applied at all in this institution. Convincing arguments have been proposed by some researchers for institutions to adopt a lenient approach to forms of student failings (Howard 1999, Pecorari and Shaw 2012, Borg 2009), particularly advocating that a supportive educative approach is preferable to designing legalist systems and punitive measures for deterring misconduct. In practice something in-between these two extremes (carrot and stick) tends to be adopted by institutions that have undertaken careful research into the options before designing policies and systems for upholding academic integrity (Glendinning 2013).

The reasons for applying punishment or sanctions can be summarised as follows:

- To ensure no student gains academic credit for work that is not their own;
- To deter academic dishonesty through awareness of the consequences;
- To send a clear message that academic misconduct is not acceptable;
- To provide opportunity for dialogue about how to improve academic practice and conduct;
- To demonstrate that the institution is aware a violation has occurred;
- To record cases of misconduct that can be taken into account in case of subsequent violations.

Where there is leniency on sanctions, either for educative or other reasons, the other motives in the above list also need to be factored in to ensure there is a balanced response.

The use of software tools such as Plagiat.pl for aiding the detection of plagiarism can be a useful part of the academic toolkit. However there is evidence from the IPPHEAE survey across most parts of Europe that the limitations of these tools are not understood by many students, administrators and academic teaching staff. Much more work needs to be done across Poland to develop the capabilities of the available tools, increase the scope of their use to encompass all written student work in all institutions and educate the academic community about what role they can play in formative learning and deterring plagiarism.

9. Recommendations

9.1 National level recommendations

9.1.1 The national government ministers with responsibility for higher education have already made a start in the acquisition of digital tools. They should consider providing funding to ensure that all HE institutions appropriately implement high quality software tools institutionally, ideally both for aiding the detection of plagiarism and to be utilised formatively to teach appropriate use of academic sources.

9.1.2 The evolving national digital archive of academic work including master's and doctoral theses, whether in Polish or English, should be made accessible to the selected software tools for text matching against academic papers and student work;

9.1.3 A set of national guidelines should be created that advises institutions and academics on the value, mature applications and limitations of digital tools for deterring plagiarism and academic misconduct;

9.1.4 Accreditation or quality assurance agencies should be required to audit and monitor institutions' policies and operational effectiveness in identifying and managing academic misconduct cases, at whatever level they arise;

9.1.5 Support and protection should be provided by the national government for "whistle blowers" who expose all forms of malpractice in education, research and society;

9.1.6 Additional research should be considered to cover all Polish HEIs with a view to investigate current practices, raise awareness of good practice and encourage positive change;

9.1.7 For monitoring purposes it would be useful to collect statistics from HE institutions on cases arising of academic misconduct, with outcomes; however such statistics would only be of value for comparison if all institutions had similar rigour in detecting malpractice, recorded the statistics in the same way and recorded similar statistics;

9.1.8 The ministry of education is advised to consider introducing education about academic conduct and writing conventions at secondary education level.

9.2 Institutional level recommendations

9.2.1 A training programme should be designed and made available for academic staff at all levels to create a culture of responsibility and consistency in assessment design and grading of student work that discourages all forms of academic misconduct and challenges student plagiarism;

9.2.2 The institution should take steps to ensure that all students receive on-going instruction and support in appropriate use of academic sources and scholarly academic writing requirements;

9.2.3 The institutional policies for quality assurance and for upholding academic integrity should be reviewed and revised in the light of the findings from this survey in order to ensure that

- A common institution-wide set of values and standards is agreed by all academic staff and promoted to the student population;
- All students are set challenging assessments requiring them to engage in critical thinking, according to their academic level, in line with the principles set out in European qualifications frameworks;
- Procedures for identifying and penalising cases of academic misconduct are applied consistently, fairly and transparently throughout the institution.

9.2.4 The difference in perceptions of students and teachers captured through this survey implies there needs to be serious and regular dialogue with students in the institution about causes of plagiarism and academic misconduct, ways to reduce such occurrences and sources of guidance and information;

9.2.5 A central institutional register should be established recording and categorising the number of cases of plagiarism and academic misconduct, including the action taken. This will allow the institution to determine whether responses to misconduct are transparent, fair, consistent and proportional;

9.2.6 Institution #115 should aspire to become an exemplar institution in academic integrity good practice for Poland.

9.3 Recommendations for individual academics

9.3.1 Given that cases of student misconduct and plagiarism are unlikely to surface unless they are identified by academic teachers and supervisors, it is the responsibility of all academic staff to ensure that they

- set a good example for students in their own conduct;
- guide and advise students on integrity and appropriate academic conduct;
- are alert to detect student cheating through ghost-writing and through novel use of technology.

9.3.2 Academic staff should take advantage of any professional development available on raising standards, quality assurance and promoting academic integrity across the institution;

9.3.3 Where possible academic staff should contribute to the development of effective and consistent institutional policies for promoting academic integrity and deterring plagiarism and academic misconduct.

10. Conclusions

Despite the limitations of the data collected, the survey has produced some interesting but worrying results about the Polish higher education sector. Clearly it is not possible to extrapolate from one institution surveyed and claim these results apply across all HEIs in Poland. However no evidence has emerged that singles out this institution as different from others.

The findings of Poland's whistle-blower suggest an unacceptable level of complacency and tolerance of poor practice that pervades all levels of education and research in HEIs across the country. It would be desirable to survey more HE institutions in Poland in order to raise the profile of this research, the need for raising standards and in the search for examples of more effective practice.

Recently organised events suggest there is awareness that radical changes are needed in Polish HE to bring the country's universities and HE institutions into line with best practice found elsewhere. It is hoped that the findings and recommendations from IPPHEAE will be taken very seriously on all levels and that positive changes will begin to emerge.



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AppendixPL-1: Responses to question 5: (1=strongly disagree – 5=strongly agree)

Table 16: Student and teacher responses to questionnaire Question 5 (percentages)							Question
Qu	Negative (1,2)		Don't know		Positive (4,5)		
	student	teacher	student	teacher	student	teacher	
s5a t5a	76%	36%	6%	26%	15%	37%	<i>Students receive training in techniques for scholarly academic writing and anti-plagiarism issues</i>
s5b t5p	25%	15%	22%	21%	52%	61%	<i>I would like to have more training on avoidance of plagiarism and academic dishonesty</i>
s5c t5b	9%	16%	46%	34%	43%	50%	<i>This institution has policies and procedures for dealing with plagiarism</i>
t5c		14%		35%		49%	<i>I believe this institution takes a serious approach to plagiarism prevention</i>
t5d		22%		29%		47%	<i>I believe this institution takes a serious approach to plagiarism detection</i>
s5d t5e	16%	22%	58%	56%	24%	19%	<i>Plagiarism policies, procedures and penalties are available to students</i>
t5f		25%		37%		38%	<i>Plagiarism policies, procedures and penalties are available to staff</i>
s5e t5g	6%	14%	61%	57%	31%	28%	<i>Penalties for plagiarism are administered according to a standard formula</i>
s5f t5h	46%	38%	18%	21%	35%	41%	<i>I know what penalties are applied to students for different forms of plagiarism and academic dishonesty</i>
s5g t5i	18%	13%	71%	82%	7%	4%	<i>Student circumstances are taken into account when deciding penalties for plagiarism</i>
s5h t5m	5%	14%	52%	46%	40%	36%	<i>The institution has policies and procedures for dealing with academic dishonesty</i>
t5j		10%		75%		12%	<i>The penalties for academic dishonesty are separate from those for plagiarism</i>
t5k		4%		49%		47%	<i>There are national regulations or guidance concerning plagiarism prevention within HEIs in this country</i>
t5l		10%		46%		44%	<i>Our national quality and standards agencies monitor plagiarism and academic dishonesty in HEIs</i>
s5i t5n	31%	27%	30%	31%	36%	43%	<i>I believe one or more of my teachers/colleagues may have used plagiarised or unattributed materials in class notes</i>
s5j	46%		19%		33%		<i>I have come across a case of plagiarism committed by a student at this institution</i>
s5k t5o	43%	44%	24%	19%	31%	34%	<i>I believe I may have plagiarised (accidentally or deliberately)</i>
s5l t5q	28%	35%	52%	49%	18%	14%	<i>I believe that all teachers follow the same procedures for similar cases of plagiarism</i>
s5m t5r	26%	29%	45%	44%	26%	25%	<i>I believe that the way teachers treat plagiarism does not vary from student to student</i>
s5n t5s	15%	28%	55%	50%	27%	21%	<i>I believe that when dealing with plagiarism teachers follow the existing/required procedures</i>
s5o t5t	14%	7%	41%	12%	43%	78%	<i>It is possible to design coursework to reduce student plagiarism</i>
s5p t5u	14%	51%	41%	46%	43%	3%	<i>I think that translation across languages is used by some students to avoid detection of plagiarism</i>
s5q	16%		36%		6%		<i>The previous institution I studied was less strict about plagiarism than this institution</i>
s5r	20%		15%		64%		<i>I understand the links between copyright, Intellectual property rights and plagiarism</i>