SANJARI
INTERNATIONAL COLLEGE

Unfair Practice Policy

Updated: July, 2013

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1.   Preamble

As a college committed to providing quality education, Sanjari International College (SIC) feels an obligation to assessment bodies, its students, employers and society in general to ensure that the qualifications its students receive are a fair and accurate representation of their work, and of the knowledge and skills attained. It is a fact that plagiarism, and other forms of cheating, undermines the value of qualifications for all concerned because they undermine their credibility. If a student passes an assessment, or gets a qualification, by unfair means then this is unfair to those who have achieved the same qualification fairly. For these reasons the SIC will take all appropriate measures to ensure that student work is in fact their own, and that plagiarism and other forms of cheating have not taken place. The SIC will also take appropriate action where plagiarism is detected.

Malpractice - what it means

Malpractice is defined as any act default or practice which is the breach of the regulations or which: Compromises, attempts to compromise or may compromise the process of assessment the deliberate falsification of personal state to obtain certificates.

Plagiarism - what it means

Plagiarism is a form of cheating. Neville (2007) describes plagiarism as "a practice that involves knowingly taking and using another person's work and claiming it, directly or indirectly, as your own". However, this definition covers a range of degrees of seriousness and intent. Students may be motivated, for example, by laziness as well as by a direct intent to obtain a qualification unfairly. In practice, it can also be difficult to distinguish between deliberate plagiarism and failure to acknowledge sources appropriately. There is a clear difference of degree between poor referencing of a quotation and the deliberate passing off of an entire piece of work with the intention of obtaining a qualification unfairly. It should be noted, however, that whether it is intentional or not, plagiarism presents a problem when it interferes with the accurate assessment of a student's ability - it subverts the purpose of assessment. Plagiarism can also be seen as a breach of trust between lecturers and their students, and between society and its members, and as such issues relating to plagiarism are matters of citizenship, honesty, and fairness.

Collusion- what it means

Collusion occurs when, unless with official approval (e.g. in the case of group projects), two or more students consciously collaborate in the preparation and production of work which is ultimately submitted by each in an identical or substantially similar form and/or is represented by each to be the product of his or her individual efforts. Collusion also occurs where there is unauthorised co-operation between a student and another person in the preparation and production of work which is presented as the student's own.

Fabrication- what it means

Embellishment of Data occurs when a proportion of the total data is altered, enhanced or exaggerated in order to emphasise data which has been obtained by legitimate means
Fabrication of Data occurs when a student creates and presents an extensive amount or significant piece of data in order to conceal a paucity of legitimate data; or wholly fabricates a set of data in the absence of legitimate data.

The use of plagiarism detection systems

The development of digital technologies and the Internet has both exacerbated the problems of plagiarism and has also provided means for its detection. The SIC is committed to the use of appropriate technologies to support its staff in the detection of plagiarism. As part of its approach to the detection of plagiarism the College has planned to implement the Turnitin Plagiarism Service at its earliest convenience. This service uses extensive databases of material from a range of sources, including the work of other students, in order to detect when the material submitted by a student has been copied from another source. While this system is very powerful, and provides an aid to the judgement of SIC staff, it should not be seen as a substitute for that judgement. The responsibility for judging whether plagiarism has taken place remains with teaching staff. It should also be noted that material submitted by the SIC for plagiarism detection purposes is retained on the plagiarism detection system for the purpose of detecting plagiarism in future submissions. For this reason there are potentially both data protection and copyright issues surrounding the use of these systems. The following is intended to clarify these issues:

- By enrolling at the SIC, students agree to the submission of their work to the plagiarism service used by the College.
- Further, they agree to the following:

- The transfer of their College course work and data relating to this work outside the EU for purposes of plagiarism detection
- The transfer of work submitted for assessment to third parties for the purpose of present and future plagiarism detection
- The processing of such work and related data for the purposes of plagiarism detection and the provision of information to the College relating to this work
- The future use and storage of this material in order to facilitate the work of the Plagiarism detection service
- The above will be carried out only for the purposes of plagiarism detection, and will involve:
- Comparison with other works, published or unpublished, either on the internet or in some other electronic form
- Comparison with works previously submitted by students for purposes of assessment and maintained on the databases of the third party supplier of plagiarism detection services
- Addition of the work submitted to the above databases for purposes of future plagiarism detection

Under the Data Protection Act, students have a number of rights. The SIC plagiarism detection will be implemented in line with their rights, and with the provisions of the Act.

Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of all students and staff to ensure that student work submitted for purposes of assessment, especially purposes of summative assessment, is in fact their own work. The following details the specific responsibilities of students and various members of staff.

Students

It is the responsibility of students:

- To ensure that work submitted for purposes of assessment is their own.
- To ensure that the words and arguments of others are appropriately cited and referenced using an accepted referencing system such as the Harvard referencing style. Students must not simply copy materials from other students, past or present,

from written sources, from the Internet, or from any other source whether this is through cutting and pasting, rewriting or by any other means. Changing a few words within a copied piece of text does not render this original, and still counts as plagiarism. In short, work submitted by students must be their own unless it is specifically indicated within the text through appropriate referencing that this is not the case - or where originality was clearly not a requirement of the assessment being undertaken.

Teaching staff

- It is the responsibility of teaching staff:
- To stress to their students the unethical nature of plagiarism
- To make clear to students the College's policy on plagiarism and the consequences if they fail to comply
- To ensure that students have the knowledge and skills required to enable them to cite and reference appropriately

Guidance staff

The role of guidance staff in the area of plagiarism includes:

- Developing appropriate attitudes and practices in College students and facilitating discussion around plagiarism and related issues
- Co-ordinating information on students across the range of their course so as to detect and address multiple instances of plagiarism

Issues surrounding plagiarism provide a useful and appropriate context for the discussion of wider issues of fairness, citizenship and employability.

College technical support staff will:

- ensure that appropriate technical means of plagiarism detection are effectively implemented and maintained.
- provide statistics on usage for purposes of self-evaluation and the effective management of contracts relating to plagiarism detection between the College and third party providers

- ensure effective integration between plagiarism detection software and services and other College systems such as the Virtual Learning Environment.

Human Resources will ensure that:

- All teaching staffs receive full and appropriate training in plagiarism, its prevention and detection
- Plagiarism is appropriately covered as part of the induction for new teaching staff

Flexible Assessment Co-ordinator will:

- provide advice on appropriate plagiarism detection services will support staff in their use and will provide appropriate training for teaching and other staff in this area.
- provide appropriate guidelines on the use of the detection software.

Guidelines for staff

The following document expands on the information in the College Unfair Practice Policy, and is intended to guide practice.

Responsibilities of teaching staff: It is the responsibility of teaching staff to stress to their students the unethical nature of plagiarism, to make clear the College's policy on it and to inform students of the consequences to themselves if they fail to comply. It is also their responsibility to ensure that students have the knowledge and skills required to enable them to cite and reference material appropriately. In general this requirement can be met by introducing them to the use of an accepted referencing system such as the Harvard system. It may also be fruitful to introduce plagiarism as a part of Citizenship and to stress the values of fairness and just desert within society.

It is also the responsibility of teaching staff to take all possible measures to ensure that when plagiarism occurs it is detected and appropriate action taken. Evidence of plagiarism should be carefully gathered and retained. Issues relating to plagiarism by an individual student or students are confidential matters and should be treated as such. All records should be kept with due concern for confidentiality and the need for evidence. It is the responsibly of teaching staff to ensure that records relating to instances of plagiarism are

kept for the required length of time for those records, and are appropriately destroyed once the period of time required for their retention has elapsed.

Standards should be applied fairly by staff so that accusations cannot be made of unequal treatment. Teaching staff can also take preventative action through appropriate design of assessment. This might include, for example:

- more individualised assessments
- the use of question banks rather than static, identical assessment for
- all students
- frequent changing of assessment instruments
- appropriate supervision

The College will provide tools for the detection of plagiarism which all staff will use. However, these systems should be seen as aids to professional judgement on the part of teaching staff. They should not be seen as substitutes for this judgement. Teaching staff should also ensure that they set a good example to students through the adoption of good referencing practice themselves.

## 2.	Types of plagiarism

Plagiarism is not limited to the wholesale word-for-word copying of another's work. The cunning plagiarist will attempt to make detection difficult by changing words in a piece of work, or paraphrasing an argument while passing off the argument itself as their own. Some forms of plagiarism may result from failure to reference properly, or from a simple failure to understand the full requirements of the assessment.

The issue of plagiarism must also be seen in the context of the requirements of the particular assessment activity. If the assessment requires only the gathering of information from a range of sources, copying and pasting may not constitute plagiarism.

If the student is expected only to outline the arguments of others then paraphrasing these arguments may again meet the needs of the assessment. Whether copying or paraphrasing

constitutes plagiarism must be judged in the context of the requirements of the assessment and what it is intended to evidence. The adoption of appropriate referencing and acknowledgement aids in removing ambiguity.

The use of appropriate referencing

The most common form of unintentional plagiarism consists in failure to reference sources appropriately. In this case the student appears to be passing off the work of others as their own, not through a deliberate attempt to deceive the assessor, but through a failure to attribute authorship appropriately. In order to avoid such problems, all students should use an appropriate referencing system - the appropriate system depending on established practice within the subject being studied. Teaching staff should ensure that students are informed of the appropriate system to be used, and are instructed in its use. The Harvard style of referencing is used widely, and may be adopted in the absence of an established system for the subject being studied.

Plagiarism and quality improvement

Students do not always copy material word for word out of a deliberate attempt to cheat. In some cases copying of this kind may be a coping strategy for students and may indicate either that they have been wrongly placed on a course which is too difficult for them, or actual shortcomings in the course itself. While this should not be seen as an excuse for what is still essentially cheating, it may indicate additional action which is required over and above dealing with the instance of plagiarism itself. This action might include guidance intervention or additional support for the individual student, or the rethinking of course content. For example, is referencing adequately covered as part of the course, have key concepts been adequately covered, and has the assessment activity been properly explained.

3.   Action on detection of Plagiarism/ Collusion/ Malpractice/ Data Fabrication

a. All instances of Plagiarism/ Collusion/ Malpractice/ Data Fabrication, whether intentional or not, require action. The following provides guidelines on the course of action to be taken

by staff. In all cases, the member of staff must take care to ensure that there is indeed clear evidence that plagiarism has taken place. If the plagiarism would have altered the result obtained by the student if it had been undetected then at the very least the assessment must be retaken by the student. This will count as a second attempt at the assessment. If the problem arises from a failure on the part of the student to reference properly, or to understand the requirements of the assessment, then this issue must be addressed before the assessment is retaken.

b. If it is clear that the Plagiarism/ Collusion/ Malpractice/ Data Fabrication was minor and did not constitute intentional cheating, then guidance and support should be provided to address any underlying issues. This might include revision of appropriate referencing practice. The student should also be informed clearly of the unacceptability of plagiarism and the need to abide by accepted practice. The students' Tutor should also be informed of this so that any more general issues, or patterns of behaviour, can be identified.

c. If the Plagiarism/ Collusion/ Malpractice/ Data Fabrication is more extensive, but again it is the judgement of the member of staff that this was not intentional cheating, then more extensive action will need to be taken.

This might be the case where a student has answered an assessment simply by cutting and pasting material from the internet, but was unaware that this was an unacceptable way of completing the assessment or was unable to complete the assessment in any other way. Care must be taken in making this judgement as a student found cheating may well claim a failure to understand rather than deliberate intent. If the case is genuine, then serious attention will need to be paid to whether the student is actually on the right course, whether there has been a serious failure of teaching or learning, whether the course content itself needs to be modified in some way, or whether the assessment instructions are unclear. Judgement on these matters will, of course, depend on whether problems being encountered are general or are limited to a single student.

d. Finally if it is the judgement of the member of staff that this is an instance of genuine cheating, with deliberate intent to deceive, then disciplinary action must be taken. The procedure for this is contained within the College Internal Assessment Policy. Guidance staff

should, of course, be kept fully informed. Individual cases of Plagiarism/ Collusion/ Malpractice/ Data Fabrication should, of course, be dealt with due concern for confidentiality.

4.   Outcomes

4.1 In the event that the student admits Plagiarism/ Collusion/ Malpractice/ Data Fabrication, the following outcomes are possible:

(1) In certain circumstances, for example, where the student, despite the publicity, appears genuinely not to have known or understood that he or she has committed an offence, the course leader may recommend that no penalty should be imposed, i.e. student may be given the opportunity of resubmitting the work as if for the first time.

(2) The course leader may recommend an adjusted mark, taking into account the extent of the Plagiarism/ Collusion/ Malpractice/ Data Fabrication, and the intentions of the student(s). The work will be assessed as far as possible as if the reproduced material were not included in the assessment. The size of the adjustment (deduction) will therefore depend on the extent of the plagiarism detected. The following factors may be considered in reaching a recommendation for an adjusted mark:

(a) Where the assessment includes substantial amounts of the student's own work, with minor additions of material reproduced elsewhere or with assistance from another/other person(s), a distinction may be drawn between poor academic practice (e.g. source is listed in the bibliography, but the location and the extent of the reliance on the source of the text is not made clear) and outright plagiarism (unacknowledged reproduction of the work of another/ other persons(s)) or collusion/Malpractice/ Data Fabrication). In these cases, the adjustment is likely to be relatively small;

(b) Where the material reproduced from elsewhere is deemed to form a major part of the content, a mark of zero may be recommended;

(c) In the case of collusion, where there is evidence of substantial collusion with other students, the pieces of work will be marked as they stand, and the highest mark of those awarded will be divided equally amongst the number of students deemed to have colluded. If, however, it is clear that one of the students has produced most/all of the work and lent it to the others, course leader may recommend adjusted marks that take account of the effort put in by the student who produced the work, and the lack of effort from the other students who colluded;

(d) Where it is clear that the student has commissioned and/or purchased the work or solicited (an) other individual(s) to produce the work under consideration, a mark of zero and immediate referral to a Discipline Committee may be recommended.

4.2 The course leader shall report the matter to the Principal about the Unit in which the student is registered, enclosing (i) the record of the meeting, (ii) the assessed work in question and (iii) the findings and the penalty recommended by course leader. The student will be given a copy of the documentation upon request. Course leader shall also notify the secretary to the relevant Board(s) of Examiners so that the recommended adjusted mark(s) may be confirmed.

4.3 In the event that a student denies that he or she is guilty of plagiarism or collusion, the following outcomes are possible:

(1) If the course leader are persuaded by the student's accounts of events and agree that no offence has been committed, no further action will be taken;

(2) If, on the basis of the evidence collected, the course leader is not persuaded by the student's accounts of events, the matter shall be reported to Academic Committee comprising:

- Principal
- Academic Head
- One other academic representative
- Communication Manager

5. Meeting to consider Plagiarism/ Collusion/ Malpractice/ Data Fabrication

5.1 In the event that a case is reported to Academic Committee, the course leader shall submit

(i) the record of the meeting with the student and

(ii) the assessed work in question.

5.2 The Academic Committee shall review the evidence and may seek further information and evidence from the student or the College as it shall deem appropriate. The Academic

Committee shall consider whether the student has committed an offence of plagiarism and/or collusion.

5.3 If the student is deemed to have Plagiarism/ Collusion/ Malpractice/ Data Fabrication related issue, the Academic Committee shall inform the relevant teacher, the course leader offering the Unit(s) and the Principal. The course leader may then recommend an adjusted mark, taking into account the extent of plagiarism and/or collusion and the intention(s) of the student (as set out in Section B, paragraphs 4.1(2) and 4.2 above). The Principal shall also be informed about any adjusted mark(s).

5.4 If the student is deemed not to have Plagiarism/ Collusion/ Malpractice/ Data Fabrication related issue, the Academic Committee shall inform the teacher, the course leader and Principal that no penalty will be imposed and no further action shall be taken.

6   Disciplinary Actions

In accordance with paragraphs 4.2 and 5.3 above, cases of Plagiarism/ Collusion/ Malpractice/ Data Fabrication will be notified to the Principal. Where the offence has been repeated, or is particularly serious, the Principal shall consider if it is appropriate for disciplinary action to be taken under General Regulation. The Principal may refer the matter to a Discipline Committee/ Academic Committee which will act in accordance with the College Disciplinary Procedures.

7   Appeals

A student may appeal against the ruling of the Faculty Academic Committee under paragraph 5.3 as to whether Plagiarism/ Collusion/ Malpractice/ Data Fabrication have occurred. A student who wishes to appeal should do so in writing to the Academic Head within 10 working days of the notification of the outcome, setting out the grounds for the appeal. The appeal shall be heard at Stage 2 of the Academic Appeals Procedure. A student may appeal against a penalty applied under paragraphs 4.1.(2) (section B) or 5.3 (section B) and should do so in writing to the Principal within 10 working days of the notification of the outcome, setting out the grounds for the appeal. The appeal shall be heard at Stage 1 of the Academic Appeals Procedure.

8.   Publicity about the Unfair Practice Policy and Procedure

The College shall publicise by appropriate means its policy and procedures on Plagiarism/ Collusion/ Malpractice/ Data Fabrication to students and staff.

Prevention of Plagiarism/ Collusion/ Malpractice/ Data Fabrication

Individual teachers are recommended to reduce the opportunities for Plagiarism/ Collusion/ Malpractice/ Data Fabrication. Suggested approaches include:

• Providing examples in Student Handbooks of the acceptable use of others' work and of plagiarism of that work

• Providing information on how to set out footnotes and prepare a bibliography

• Setting course tests or examinations in lieu of coursework within regulations

• Varying titles of essays from year to year to prevent "recycling"

• Not allowing a free choice of essay topic, to prevent students from using previous work

• Setting stringent presentational requirements (acknowledgements, bibliography, footnotes) and scrutinising these closely in the marking process

• Requiring staged reports on projects

• Requiring oral presentations

• Adopting good security measures surrounding the handing in and giving back of work.

In order to do this, the centre will:

- seek to avoid potential malpractice by using the induction period and the student handbook
- inform learners of the centre's policy on malpractice and the penalties for attempted and actual incidents of malpractice
- show learners the appropriate formats to record cited texts and other materials or information sources
- ask learners to declare that their work is their own

- ask learners to provide evidence that they have interpreted and synthesised appropriate information and acknowledged any sources used
- Conduct an investigation in a form commensurate with the nature of the malpractice allegation.

Such an investigation will be supported by the CEO and all personnel linked to the allegation. It will involve:

• make the individual fully aware at the earliest opportunity of the nature of the alleged malpractice and of the possible consequences should malpractice be proven

• give the individual the opportunity to respond to the allegations made

• inform the individual of the avenues for appealing against any judgment made

• document all stages of any investigation.