



Civil Defence College

Plagiarism Policy

Background:

This policy is intended to guide the College and Learner in cases where concerns of plagiarism are suspected. The policy aims to give both the learner and college a framework within which any fact gathering exercise is conducted in a fair and transparent manner.

Means of communication:

All correspondence between parties will be in writing.

Where a face to face meeting is requested, the learner may invite their Civil Defence Officer (CDO) to attend. The College would actively encourage such practice be adopted.

Timeframe:

Civil Defence College is mindful that in committing to implement the steps of this policy in an efficient and timely manner; that factors outside its control may impact on expected timelines. Where a delay is anticipated / transpires the learner and their CDO will be notified in writing giving reason for any delay and revised timeframe.

Methods of Fact Gathering:

The College has an informal and formal approach to fact gathering. Both approaches are based on affording all parties an opportunity to contribute to the fact gathering exercise in an open and transparent manner. While the College has discretion as to which approach is adopted initially; *Informal Contact* is the preferred route.





What is Plagiarism?

Civil Defence College understands plagiarism to be the inclusion of another person's writings or ideas or works, in any formally presented work (including essays, theses, projects, laboratory reports, examinations, oral, poster or slide presentations) which form part of the assessment requirements for a module or programme of study, without due acknowledgement either wholly or in part of the original source of the material through appropriate citation.

Plagiarism is a form of academic dishonesty, where ideas are presented falsely, either implicitly or explicitly, as being the original thought of the author's. The presentation of work, which contains the ideas, or work of others without appropriate attribution and citation, (other than information that can be generally accepted to be common knowledge¹) is an act of plagiarism. It can include the following:

- 1.1.** Presenting work authored by a third party, including other students, friends, family, or work purchased through internet services;
- 1.2.** Presenting work copied extensively with only minor textual changes from the internet, books, journals or any other source;
- 1.3.** Improper paraphrasing, where a passage or idea is summarised without due acknowledgement of the original source;
- 1.4.** Failing to include citation of all original sources;
- 1.5.** Representing collaborative work as one's own;

(The above with thanks to UCD – from their Academic Plagiarism Policy.)

¹ Common knowledge refers to information, which is generally known and does not require to be formally cited in a written piece of work. Each subject area will have its own set of common knowledge – For example the Earth circles the Sun, Ireland is an Island, The Bible is a religious text.





Formal Review:

The Formal Review will be adopted where the outcome from *Informal Contacts with the Learner* have not addressed the concerns of the College. Where such is the case the learner will be written to formally via the CDO notifying them that the Formal Review has been invoked and the next steps as outlined below.

The first step is for the College Principle to request the Course Director compose a detailed report highlighting all suspected incidences of plagiarism. All such incidences of plagiarism should be referenced to support the Course Directors concerns.

Where the suspected plagiarised text appears in multiple contexts the Course Director will reference to one source. Identification of a source does not imply this is the specific origin of the learner's plagiarised text merely that such text existing.

The completed report along with the Learners *Record of Assignment Receipt* is referred to the College Principle for review. The following steps will be followed thereafter:

- The College Principle will circulate a copy of the Course Directors Report to the Learner via their CDO. The Learner will then be invited to meet with the College Principle (or a nominated person)
- The purpose of the meeting will be to discuss the Course Directors findings and give the learner opportunity to make any comments or observations to assist with the gathering of facts.
- The learner can invite their CDO to attend and we would strongly advise that such be the case.
- Minutes of the Meeting will be made and circulate to all attendees.
- The meeting may occur at the Civil Defence College or other agreeable venue.
- At least 10 working days notice of the meeting will be given to all parties. Where such a date does not suit the learner and / or their CDO the learner will be invited to propose an alternative date.
- In the unlikely event that a face-to-face meeting has not occurred with the learner on the Colleges fourth attempt to organise such (unless special circumstances can be demonstrated); the Form Mechanism will progress without the learners face-to-face participation; though written communication will remain an option for all parties.





Outcomes:

The College Principle will compile a written report based on all information to hand with an accompanying determination. The learner will be notified in writing through their CDO of the outcome.

Outcomes will be drawn from the list below:

- In circumstances where the College is satisfied its concerns have been adequately addressed the learners work will be processed in the normal manner. Where a minor case of plagiarism is noted the learner will be notified in writing of the importance to reference all material in their works. A minor case would constitute no more than a sentence or two of text.
- Where Plagiarism is less than 10% that section(s) of the paper will not be marked with the remainder of the paper awarded in the normal manner.
- Where Plagiarism is greater than 10% and less than 50% of any one paper / item of work that paper will be marked NIL and the remainder of the learners work marked as normal (so long as no additional cases of plagiarism have been identified). In addition a note will be placed on the learners file stating the instance of plagiarism and percentage of such.
- Where Plagiarism is equal to or greater than 50% of any one paper / item of work the learner will be removed from the course and no further consideration will be given to their participation or awarding of a result. The Training Register will be updated to state the learner *did not complete the course*. In addition a note will be placed on the learners file stating the instance of plagiarism and percentage of such.





How Plagiarism Percentage is calculated:

Written work:

Example: A learner has written a paper consisting of 1,222 body text* words. It has been identified that 931 of those words appear in other third party sources. The Plagiarised Percentage is calculated by dividing 1,222 into 931 which give a result of 76%

**Body Text: Is defined as NOT INCLUDING word count from cover pages, headers, titles, sub titles, references, page numbers, figures, bibliography or any other indirect word count.*

Audio Visual / Practical: Where plagiarism is suspected under this heading the Course Director will arrive at an estimated percentage based on their observation of the plagiarised material contrasted against the learners overall submission. Where the percentage identified is close to a sanction threshold it is advisable that the Course Director seek a second opinion and include such in any report to support their position.

Right of Appeal:

All learners may appeal a decision of Civil Defence College. Where a learner wishes to do so the Civil Defence College Appeal Mechanism will be adopted.

