

Policy name: Plagiarism Policy and Procedure

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Revision 1 approved 10th March 2017

Revision 2 approved

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1. Context

- 1.1 All undergraduate and postgraduate programmes offered by the Royal Irish Academy of Music, hereinafter referred to as RIAM or the Academy, are delivered by RIAM and validated by the Designated Awarding Body, Trinity College Dublin, the University of Dublin, hereinafter referred to as Trinity. RIAM considers plagiarism to be a fraudulent offence against academic integrity which is subject to the Academy's disciplinary procedures. It is commonly understood that all members of the academic community use and build on the work and ideas of others in an open and explicit manner, with due acknowledgement.

2. Purpose

- 2.1 This policy exists to provide comprehensive information on how to identify and prevent plagiarism and ensure that, should a case arise, the matter is processed in a fair and transparent manner.

3. Scope

- 3.1 This policy applies to all assessments and examinations, including texts, music and compositional works produced and submitted by RIAM students.
- 3.2 This policy applies to all undergraduate, postgraduate and research students at RIAM, and to students on programmes delivered by RIAM and certified by RIAM.

4. Benefits

- 4.1 This policy encourages and fosters academic integrity within the student body.
- 4.2 This policy provides clarity on the Academy's definition of plagiarism and contributes to students' understanding of what constitutes plagiarism.
- 4.3 This policy sets out appropriate procedures where plagiarism is suspected or confirmed.

5. Definitions

- 5.1 **Plagiarism** is the act of presenting the work or ideas of others as one's own without due acknowledgement. Plagiarism can arise from actions such as:
- (i) **Quoting** directly, without acknowledgement, from books, articles, compositions or other sources, either in printed, recorded or electronic format, including websites and social media;
 - (ii) **Paraphrasing**, intentionally or unintentionally content from books, articles, websites or other sources, without acknowledgement.

- (iii) **Enlisting or contracting** (whether with payment or otherwise) another person or persons (including essay mills) to complete an assignment on the student's behalf (however, copy editing or proofreading by another person are not considered to be plagiarism).
- (iv) **Collusion**, which is the copying of another student's work in full or in part and presenting it as one's own or by submitting the same work as a peer without having sought the approval of the lecturer and without having sufficiently individualised the work.

5.2 **Plagiarism of Music** may include the unauthorised appropriation of, or substantial similarity with a melody or motif, or the sampling of an element of a sound recording. It may also include a copied or unacknowledged piece of written notation/ transposition for an assessment or examination.

5.3 **Self-Plagiarism:** No work can normally be submitted for more than one assessment for credit, either as a direct copy or with substantial similarities. Resubmitting the same work for more than one assessment for credit is considered self-plagiarism. This can include appropriation of, or substantial similarity with, a melody or motif, or the sampling of an element of a sound recording that was created by the student in a previous piece of musical work.

6. Principles

- 6.1 RIAM promotes academic integrity and provides its students with training in good scholarship and the required citation style in advance of assessment.
- 6.2 Students are responsible for ensuring that they act with integrity in their academic work and do not commit plagiarism consciously nor accidentally.
- 6.3 Allegations of plagiarism will be investigated according to procedures set out in section 9. Students who are found to have committed plagiarism, normally identified during assessment, will be subject to the proportional penalties set out therein.
- 6.4 Students are entitled to equitable treatment which is delivered in a consistent manner.
- 6.5 Assessment data, including disciplinary records and the recording of plagiarism outcomes will be retained by RIAM in accordance the Records Management and Retention Policy and in line with the General Data Protection Regulation.
- 6.6 RIAM adheres to copyright law of Ireland, regulated by the [Copyright and Related Rights Act, 2000](#).

7. Guidelines for Good Scholarship

7.1 Avoiding plagiarism

The offence of plagiarism lies not in the attitude or intention of the perpetrator, but in the action and in its consequences. Plagiarism can arise from deliberate actions and also through careless thinking and/or methodology. Many cases of plagiarism may be avoided by following some simple guidelines:

- (i) Any material used in a piece of work, of any form, that is not the original thought of the author should be fully referenced in the work and attributed to its source.

- (ii) Small sections of the material may either be quoted directly or paraphrased with an explicit citation of the work referred to in the text, in a footnote, or both. Not to do so is to commit plagiarism.
- (iii) When taking notes from any source, it is very important to quote the precise words or ideas and record the precise source for accurate referencing, in-line with the required citation style.
- (iv) Although the Internet often offers a wider range of possibilities for researching particular themes, it also requires particular attention to be paid to the distinction between one's own work and the work of others.
- (v) Particular care should be taken to keep track of the source of the electronic information obtained from the Internet or other electronic sources and ensure that it is explicitly and correctly acknowledged.

7.2 Common mistakes resulting in poor scholarship

Plagiarism can arise from actions such as failure to:

- (i) distinguish between a student's own ideas and those of others;
- (ii) take proper notes during preliminary research and lose track of the sources from which the notes were drawn;
- (iii) distinguish between information which needs no acknowledgement because it is firmly in the public domain, and information which might be widely known, but which requires some sort of acknowledgement;
- (iv) record the source of a distinctive methodology or idea.

7.3 Guidance for students on academic integrity

- (i) RIAM Faculties will provide guidelines on the appropriate methodology for the kind of work that students will be expected to undertake.
- (ii) Students who are unclear on how to avoid plagiarism may seek advice from their lecturers, tutors or supervisors.

8. Policy

8.1 Academic Integrity

It is commonly accepted that the academic community builds on the work of others in an open and explicit manner and with due acknowledgement.

8.2 Students' Responsibility with respect to Plagiarism

- (i) It is the student's responsibility to ensure that they do not commit plagiarism, neither intentionally nor unintentionally.
- (ii) It is a student's responsibility to take reasonable precautions to guard against unauthorised access to their work by others without their knowledge or acknowledgement.

- (iii) The student whose work is used without appropriate referencing by another is considered to have colluded and acted as an accomplice in the act of plagiarism.

9. Policy and Procedure for inquiring into allegations of plagiarism

- 9.1 If a student is suspected of plagiarism, a meeting of the Plagiarism Committee will be called to investigate the allegation and to make findings. The student is required to appear in person to respond to the accusation and may be accompanied by a fellow student.
- 9.2 If a student does not appear, the Panel may proceed to deal with allegation and, if it considers it appropriate to do so, determine a penalty in the student's absence.
- 9.3 The Plagiarism Committee will consist of three *ex officio* members who are not associated with the accusation:
 - (i) The Head of Musicianship [Chair], or his/her nominee.
 - (ii) A lecturer who is not associated with the accusation.
 - (iii) The Administrative Officer, Registry.

The relevant lecturer of the module where the plagiarism is suspected will normally be in attendance at meetings of the Committee, but will not be party to the Committee's decision.

9.4 Penalties

The Academy has a three-tier system of penalties dealing with plagiarism, as outlined below. Tiers 1 and 2 shall be dealt with through a 'summary procedure' and Tier 3 will be dealt with through a 'Director's procedure'.

- 9.4.1 Tier 1 - lesser offences and poor scholarship which may include, but are not limited to:
 - (i) poor understanding of how to acknowledge sources of direct or indirect quotations and lack of citation of the work referred to in the assignment;
 - (ii) poor paraphrasing skills which do not distinguish the students own work;
 - (iii) inadvertent or unknowing plagiarism caused by poor research skills and/or writing technique;
 - (iv) copying of individual elements such as sentences, paragraphs, or illustrations;
 - (v) plagiarism of existing music notation in composition portfolios.
- 9.4.2 Tier 2 - offences which may include, but are not limited to:
 - (i) copying of a large portion of work (up to half), including music comprehension and transposition exercises etc;
 - (ii) collusion of a major portion of a paper without clear delineation of the work of a peer;
 - (iii) plagiarism of written notation where the major portion of the composition is copied.

9.4.3 Tier 3 - major offences which may include, but are not limited to:

- (i) a second, or more, breach of plagiarism is recorded against the student;
- (ii) cheating where material from another student's assignment or paper is copied with, or without the person's knowledge;
- (iii) contracting, where a student has commissioned or purchased work with the intention of representing it as their own work;
- (iv) self-plagiarism where a student resubmits the same work, or a part thereof without acknowledgement or referencing, for more than one assessment for credit.

9.5 Tiers 1 and 2 – Summary Procedure

9.5.1 Where a student is found to be in breach of the Regulations and before determining the penalty to be imposed, the Plagiarism Committee will take into account whether there have been any similar, prior breaches by the particular student. If the student has committed a tier 2 offence already, the situation must be referred to the Director's Procedure automatically.

9.5.2 RIAM Plagiarism Committee will determine the penalty to be applied having regard to the seriousness of the incident and must state their agreement in writing. Should the Committee fail to agree the decision should be referred to the Director's Procedure.

9.5.3 Summary procedure findings

- (i) *Find no plagiarism detected.* In such a case the Examination Board shall be instructed to process the assessment results in the normal manner.
- (ii) *Find that the student has perpetrated a lesser offence (Tier 1).* The student will receive an informal verbal warning, which will nonetheless be noted on the student's record, in order to inform the provisions of 9.5.1 above, should this be necessary in the future. The student will be required to rearticulate and correctly reference all plagiarised elements of the work. Other content of the piece of work should not be altered. The resubmitted work will be assessed and marked without penalty. The Committee shall instruct the Administrative Officer, Registry, to process the results in the normal manner.
- (iii) *Find that the student has perpetrated an offence (Tier 2).* The Student will receive a formal written warning which constitutes a formal record of breach of assessment regulations. The student is required to rearticulate and correctly reference all plagiarised elements. Other content should not be altered. The resubmitted work will receive a reduced or capped mark depending on the seriousness or extent of plagiarism; and the Committee shall instruct the Administrative Officer, Registry, to process the results in the normal manner.

9.6 Tier 3 - Director's Procedure

If the case cannot normally be dealt with under the summary procedures the Administrative Officer, Registry, will refer the case directly to the Director, in writing, and will include all the information about the case as well as the Committee's suggestions as to how the problem

may be rectified. Nothing provided for under the summary procedure diminishes or prejudices the disciplinary powers of the Director.

9.6.1 Director's Procedure Findings

- (i) *The Student will receive a formal written warning.* The piece of work in question is excluded and the module is marked as a Fail. There is no opportunity for rearticulating and correctly referencing all plagiarised elements in order to resubmit the work. The student shall be returned as a Fail to the Examination Board and will be "Off Books" for the following Academic Year, but must attend and pass the relevant module in order to continue on the programme.
- (ii) *The Director may recommend the student be suspended or expelled from RIAM.* Such recommendations will be brought to the Board of Studies by the Director. If the Student has already graduated from RIAM, their award may be rescinded, on the recommendation of the Director, by the Board of Studies, subject to confirmation by Trinity, as the Designated Awarding Body.

9.7 Post Board of Examiners

A plagiarism case may still be initiated, in accordance with the procedures set out in 9.5 or 9.6 above, where allegations of plagiarism come to light after the final Board of Examiners convene. In such instance, Trinity would be informed accordingly.

9.8 Confidentiality

Only those directly involved in the inquiry will be aware that the process is being conducted or have access to any information or records (in accordance with the Records Management and Retention policy) during the course of the investigation.

10. Office of the Ombudsman

- 10.1 If a student feels that they have been unfairly treated or are not satisfied with the decision on a complaint, it is open to students to contact the Office of the Ombudsman. By law the Ombudsman can investigate complaints about any administrative actions or procedures as well as delays or inaction in dealings with the institution. The Ombudsman provides an impartial, independent and free dispute resolution service.

11. Responsibility

- 11.1 Chair of Board of Studies is responsible for overseeing this policy and its three yearly cyclical review. The Head of the Administrative Office (Registry) is responsible for its operating procedures in relation to all undergraduate and postgraduate programmes.

12. Legislation and Regulation

- 12.1 [Qualifications and Quality Assurance \(Education and Training\) Act 2012.](#)
- 12.2 [Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area \(2005\).](#)
- 12.3 [Code of Practice for Provision of Education and Training to International Learners \(2015\).](#)
- 12.4 [National Framework of Qualifications \(NFQ\).](#)

12.5 [Copyright and Related Rights Act, 2000](#), [2004](#) and [2007](#).

13. Related Documents

13.1 Academic Assessment and Progression Policy.

13.2 Records Management and Retention Policy.

14. Document Control

Approved by Board of Studies 25th November 2016.

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Revision 2 approved

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Next review: Academic year 2020/21.