



Impact of Policies for Plagiarism in Higher Education Across Europe

Plagiarism Policies in Portugal

Full Report

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June 2014



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1. Information sources

Information about **Portugal** was collected through:

- the three levels of on-line surveys (*students*, *academic teachers* and *senior university managers*);

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	Student Focus Groups	Organisations and Institutions			
Portugal	189	43	7	0	6			
Breakdown of student responses		Home students	Other EU students	Non-EU students	Not known	Bachelor, diploma	Master, doctor	Blank, other
Portugal	189	182	7	0	0	137	52	0

This summary also draws on publications about research into quality assurance in Portugal and some on-line material available on web sites and blogs.

2. Higher Education in Portugal

According to the NARIC web site, Portugal has

Public HEIs: 13 universities, 15 “polytechnic Institutes” and 11 other institutes

Private HEIs: 11 universities, 3 polytechnic institutes, 77 other institutes

A recent OECD report on Portugal (2013) indicates that there is a generational discrepancy in the population with only 20% of the 55-64 age group educated to at least “upper secondary level”, but for 25-34 year-olds 60% of females and 50% of males have reached at least that level of education.

Between 2005 and 2010 the “tertiary attainment” for the Portuguese population ages 25-64 rose from 12.8% to 15.4% (OECD statistical profile 2013). There are some interesting gender differences in higher education attainment with 73% of Portuguese women compared to 59% of men completing their HE programme at first attempt (OECD report 2013).

In common with other EU countries the rise in the student population at higher education level in the last decade has driven the expansion of the higher education sector and led to increased class sizes. High ratios of students to staff can have implications on the nature of learning, teaching and assessment and can reduce the capacity for academic teaching staff to respond to suspected breaches in academic integrity.

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

3.1 National information about Higher Education quality assurance in Portugal

Agência de Avaliação e Acreditação do Ensino Superior (Agency for Assessment and Accreditation of Higher Education - A3ES) was created in 2006 with legal incorporation in 2007, taking over responsibilities for quality assurance and accreditation in higher education from the previous agency Conselho Nacional de Avaliação do Ensino Superior (CNAVES). The organisation’s accreditation



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responsibility was implemented from 2009. A3ES is the only authority with remit to accredit higher education institutional and degree programmes across Portugal, ranging from bachelor degrees to PhD programmes. The accreditation is valid for a maximum of six years (A3ES web site).

Institutional accreditation visits are conducted by a small review panel of nominated experts, which normally includes one international panellist. The web site indicates that an experimental pilot is in operation to include one student on panels where an institution agrees to this. The visits normally last 2 or 3 days. The agenda is informed by a self-assessment report prepared in advance by the institution (A3ES web site).

The institutional assessment reports and outcomes from panel visits are made public through the Agency’s web site. The figures available for 2011 indicate that of 428 proposals presented only 41% (176) were received “favourably” and a further 10% (44) were approved with conditions (web site). This attrition rate suggests there is a rigorous process in place, however there is no evidence about the nature of the scrutiny undertaken by the panel and whether policies and systems for academic integrity are part of their remit (A3ES web site).

A3ES has applied to be included on the European Quality Assurance Register (EQAR) and is working towards compliance with the European Standard and Guidelines (ESQ) and European Network of Quality Assurance Agencies (ENQA) regulations (A3ES web site).

After examining the institutional self-assessment pro-forma (A3EA web site) and A3ES Manual for audit (January 2013), it became apparent that scrutiny of quality assurance policies and systems for student assessment is not explicitly part of the audit process and there is no mention of academic integrity, plagiarism or academic misconduct in the documentation.

3.2 Survey evidence about learning, teaching and assessment

The teachers’ questionnaire asked respondents from Portuguese higher education institutions (HEIs) to comment on the typical assessments students were required to complete. One response showed a 5%-95% split for individual and group work and at the opposite extreme was one response showed 100% individual work (Table 2). The most common response was 50%-50% split. The question about breakdown of assessment types showed a mixture of different types of assessment. The percentage of assessment by formal examination ranged from 100% to 10%. Just over 24% of responses indicated that no project work was included in the assessment, but all except one response included some assessment that was not by formal examination. Additional types of assessment noted by respondents were 10% classwork, 25% skills and 10% oral work.

Table 2: Individual and group assessment		
Individual work	Group work	Occurrences
5	95	1
30	70	1
40	60	1
50	50	9
60	40	5
70	30	4
80	20	5
100	0	1

It is important to appreciate the varied assessment profile in different institutions and programmes because the institutional practices will create different barriers and opportunities for preventing and encouraging plagiarism. This evidence helps with interpretation of some of the responses to questions about student plagiarism.



4. Academic Integrity and Plagiarism in Portugal

According to the senior managers' responses no statistics are maintained about academic dishonesty cases in Portugal. Three of the seven senior manager respondents said they believed that plagiarism was increasing in Portugal and three of the managers said there was no increase.

One very detailed comment provides insight into practices on one HEI in the view one of the respondents (translated from Portuguese):

I have only one impressionist intuitive notion with regard to the subjects I teach. I do not have, unfortunately, statistics and objective data. In my institution it can be stated that there are only collective actions (joint) to prevent and redirect this kind of practice - the Moodle platform, which not all teachers make use of, comprises a detection mechanism, and that's all. This matter is a bit "hand to mouth"; that is, depending on the will, care and good conscience of each teacher. Many colleagues do not bother to check the plagiarism. It is faster and less troublesome to let them pass, pretend [it was not] detected. I've been even asked by my superiors to overlook and think twice whether it was worth risking my contract renewal by these "[frivolous] requirements" (senior management questionnaire)

However this view was not supported by some other results from the IPPHEAE survey. In particular just 39% of students and only 7% of teachers that responded believed that they may have "accidentally or deliberately" plagiarised at some time previously (Annex PT-1, Qu S5k, T5o). This may indicate that plagiarism was less common than the senior manager suggested. Alternatively there may be reluctance by respondents to admit to making mistakes or lack of understanding of academic writing conventions and use of sources.

The questionnaire for students and teachers asked about sanctions or penalties for plagiarism, summarised in Table 3.

Question 7 of the student and teacher questionnaire 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 summarized in Table 3.

Table 3: Sanctions for plagiarism (percentages)

Assignment		Project or Dissertation		
Student	Teacher	Student	Teacher	
17%	21%	4%	14%	No action would be taken
53%	53%	25%	40%	Verbal warning
13%	9%	26%	19%	Formal warning letter
42%	49%	28%	49%	Request to re write it properly
61%	67%	52%	51%	Zero mark for the work
36%	42%	33%	28%	Repeat the module or subject
40%	51%	33%	42%	Fail the module or subject
5%	7%	16%	7%	Repeat the whole year of study
3%	7%	16%	7%	Fail the whole programme or degree
7%	5%	16%	2%	Expose the student to school community
4%	7%	20%	9%	Suspended from the institution
2%	0%	13%	0%	Expelled from the institution
6%	0%	16%	0%	Suspend payment of student grant
6%	5%	6%	2%	Other

Table 3a Additional feedback from the *teacher* and *student* questionnaire to question 7:

No action would be taken	<i>It would not be recognized, seen</i>
Verbal warning	<i>I agree; For a simple copy Not enough</i>
Formal warning letter	<i>It is preferable to say this in front of the student</i>
Request to re write it properly	<i>if found to be accidental; Also depends on the teacher</i>
Zero mark for the work	<i>The penalty may depend on the teacher responsible (3 times); in severe cases Do not know if that is the case, but it would be more correct.</i>
Repeat the module or subject	<i>Before Final Defense; In the worst case; if not corrected, and for having failed</i>
Repeat the whole year of study	<i>if not corrected</i>
Suspend payment of student grant	<i>I think it would be more correct, since they should not be expelled because we are all entitled to make mistakes and learn from our mistakes; Only if failed</i>
Expelled from the institution	<i>Only if failed; I think this should be the correct procedure to take, in severe cases, as was established in UCONN (University of Connecticut, USA), unless I am mistaken, the advent of the new millennium; OMG</i>
Other	<i>defend the work (twice); Making a new work; Given the higher mark than a student who had not In theory either should lead to a formal academic rector's inquiry. In practice the formal procedures are so off putting that most staff are subtly encouraged to deal with it themselves on an individual basis; Making new work; Inform the Director of the Institution; would be annulled</i>

Most responses, but particularly those from teachers, suggest that the more draconian penalties listed in the options appear not to be applied routinely in Portuguese institutions. It is of note that the sanctions applied for dissertations appear to be less severe than those for plagiarism in other work.

The most common sanctions for an assignment and project or dissertation appear to be zero mark for the work from both teachers and students. The second common sanctions for the project appeared to be verbal warning for both students and teachers. The second common sanctions for the assignment to be request to re write it properly. However there are differences of opinions between respondents about whether, how and why punishments, penalties and sanctions are needed.

Only a small percentage of teachers (42%) and student respondents (23%) said they had encountered cases of academics plagiarising or using unattributed materials (Annex PT-1, Qu S5I, T5q). The concern with such practices is that because students rely on academics for guidance on academic conduct they may be misled that this type of behaviour is acceptable.

The teacher and student survey contained two questions about “digital tools”; responses are summarised in Tables 4 and 5. It is clear from the responses that it is unusual for software tools for aiding detection of plagiarism to be used in universities in Portugal. However one student respondent indicated the use of tools was being applied for major work such as the final dissertations. The feedback suggests that at the time of the survey the vast majority of students and teachers in Portugal did not have access to software tools for aiding plagiarism prevention and detection.

Student and teacher Question 8: *What digital tools or other techniques are available at your institution for helping to detect plagiarism?* (number of responses)

Table 4: Software Tools	Student #	Teacher #
Software for text matching (Ephorus, Moss, SafeAssign)	5	2
Software unnamed	15	5
Website, google	36	13
Nothing	1	0
Don't know	89	13

Student and teacher Question 9: *How are the tools you named above used?*

Table 5: Use of software tools	Student	Teacher
<i>It is up to the lecturers to decide whether to use the tools</i>	48%	51%
<i>For some courses students must submit their written work using the tools</i>	13%	12%
<i>Students must submit all written work using the tools</i>	7%	7%
<i>Students may use the tools to check their work before submitting</i>	7%	5%
<i>Checking for final dissertation</i>	x	
<i>No policy to my knowledge exists or if it does is not implemented</i>		x
<i>No tools are used</i>		x

One way of highlighting academic integrity is to ask students to sign some form of statement about integrity and honesty. Responses about when *students are required to sign a declaration about originality and academic honest* from the student and teacher questionnaire are summarised in Table 6. The responses suggest this is not normal practice in Portugal.

Table 6: Students signing a declaration		
Student	Teacher #	When
5%	0%	On starting their degree
5%	2%	For every assessment
11%	12%	For some assessments
29%	42%	Never
43%	40%	Not sure

Education of students about good academic practice is a key element of a preventative strategy. Students were generally confident that they understood plagiarism, but there was slightly less certainty about the technicalities of academic writing:

Student Question 2: *I became aware of plagiarism...*

84% of students said that they were aware about plagiarism before they started university and 12% became aware of this during their undergraduate degree and 3% during master's degree or doctoral studies. Only 2% said that they still were not sure about this.

Student Question 3: *I learned to cite and reference...*

49% of students said that they learnt about writing conventions before they started bachelor degree and 44% during bachelor degree, 3% during master's degree and 4% said that they were still not sure about this.

Student Question 6, Teacher Question 2/3 addressed the question about awareness-raising: *students become aware of plagiarism and of other forms of academic dishonesty (e.g. cheating) as an important issue through:*

Table 7: Ways that students become aware about plagiarism and academic dishonesty				
Plagiarism		Academic Dishonesty		
Student	Teacher	Student	Teacher	
50%	12%	19%	9%	Web site
17%	14%	17%	12%	Course booklet, student guide, handbook
30%	33%	20%	23%	Leaflet or guidance notes
44%	42%	31%	30%	Workshop / class / lecture
30%	13%	29%	17%	I am not aware of any information about this

Student Question 12, Teacher Question 14 asked: *Which of the following services are provided at your institution to advise students about plagiarism prevention?* The responses are summarised in Table 8. The main channel for education of students about plagiarism and academic dishonesty appears to be through tutors and in classes. The student responses suggest that a few institutions in Portugal may provide extra-curricular information and support for students in academic integrity, perhaps through the university library or an academic support unit.

Table 8: Services and student support for discouraging plagiarism		
Student	Teacher	Service or provision
14%	9%	Academic support unit
57%	37%	Advice in class during course/module
17%	7%	Additional lectures, workshops:
58%	67%	Advice from tutors or lecturers
16%	7%	Guidance from the library
2%	2%	University publisher
2%	7%	Academic writing unit/Study skills unit

Table 8a: Ideas for how to reduce student plagiarism: Thematic Analysis (number of responses)

Teachers	Students	Response theme
8	38	Raise awareness in students
6	34	Need for student skills training
6	24	Need for information, guidance notes
5	15	Stricter and clearer penalties
2	15	More control needed
5	11	Effective use of software tools
3	8	Conduct more research
3	6	More awareness and training for teachers
3	5	Better assessment design, not repeating previous assignment
3	4	Monitoring and supervision of student work
0	3	Introduce concepts pre-university level
0	3	Improve time management skills
5	0	Policy development
2	0	More effective senior leadership
2	0	Professionalism, honesty
1	0	Address teacher plagiarism



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When asked for suggestions about what more can be done to reduce student plagiarism, a range of responses from students suggested that the current provision for support, guidance and sources of advice is not seen as sufficient by majority of students. Ideas given by students are shown in Table 8a.

There was a particularly clear view about what should be done from one teacher

Design of assessment tasks can reduce incentives to cheat ; Clear guidance to staff and students and the actual rather than formal commitment to tackling the issue; Senior staff (dept heads) should assume responsibility and support junior staff in Implementing policies; Transparent application of penalties; (teacher questionnaire – translated)

The number of useful and relevant suggestions in this list demonstrates how engaged the student participants were with this subject. On a similar theme, in response to a different question, 70% teachers and 63% of student participants agreed that *it is possible to design coursework to reduce student plagiarism* (Annex PT-1 Qu S5o, T5t).

Training and skills development for students and teachers

In response to the *statement I would like to have more training on avoidance of plagiarism and academic dishonesty* 79% of students and 77% teachers either agreed or strongly agreed, with 8% and 19% respectively disagreeing (Annex PT-1 Qu S5b, T5p). The student response underlines the key message in the additional feedback responses from students thematically summarised in Table 8a, with many requests for workshops, classes, information and guidance on academic writing conventions and skills. However the differences between teacher and student responses to a number of questions discussed earlier suggests that some teachers may be over-estimating the effectiveness of the support currently being offered to students and perhaps some may demonstrate misplaced confidence in their own understanding of plagiarism and academic writing practices.

5. Perceptions and understanding of Plagiarism

To reinforce the calls for more information and training in table 8a, 79% of students and 77% teachers said they would like to have more training (Annex PT-1 Qu S5b, T5p). However according to 33% of students and 40% teacher respondents said they had received some guidance, *in techniques for scholarly academic writing and anti-plagiarism issues* (Annex PT-1 Qu S5a, T5a).

There were positive responses from 40% of students and 30% of teachers to questions about institutions having policies and procedures for plagiarism and with 38% and 33% respectively responding positively about having institutional policies for academic dishonesty (Annex PT-1 Qu S5c, T5b, S5h, T5m). Although 48% of students and 28% of teachers said the policies and penalties were made available to students, only 14% of teacher respondents believed they were made available to staff (Annex PT-1 Qu S5d, T5e, S5e, T5g). However, responses to questions about consistency of application of the policies and procedures were rather less positive, with relatively high numbers of respondents not sure about some answers. Only 9% of teachers and 23% of the students believed that *all teachers follow the same procedures for similar cases of plagiarism*, with 49% teachers and 27% of students disagreeing with the statement (Annex PT-1 Qu S5l, T5q).

26% of the teachers agreed with the statement *I believe the way teachers treat plagiarism does not vary from student to student*, with 30% disagreeing and 44% were not sure. However 42% of the



students did agree with the same statement, with 23% disagreeing and 25% not being sure (Annex PT-1 Qu S5m, T5r).

All four levels of survey included questions that explored respondents' understanding about what constitutes plagiarism and the underlying reasons why it occurs, with responses summarised in Tables 9 and 10. Table 9 shows agreement between students and teachers that the main reasons for student plagiarism are that *they think they will not get caught* and *it is easy to cut and paste from the Internet*. Although there is consensus on many of the reasons provided, there are some notable differences in the response rates, particularly with more teachers than students selecting the last two points *there is no faculty control on plagiarism* and *consequences are not fully understood* and also more teachers choosing *their reading and comprehension skills are weak*.

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

Table 9: Reasons student plagiarise – student and teacher questionnaires		
Student	Teacher	Possible reason for plagiarism
22%	23%	<i>They think the lecturer will not care</i>
72%	91%	<i>They think they will not get caught</i>
69%	51%	<i>They run out of time</i>
47%	53%	<i>They don't want to learn anything, just pass the assignment:</i>
16%	33%	<i>They don't see the difference between group work and collusion</i>
42%	51%	<i>They can't express another person's ideas in their own words</i>
48%	53%	<i>They don't understand how to cite and reference</i>
33%	37%	<i>They are not aware of penalties</i>
40%	21%	<i>They are unable to cope with the workload</i>
27%	19%	<i>They think their written work is not good enough:</i>
17%	9%	<i>They feel the task is completely beyond their ability</i>
70%	86%	<i>It is easy to cut and paste from the Internet</i>
22%	0%	<i>They feel external pressure to succeed</i>
23%	35%	<i>Plagiarism is not seen as wrong</i>
26%	33%	<i>They have always written like that</i>
19%	14%	<i>Unclear criteria and expectations for assignments</i>
20%	49%	<i>Their reading comprehension skills are weak</i>
18%	5%	<i>Assignments tasks are too difficult or not understood</i>
27%	37%	<i>There is no teacher control on plagiarism</i>
17%	51%	<i>There is no faculty control on plagiarism</i>
32%	53%	<i>Consequences not fully understood</i>

Additional (translated) reasons for plagiarism were provided from the teacher questionnaire: “*When [there are] no penalties there is no problem*” and “*it is widespread*” and one comment from the student questionnaire: “*The form of education in the early years promotes copy-paste*”. The last comment provides a common link with responses from other EU countries, which suggest more should be done to educate students in critical thinking skills before they go to university.

The senior managers' questionnaire included an open question (*why do you think students plagiarise?*) instead of the pre-populated table of suggested reasons for plagiarism on the questionnaires. Their translated replies are listed below.

*Ignorance; Superficiality in the study; little effort;
Because it's easy;
Because it is easier;
Laziness. For lack of curiosity. For demotivation. Because of the competitive spirit (understood in its less salutary feature) that has been installed at the University;
Ease and "law of least effort";
Three independent or cumulative reasons that are serious difficulty in writing; difficulty in thinking; refuse the hard work.*

The above senior management responses contrast with some of the responses captured from students and teachers in that all reasons provided by management concern lack of engagement with study and low student motivation.

Responses to question 5 (Annex PT-1, S5p, T5u), indicate broad agreement, with 63% teachers and 63% of students believing that *translation across languages can be used to avoid detection of plagiarism*. It could be that such cases have never been encountered or considered by the few (5% and 7% respectively) who disagreed or the 27% of student respondents and 30% of teachers who said they were not sure about this.

Tables 11, 12 and 13 summarise responses to questions about different aspects of academic writing.

Question 10 of the student questionnaire explored students' understanding of basic academic writing conventions: *What are the reasons for using correct referencing and citation in scholarly academic writing?*

Table 11: Reasons for referencing and citation

71%	To avoid being accused of plagiarism
46%	To show you have read some relevant research papers
61%	To give credit to the author of the sourced material
61%	To strengthen and give authority to your writing
20%	Because you are given credit/marks for doing so
5%	I don't know

Student Question 11, Teacher Question 10a concerned the process of academic writing and particularly explored understanding of the purpose and techniques for use of referencing and in-text citations. The responses are summarised on Table 12.

Table 12: Referencing styles

yes		No		Not sure		Question
student	teacher	student	teacher	student	teacher	
56%	51%	14%	19%	27%	16%	<i>Is there any referencing style students are required or encouraged to use in written work?</i>
61%		16%		21%		<i>Are you confident about referencing and citation?</i>

Student Question 13 asked: *What do you find difficult about academic writing?*

66%	<i>Finding good quality sources</i>
28%	<i>Referencing and citation</i>
24%	<i>Paraphrasing</i>
32%	<i>Understanding different referencing formats and styles</i>

Although disappointingly the most popular response (71%) in Table 11 about why references are needed was to avoid accusations of plagiarism, other responses indicated that 61% of student respondents appeared to appreciate why referencing and in-text citations are required. Just over half the student and teacher respondents said that a standard referencing style was applied in their subject area or institution. Although the majority of students were positive about referencing and citation, 37% expressed lack of confidence or uncertainty about this. The most common difficulty encountered by student respondents in academic writing was finding good quality sources, with 66% of the students selecting this option.

Students (question 15) and teachers (question 19) were asked to identify possible cases of plagiarism based on a brief scenario, and suggest whether some “punishment” should be applied. The purpose of this question was to try to establish what behaviour different people viewed as plagiarism and whether they believed some sanctions should be applied in such cases. Tables 14 and 15 summarise the responses from students and teachers, respectively.

Arguably all six cases (a-f) presented may be categorised as plagiarism, but some could be construed as poor academic practice or perhaps patch-writing due to poor language skills could account for some matching. However given that the scenario says 40% of the paper is identical to other work, it is difficult to justify why a student should be given academic credits without some investigation.

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

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	90%	1%	6%	69%	<i>word for word with no quotations</i>
b	68%	2%	27%	46%	<i>word for word with no quotations, has a correct references but no in text citations</i>
c	42%	16%	37%	29%	<i>word for word with no quotations, but has correct references and in text citations</i>
d	60%	5%	32%	39%	<i>with some words changed with no quotations, references or in text citations</i>
e	32%	12%	51%	19%	<i>with some words changed with no quotations, has correct references but no in text citations</i>
f	16%	37%	44%	8%	<i>with some words changed with no quotations, but has correct references and in text citations</i>

Teacher Question 19: *Is it plagiarism?*

Table 15: 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	98%	0%	0%	51%	<i>word for word with no quotations</i>
b	93%	0%	5%	47%	<i>word for word with no quotations, has a correct references but no in text citations</i>
c	70%	5%	21%	23%	<i>word for word with no quotations, but has correct references and in text citations</i>
d	79%	0%	19%	28%	<i>with some words changed with no quotations, references or in text citations</i>
e	61%	7%	30%	21%	<i>with some words changed with no quotations, has correct references but no in text citations</i>
f	37%	26%	33%	12%	<i>with some words changed with no quotations, but has correct references and in text citations</i>

Although almost all respondents agreed that case (a) was plagiarism, those agreeing about case (d) reduced to 60% of students and 79% of teachers. This indicates that some of the student respondents and a few teachers appear to be under the misapprehension that blatant copying without attribution may not be categorised as plagiarism if some words are changed or if references are added. The percentage of respondents that believed “punishment” was appropriate was lower than those who said they believed this was a case of plagiarism. This raises questions about what expectations Portuguese teachers may have for scholarly original content in assessed student work. It also raises questions about the standard of student work deemed acceptable at different stages in higher education in Portugal.

Responses summarised in Table 12 indicate that 61% of the student participants were confident about referencing and in-text citation with 27% saying either they were not confident or not sure. Responses in Table 14 confirm that many students and some of the teachers that responded would benefit from more help with understanding appropriate practices for academic writing.

6. Examples of good practice

Although much of the evidence collected through the questionnaires painted a largely negative picture of academic integrity in Portugal, there are active researchers in this field and interested academics who are trying to highlight the problem and encourage changes to policies and systems.

A seminar about plagiarism was organised by the ethics committee in Health sciences at the University of Beira Interior (UBI), Covilhã in 2012 entitled Plagiarism-Phobia and at the same institution a game has been developed to support prevention of plagiarism (Ferreira and Silva 2013).

Three members of the IPPHEAE team provided a virtual workshop by video-conferencing 16th September 2013 about the IPPHEAE research as part of the Lisbon based Great Lx International Conference.

Dr Rui Sousa-Silva from Universidade do Porto presented a paper at the June 2013 conference *Plagiarism Across Europe and Beyond*, held in Brno, Czech Republic, as part of the IPPHEAE project dissemination activities (Sousa-Silva 2013), which was subsequently reworked and published in a



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special edition of the International Journal for Educational Journal with selected papers from the 2013 conference (Sousa-Silva 2014). The research he reported in these papers involved forensic linguistic analysis of plagiarised student work to uncover techniques for copying text unlikely to be detected by software tools. This work represents a valuable contribution to the body of knowledge about limitations of digital tools and measures needed to counter student plagiarism.

7. Discussion

The contact with participants from Portugal in the course of the project indicates that the threats to academic standards through toleration of plagiarism in work by both students and faculty are well understood by at least some academics working in Portugal. The analysis of teacher and senior management responses supports this perception. The student responses provide evidence that students studying in Portugal are also aware of the need for more action to improve the quality of their education, discourage plagiarism and strengthen the assessment leading to degree qualifications.

It is of concern that respondents believed there were inconsistencies in outcomes for different cases of plagiarism. The analysis of results also suggested that student plagiarism is common in Portugal, but not always picked up by tutors. Such a failing means students may not be given timely advice on improving their writing skills and correcting poor practice.

At the national level there is a missed opportunity in that the national agency A3ES does not include checks on effectiveness and consistency of institutional policies for academic integrity the periodic institutional audits.

Feedback from reviewers suggested that since the survey was conducted, many more HEIs in Portugal now have access to some form of digital tool for aiding the detection of plagiarism. However the reviewer was clear that very few institutions have developed policies to promote and support the consistent and effective use of such tools.

The recent research summarised above conducted in some institutions indicates that plagiarism is beginning to be addressed in parts of Portugal. However, only six out of over 130 HEIs in Portugal took part in the research with a relatively small sample of participants from the three categories of student, teacher and senior manager. Therefore it would be unsafe to assume that the results presented in this report apply across the whole HE sector in Portugal. It is anticipated, and it was suggested anecdotally by participants, that institutions participating in the research were more open and engaged towards academic integrity than institutions that decided not to take part. This would imply that the findings presented here are likely to be positively biased regarding the profile of consistency and maturity of policies currently in place in Portuguese HEIs.

8. Recommendations for Portugal

8.1 Recommendations nationally and internationally

- 8.1.1 The national agency for quality assurance in higher education A3ES should consider adding checks on academic integrity to the remit of the institutional accreditation visits and audits.





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- 8.1.2 The European Network of Quality Assurance Agencies should consider adding scrutiny of policies for academic integrity to the guidelines for its members.
- 8.1.3 The Portuguese government should consider providing support and funding for initiatives and research to encourage development of effective policies and systems for academic integrity and addressing plagiarism in higher education and at upper secondary level.
- 8.1.4 The Portuguese government should consider investing in a national language corpus of research and academic papers for use as a repository for matching student work to discourage plagiarism.
- 8.1.5 Specific financial support at national level would help HEIs acquire effective digital tools to act as a deterrent for student plagiarism and also for use as a formative tool to improve academic writing.

8.2 *Recommendations institutionally*

- 8.2.1 HE institutions need to develop holistic institutional policies to promote consistency, transparency and fairness in the management of academic integrity and specifically in discouraging plagiarism across all part of the institution; for guidance see Carroll (2005), Carroll and Appleton (2001), East (2009), Morris and Carroll (2011), Macdonald and Carroll (2006), Park (2004), Tennant and Duggan (2008), Tennant and Rowell (2010).
- 8.2.2 Institutions should share good practice in the area of research and policy development about ways to counter student plagiarism through sector-wide seminars and initiatives.
- 8.2.3 The institution should ensure that every student is provided with clear, regular and timely guidance and training about professional values, good academic practice and also be made aware about the consequences of academic misconduct.
- 8.2.4 Professional development (CPD) should be provided at regular intervals for all staff in the institution who are concerned with the quality of student assessment, including teaching staff (faculty), administrators and management; training should ensure that all staff are aware of and are following the institutional policies and associated procedures regarding upholding academic integrity and deterring plagiarism.
- 8.2.5 The institution should require academic departments and subject groups to evaluate their pedagogical practices and assessment methods with a view to reducing student plagiarism and encouraging scholarship and critical thinking.

8.3 *Recommendations for individual academics*

- 8.3.1 Academics should be meticulous in their personal academic integrity, upholding standards and applying institutional rules to set a good example for students to follow.
- 8.3.2 Academics should ensure all the students they teach or supervise, at all levels of HE, have access to good support and guidance to enable them to develop skills in academic writing and scholarship throughout their time in higher education.





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- 8.3.3 It is suggested that academic teaching staff would benefit by networking and sharing ideas locally, nationally and internationally to explore ways to counter student plagiarism and academic misconduct.
- 8.3.4 Academic staff are advised to attend and contribute to continuing professional development seminars to better appreciate the scale of the global threat of student plagiarism and misconduct, which will help to improve both academic standards and integrity.

9. Conclusions

The analysis of the results for Portugal showed a mixed picture, with some recent activity in places on addressing the threats of plagiarism, but a great deal more effort needs to be made before the impact will be felt more generally. Strong leadership is needed both at national and institutional levels to ensure the necessary checks and policies are put in place to begin to discourage plagiarism by using a combination of education and proportional sanctions for breaches followed by regular monitoring and review. Failure to address these threats will lead to continuing impacts on academic standards.

Portugal scored quite low in comparison to other EU countries when the Academic Integrity Maturity Model was applied to the IPPHEAE results (Glendinning 2013, 30), being ranked 18 out of the 27 countries surveyed. The highest scoring categories for Portugal were knowledge, as evidenced in both student and teacher responses, and research, as described in paragraph 7. The lowest scores were for prevention measures, use of software tools and consistency of sanctions. However it is important that progress is made as soon as feasible to strengthen all aspects of policy and systems for countering plagiarism and upholding academic integrity.





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June 2014



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

Table 16: Student and teacher responses to questionnaire Question 5 (percentages)

Qu	Negative (1,2)		Don't know		Positive (4,5)		Question
	student	teacher	student	teacher	student	teacher	
s5a t5a	51	42	7	14	33	40	Students receive training in techniques for scholarly academic writing and anti-plagiarism issues
s5b t5p	8	19	11	2	79	77	I would like to have more training on avoidance of plagiarism and academic dishonesty
s5c t5b	8	37	46	23	40	30	This institution has policies and procedures for dealing with plagiarism
t5c		37		28		28	I believe this institution takes a serious approach to plagiarism prevention
t5d		37		26		33	I believe this institution takes a serious approach to plagiarism detection
s5d t5e	7	35	41	26	48	28	Plagiarism policies, procedures and penalties are available to students
t5f		44		33		14	Plagiarism policies, procedures and penalties are available to staff
s5e t5g	16	49	58	33	22	7	Penalties for plagiarism are administered according to a standard formula
s5f t5h	15	37	38	28	43	23	I know what penalties are applied to students for different forms of plagiarism and academic dishonesty
s5g t5i	15	19	63	47	22	21	Student circumstances are taken into account when deciding penalties for plagiarism
s5h t5m	7	33	49	26	38	33	The institution has policies and procedures for dealing with academic dishonesty
t5j		19		58		7	The penalties for academic dishonesty are separate from those for plagiarism
t5k		26		47		14	There are national regulations or guidance concerning plagiarism prevention within HEIs in this country
t5l		35		47		7	Our national quality and standards agencies monitor plagiarism and academic dishonesty in HEIs
s5i t5n	26	12	30	65	39	23	I believe one or more of my teachers/colleagues may have used plagiarised or unattributed materials in class notes
s5j	31		17		42		I have come across a case of plagiarism committed by a student at this institution
s5k t5o	34	71	23	21	39	7	I believe I may have plagiarised (accidentally or deliberately)
s5l t5q	27	49	45	35	23	9	I believe that all teachers follow the same procedures for similar cases of plagiarism
s5m t5r	23	30	31	42	42	26	I believe that the way teachers treat plagiarism does not vary from student to student
s5n t5s	7	35	26	30	63	33	I believe that when dealing with plagiarism teachers follow the existing/required procedures
s5o t5t	5	10	27	14	63	70	It is possible to design coursework to reduce student plagiarism
s5p t5u	5	7	27	30	63	63	I think that translation across languages is used by some students to avoid detection of plagiarism
s5q	23		22		25		The previous institution I studied was less strict about plagiarism than this institution
s5r	6		15		74		I understand the links between copyright, Intellectual property rights and plagiarism