School of Education

The Perceptions of Academic Staff of Academic Integrity Policies and Procedures and Their Responses to Student Plagiarism in Australian Universities

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Declaration

To the best of my knowledge and belief this thesis contains no material previously published by any other person except where due acknowledgment has been made.

This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university.

Human Ethics The research presented and reported in this thesis was conducted in accordance with the National Health and Medical Research Council National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007) updated March 2014. The proposed research study received human research ethics approval from the Curtin University Human Research Ethics Committee (EC00262), Approval Number #121/2008.

Signature:

Date:

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Abstract

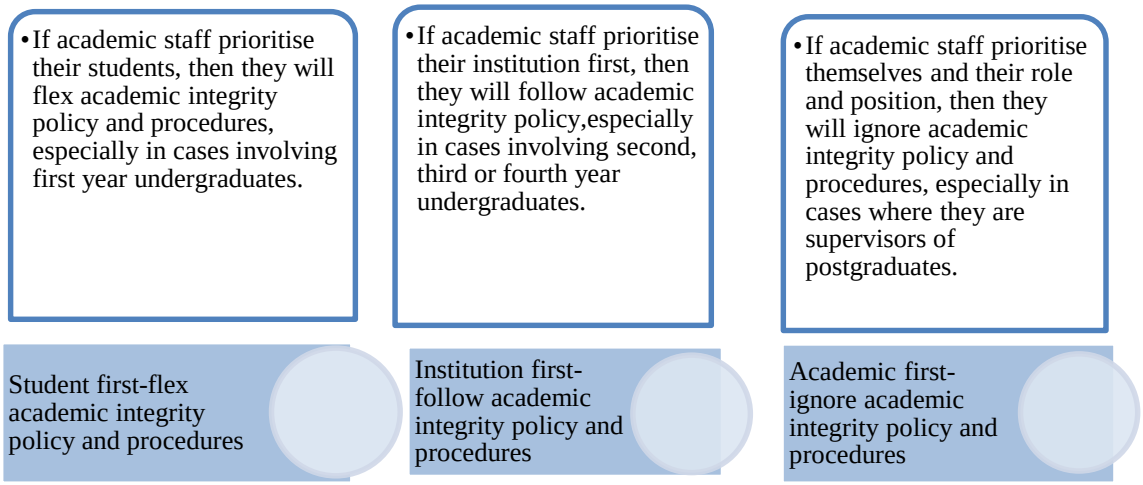
Plagiarism by students is an area of growing concern in institutions of higher learning in Australia. Universities have in place academic integrity policies and procedures to enable their academic staff to respond to incidences of student plagiarism in consistent and aligned ways. However, research suggests that academic staff do not respond in ways which they are expected to according to institutional documents. This lack of consistency and alignment ultimately affects the reputation of institutions and the integrity of their degrees and awards.

This study uses a mixed methodology as set out by Cresswell and Plano-Clark (2011) to address seven research questions. In particular, the study explores the understandings of academic staff of the notion of plagiarism, their perceptions of their institution's academic integrity policy and procedures and their responses to student plagiarism. Under the philosophical stance of pragmatism, document analysis based on the framework of Miles and Huberman (1994) together with grounded theory as set out by Strauss and Corbin (1990) are used to generate a comprehensive definition of student plagiarism and a model which might help explain the responses of academic staff to the issue.

The findings obtained from institutional documents, focus groups, an online survey and semi-structured interviews suggest that although academic staff view their institution's academic integrity policy as fair and easy to follow, they perceive the procedures for responding to plagiarism as time consuming and hard to follow. The responses of academic staff to specific incidences of student plagiarism suggest that they respond in ways which are not always aligned with what is expected of them as found in institutional documents. The reasons for this non-alignment may include academic staff perceptions of themselves, their students and their institutions. Two significant outcomes have resulted from this study. Firstly, a comprehensive definition of plagiarism containing nine elements is provided. This definition contains more elements than have previously been suggested by the literature or found in definitions of plagiarism in the academic integrity policies of the universities studied and are: (1) actor (2) action (3) work (4) possession (5) another (6) acknowledgment (7) intention (8) deception and (9) personal gain. Incorporating these nine elements, a comprehensive definition of student plagiarism is as follows:

"A student uses work taken from a source as their own, without acknowledgment and whether or not they intended to deceive, for assessment or personal gain".

Another outcome of this study is the development of a 'Three-view' model to help explain academic staff responses to student plagiarism based on how they prioritise students, institutions and themselves. The findings suggest that if the academic views the student as important, they are more likely to not follow institutional procedures. Alternatively, if the academic staff member prioritises their university, then they will follow institutional processes for responding to student plagiarism. Finally, if the academic prioritises themselves and their role and position in their university, then they will more likely ignore the academic integrity policy and procedures of their institution. The model may be represented as follows:



Recommendations arising from this study include the need for universities to include this comprehensive definition of plagiarism in their academic integrity policies and to offer training and education for their academic staff to enable them to respond to incidences of student plagiarism in ways which align with what is expected of them by their institutions.

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List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

ALTC=Australian Learning and Teaching Council

ACO=Academic Conduct Officer

ACODE= Australian Council on Open, Distance and E-learning

APCEI=Asia Pacific Conference on Educational Integrity

DET=Department and Education and Training (Australia)

DVC=Deputy Vice Chancellor

ESB=English speaking background

NESB=non-English speaking background

NVIVO= QSR Nud*ist Vivo

PG=postgraduate

PVC= Pro Vice Chancellor

SPSS=Software Program for the Social Sciences

TEQSA= Tertiary Education Quality Standards Agency (Australia)

UG=undergraduate

UK=United Kingdom

US=United States of America

This thesis is dedicated to my grandfather, Marone Doria (1913-2002).

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Context and background of this study

This study will examine the academic integrity policies and procedures of four public Australian universities. In particular, it will explore the understandings of academic staff at these universities of institutional documents relating to academic integrity and also it will explore their understandings and responses to plagiarism by their students (student plagiarism). While the focus of this current research appears at first glance to be about the perceptions of academic staff of their institution's academic integrity policy and procedures and plagiarism by students in higher education, it has a much wider significance. Not only does it explore the relationship between academic staff and academic integrity policies and procedures, it also examines the academics themselves and their roles and responsibilities in a changing higher education environment to gain a deeper understanding of these stakeholders and of their behaviours. Due to the complex nature of both plagiarism and academics, this study makes reference to research from the additional fields of psychology, educational management and law which may be relevant in an effort to present a more comprehensive picture of the issue.

This chapter will begin by presenting background information on plagiarism and academic integrity policies and procedures to place this study in context. It will then present the research questions and the research methodology employed. The significance and limitations of this study will then be stated, and the chapter will end with a definition of terms used in this thesis to help clarify these terms for the reader.

1.1.1 Student plagiarism

Plagiarism may be defined in simple terms as the use of another's words, thoughts or writings in a way which is unauthorised or where the original writer has not been acknowledged (Samson & Radloff, 1992). However, research has shown that plagiarism is a complex issue and not so easy to define (Carroll, 2005). Over the past few decades, student plagiarism in institutions of higher learning around the globe has become an area of growing concern with studies suggesting that it is on the increase due to a number of factors including increased use of cutting and pasting from the internet to complete assignments.

In response to the perceived increase in student plagiarism, there have been diverse responses from different countries. In the UK there has been a call for a more holistic approach to addressing the issue which would include the implementation of more educative rather than punitive policies and procedures (Carroll, 2005; Park, 2004). In the US there has been the use

of honour codes in universities and colleges to help students better understand the issue (McCabe, 2003). In Australia, academic integrity policies and procedures have been developed by most universities as a response to the issue of student plagiarism. In most universities from these countries there has also been the use of services such as Turnitin (*Turnitin.com*) to help detect plagiarism. What these responses seek to do, and what appears to be the perceived objective based on research, is to change the focus from a punitive to an educative approach to student plagiarism.

There have been many studies both in Australia and overseas which have examined cheating and academic misconduct among university students, especially on the students themselves, their perceptions and reasons for plagiarising (Guillifer & Tyson, 2013; Stappenbelt, Rowles & May, 2009; Yeo, 2007; Marshall & Garry, 2005; Breen & Maassen, 2005; Dawson, 2004; Deckert, 2002). Other studies have examined the perceptions and responses of academic staff to incidences of plagiarism by their students (Nadelson, 2007; Coalter, Lim & Wanorie, 2007; Kelley & Bonner, 2005; Simon, Carr, McCullough, Morgan, Oleson & Ressel, 2003; Sierup-Pincus & Schmelikin, 2003; Franklin-Stokes & Newstead, 1995; Kibler, 1994; Graham, Monday, O'Brien & Steffen, 1994); however, most of this research originates from the US and UK.

Some Australian projects have examined both the perceptions of students and academic staff to the issue of plagiarism (Brimble & Stevenson-Clarke, 2006; Sutherland-Smith, 2005a) however there appears to be a lack of contemporary research from Australasia which explores the perceptions of academic staff or lecturers to the issue of plagiarism and in particular their perceptions of the academic integrity policies and procedures of their institutions. This may be because such documents, in their current forms, are fairly recent introductions to institutions of higher learning.

1.1.2 Academic integrity policy and procedures

At the time of writing this thesis, there were 39 public universities in Australia (Department of Education, 2014) subject to laws set out by the Commonwealth Government in legislation. This Commonwealth legislation gives these public universities power to enact their own statutes, rules and regulations which then enable them to draw up policies and procedures to manage all aspects of university life such as student disciplinary matters. These statutes, rules, regulations, policies and procedures are mandated and legally binding which means they must be followed by those who are employed and those who study at these universities.

Failing to observe or breaching these laws may result in penalties such as expulsion of students from their studies or dismissal of academic staff from their employment.

Generally, these policy and procedure documents are prepared by administrative and legal staff of the universities with limited understanding of the day-to-day workings of the institutions and with little or no input from academic staff or students who may be affected by such policies and procedures.

In Australia, most universities have in place academic integrity policies and procedures not only to help maintain the reputation of institutions and the reliability of their degrees, but also to enable academic staff to respond to incidences of plagiarism in consistent and effective ways. These policies and procedures are fairly new, having come into effect in the early 2000s, and ideally they should be reviewed every few years to take into account any changes in the higher education environment and development in research in the area. For example, the earliest academic integrity policy and procedures from one of the four Western Australian public universities in this study was introduced in 2003 and has been reviewed only once since the time of writing this thesis.

The language of these policies and procedures is legalistic in nature (Sutherland-Smith, 2010; East, 2009; Grigg, 2009; Pecorari, 2001; Iedema, in Christie & Martin, 1997), due in part to the fact that they are usually prepared by legal or administrative staff. These staff may have diverse concepts or understandings of the issue of student plagiarism as compared to academic staff who are faced with issues of student plagiarism and are bound by these policies and procedures (Bergman, in Havilland & Mullin, 2008).

Studies in Australia have explored academic integrity policies and procedures. Research by Tracy Bretag and her colleagues examined the academic integrity policies of 39 public Australian institutions to determine which ones provided good examples for other institutions to follow (Bretag, Mahmud, Wallace, Walker, James, Green, East, McGowan & Partridge, 2011). They found that good exemplars of academic integrity policies and procedures include the elements of access, approach, responsibility, detail and support as necessary components to uphold a culture of academic integrity in institutions of higher learning. However, the focus of the study was not on definitions of plagiarism found in these institutional documents nor on the understandings of academic staff of these academic integrity policies and procedures. This study will attempt to address these gaps in the literature.

1.1.3 Academic staff understandings and responses to student plagiarism

Earlier studies suggest that academic staff do not have a clear and consistent understanding of student plagiarism and appear to define it differently from how their institution and other academics might do so (Crisp, 2007; Flint, Clegg & Macdonald, 2006; Phillips, 2005). In addition, it appears that academic staff have diverse perceptions of plagiarism even among themselves. Some academic staff might perceive plagiarism as immoral and unethical (East, 2010), while others view it as a crime which must be punished (Sutherland-Smith, 2010; Leask, 2006). Others view plagiarism as a decline in the social and educational standards of today's tertiary students (Gourlay & Deane, 2012), while some see plagiarism as a clash of values or a generational issue (Gross, 2011). Despite these different perceptions of plagiarism, studies show that almost all academic staff agree that plagiarism is an increasing problem in institutions of higher learning (Joyce, 2007). What is not clear is whether academic staff have their own, internalised definition of plagiarism (Flint, Clegg & Macdonald, 2006) and whether or not this personal view of plagiarism is consistent with definitions of plagiarism provided to them by their institution through institutional documents including academic integrity policies and procedures. This study will attempt to explore this question.

When it comes to responses to student plagiarism, research, particularly from the US, suggests that academic staff sometimes respond in inconsistent and informal ways to incidences of student plagiarism and the research indicates that many academic staff fail to respond to plagiarism at all and ignore the issue (Pickard, 2006; Barrett & Cox, 2005; Keith-Speigel, Tabachnick, Whitley & Washburn, 1998). Conversely, studies suggest that academic staff might follow institutional processes or formal procedures as set out by their university where they are confident in and trusting of the institution (Simon et al., 2003).

There are a number of reasons outlined in the literature as to why responses by academic staff to incidences of student plagiarism might be inconsistent and varied. The reasons or factors include finding the university processes too complex and time-consuming (Simon et al., 2003; Keith-Speigel et al., 1998), lacking time and resources to respond to the incident (Keith-Speigel et al., 1998) lacking support from the institution (Franklin-Stokes & Newstead, 1995; Kibler, 1994; Graham, Monday, O'Brien & Steffen, 1994), having a distrust of university processes (Simon et al., 2003), being confused about policies and procedures which appear unclear (Franklin-Stokes & Newstead, 1995; Kibler, 1994; Graham, Monday, O'Brien & Steffen, 1994), feeling there is insufficient evidence to prove plagiarism (Nadelson, 2007), feeling anxious and stressed (Coalter, Lim & Wanorie, 2007; Nadelson,

2007; Simon et al., 2003; Keith-Speigel et al., 1998), fearing retaliation by students (Nadelson, 2007), and perceiving the incident as not serious (Burke, 1997).

Keith-Speigel and her colleagues, in their research on faculty in American institutions of higher learning, present a five-factor model of reasons for why faculty might not respond to incidences of plagiarism by their students (Keith-Speigel et al., 1998). The factors in this model were Emotionality, Denial, Fear, Guilt and Difficulty. It is suggested that it might be possible, although difficult, to categorise the reasons presented in the literature in the previous paragraph into the five factor model, despite the responses of academic staff to incidences of student plagiarism being varied and inconsistent.

Where academic integrity policies and procedures are involved, studies suggest that the responses of academic staff to incidences of student plagiarism are not always consistent with procedures outlined by their institutions (Brimble & Stevenson-Clarke, 2006; Pickard, 2006; Barrett & Cox, 2005). In particular, when the incidence of plagiarism is considered minor, academic staff are more likely to ignore and not report the matter to those in authority or alternatively, deal with students in their own way on a case by case basis and therefore in a way which may not be consistent with the response expected by their institution as outlined in institutional documents relating to academic integrity (Bermingham, Watson & Jones, 2009; Nadelson, 2007; Brimble & Stevenson-Clarke, 2006; Flint, Clegg & Macdonald, 2006; Sutherland-Smith, 2005; Simon et al., 2003; Burke, 1997; Ritter, 1993). Conversely, if academic staff considered the incidence of student plagiarism to be serious or major, then they would more likely deal with it through formal channels, that is, follow their institution's procedures (Bermingham, Watson & Jones, 2009).

Whilst these studies outline some possible reasons as to why academic staff respond to student plagiarism in inconsistent ways, fewer studies discuss the factors relating to specific incidences of plagiarism that might affect their responses. Some factors suggested by the research include the seriousness of the plagiarism and the intention of the student to plagiarise (Brimble & Stevenson-Clarke, 2006; Sutherland-Smith, 2005; Burke, 1997; Ritter, 1993).

The literature on academic staff responses to student plagiarism considers possible reasons and factors to explain why academic staff behave in the ways that they do. However the research is inconclusive as it does not appear to offer any comprehensive theories or models to help explain why academic staff might respond to student plagiarism in diverse ways. On the other hand, some studies on students and why they plagiarise outline possible theories to

explain students' behaviours (Hard, Conway & Moran, 2006; Whitley, 1998). In an attempt to generate a theory which might also explain academic staff behaviour when responding to student plagiarism, this study looks further afield and presents research from various areas in the social sciences, such as psychology and law, for possible answers.

These inconsistencies, as suggested by the literature, in the responses of academic staff to student plagiarism is cause for concern, especially for institutions of higher learning who seek to maintain their reputation and the integrity of their awards and degrees. Consistent and aligned understandings and responses to student plagiarism are important not only for universities but also for their academic staff and students. By exploring possible reasons for such inconsistencies, institutions will gain a deeper understanding of the issue of plagiarism and of the perceptions of their academic staff, thus enabling them to draft and revise their academic integrity policy and procedures more effectively.

1.2 The research issue

In light of these studies which suggest that academic staff do not understand nor respond to student plagiarism in consistent ways, it is important to provide up to date research on the issue of academic integrity policies and procedures and student plagiarism as perceived by academic staff in Australian institutions of higher learning. This is particularly crucial as most studies in Australia appear to focus on the language and efficacy of the academic integrity policies and procedures themselves (Bretag, Mahmud, Wallace, Walker, James, Green, East, McGowan & Partridge, 2011) or on students' perceptions of these institutional documents (Guillifer & Tyson, 2013) and not on academic staff and their understandings and responses to student plagiarism.

Additionally, at the time of writing, the Australian federal government is seeking to reduce government funding to institutions of higher learning and this latest change to the higher educational environment in Australia will affect institutions, staff and students alike. The impact of these funding changes to the phenomenon of student plagiarism is as yet unknown but it is suggested that changes may bring with them social, economic or cultural changes in both the institution and the students who study there which may in turn be factors which influence the behaviour of academic staff when responding to student plagiarism.

These developments in higher education make it timely to explore the relationship between academic staff and their institution's academic integrity policies and procedures to explore, among other things, whether there are any inconsistencies between how plagiarism is defined in institutional documents and how it is understood by academic staff and also any non-

alignment between the responses of academic staff to incidences of student plagiarism with those responses outlined in the academic integrity procedures of the university. It is important to explore the reasons why academic staff respond to student plagiarism in the way they do to help explain any inconsistencies and lack of alignment as not all previous studies offer suggestions for why this might be. It is crucial to understand why academic staff respond to incidences of student plagiarism in inconsistent ways in order to make recommendations to universities to help reduce any inconsistencies and non-alignment.

1.3 Research objective, aims and questions

The objective of this study is to examine the perceptions of academic staff at four Western Australian public universities towards their institution's academic integrity policy and procedures and student plagiarism in general. In particular, one aim of this research is to explore academic staff understandings of the term plagiarism and to compare these to the definitions of plagiarism presented in institutional documents to see if there is consistency with their understandings and the definitions provided by their institution. Another aim is to explore the responses of academic staff to incidences of student plagiarism and examine the extent to which these responses align with what their institution might expect as set out in academic integrity policy and procedures. Leading on from these two aims, this study will explore the factors that academic staff consider important when responding to diverse incidences of student plagiarism.

In order to fulfil the objectives of this current research, it was necessary to study academic staff from public Australian institutions of higher learning. The four public universities in the capital city of Perth, Western Australia and their academic staff were chosen as the subjects of this study. The rationale for choosing these four public universities is that they are representative of Australian institutions because of their diverse roots and areas of specialisation. They were also chosen due to their accessibility to the researcher. At no time was it intended to compare and contrast the four public Australian universities or the academic staff who work there. For the purposes of this research, and to protect the anonymity of participants, all institutions have been de-identified and are hereinafter referred to as University A, University B, University C and University D.

From these aims, the following research questions have been developed, namely:

1. *How is the term 'student plagiarism' understood by academic staff at four Western Australian public universities?*
2. *To what extent are academic staff understandings of the term 'student plagiarism' consistent with how the term is expressed in the academic integrity policy of their institution?*
3. *What are the perceptions of academic staff of student plagiarism in their institution?*
4. *What are the perceptions of academic staff of their institution's academic integrity policy and procedures?*
5. *How do academic staff at four Western Australian public universities respond to incidences of student plagiarism in their institution?*
6. *To what extent do the responses of academic staff to incidences of student plagiarism in their institution align with the academic integrity procedures of their institution?*
7. *What are the reasons for lack of alignment, if any, in academic staff responses to student plagiarism?*

1.4 Research methodology

Mixed methods research is employed in this study in an effort to fully address the research questions. As this study sought to explore understandings of academic staff of their institution's academic integrity policy and procedures, their understandings of student plagiarism and how and why they respond to student plagiarism in the way they do, using solely quantitative methods, such as questionnaires, would not have been sufficient as they would not reveal rich data that could be obtained from other methods such as interviews and focus groups. Mixed methods was found to be the most suitable methodology as it allows for both quantitative and qualitative methods to be used to collect rich and complex data and for diverse theoretical approaches to choose from in order to analyse such data. Chapter 3 of this thesis explains the type of method used for each of the research questions.

The paradigm chosen as the best fit for this study is pragmatism as it suggests that there is not a particular subjective or objective view of the world but a number of possible views and understandings. The paradigm tends towards finding common or shared views or understandings of the world and suggests practical implications which may arise as a result of these diverse views.

Two theoretical perspectives were utilised due to the amount and variety of data obtained, it was not possible to place analysis of data under one theory. Therefore, document analysis as

outlined in the framework of Miles and Huberman (1994) was used as the basis for analysis of some of the data obtained from the institutional documents and online survey instrument while a grounded theory approach as enunciated by Corbin and Strauss (1990) provided the basis for analysis of the qualitative data obtained primarily from the focus groups and semi-structured interviews. This analysis was further aided by the use of software tools SPSS (Version19) and NVIVO (Version 9). For the collection of data from the online survey instrument, this study made use of the online service, *QuestionPro.com*.

1.5 Significance of this study

Through mixed methods research exploring the research questions, this study attempts to fill the gaps in the literature and make a useful and significant contribution to the field of higher education policy and practice. The review of the literature will present a comprehensive summary of the studies relating to academic integrity and plagiarism and from this review it will be seen that the area under exploration in this research is fairly new due to the fact that academic integrity policies and procedures, in their current forms, have only recently been implemented in Australian public universities. It will also show that although there have been many earlier studies on the perceptions and responses of academic staff to student plagiarism, fewer studies have shown what, if any, the effect of institutional documents might have on their perceptions and responses. Additionally, more studies appear to examine students themselves and their behaviours and understandings of academic integrity. Therefore, this research is timely in that it will help redress the lack of work on academic staff and their understandings of academic integrity policies and procedures and responses to student plagiarism.

This study is original in terms of its focus on academic staff perceptions of academic integrity policies and procedures in four Western Australian public universities. Although some Australian projects have examined the efficacy and wording of academic integrity policies, this work seeks to explore the relationship between academic staff and their institutional policies and procedures relating to student plagiarism. In particular, it will examine the understandings and perceptions of academic staff of their university's academic integrity policy and procedures and also the factors that may influence their responses to particular incidences of plagiarism by their students.

In terms of the practical significance, it is hoped that the findings from this research will be useful to institutions, academic staff and students alike. For example, the findings from this study will help administrators in institutions of higher learning have a better understanding

how the institutional documents they write and revise are understood and acted upon by academic staff at their university. Academic staff will have a better understanding of how they perceive institutional documents on academic integrity and if their responses to incidences of student plagiarism align with what is expected of them by their university as expressed in these documents.

More importantly, this study is significant in what it reveals about academic staff in Australian institutions of higher learning. In particular, not only is the relationship between academic staff and academic integrity policies and procedures explored, but the responses of these academics to incidences of student plagiarism reveal a lot more about them, their sense of identity, roles and responsibilities and their beliefs about higher education in general.

Through the development of ways for defining plagiarism and for explaining academic staff responses to student plagiarism, it is hoped that this study will add to the conversation on academic integrity and support the view that this is a complex issue where continued research is needed to find workable solutions for all concerned.

1.6 Limitations of this study

Despite the significance of this study, it is limited in three ways. Firstly, as this research is essentially made up of four case studies where four public universities and their academic staff are examined, the findings cannot be generalised to the wider international and Australian context. Despite this limitation, the results are likely to resonate with public Australian universities and add a comprehensive, regional perspective not previously explored in existing studies.

Secondly, the scope of the study is limited to academic staff in four public institutions of higher learning in the metropolitan area of Western Australia. Other stakeholders, including students, administrators, general staff and other academic staff from outside Perth, did not form part of the study due to time, geographical and resources constraints. For a more comprehensive picture of the current state of academic integrity in public universities Australia, it is vital that all stakeholders are involved.

Finally, issues of bias and validity were present. The fact that the researcher is a sessional academic staff member at two of the four institutions and a former student at one of the other institutions of this study may have had both advantages and disadvantages. For example, an advantage would be that the researcher was familiar with the tertiary environment which may have made access to information and participants more easily accessible and therefore ready

to be more open and honest in their responses. A disadvantage may have been that it was difficult for the researcher to be objective although measures were taken to help reduce this. Issues of validity and bias are addressed in detail in Chapter 3 of this thesis.

1.7 Ethical considerations

This section outlines the ethical issues pertaining to the processes involved in this study. More detailed information is found in Chapter 3 of this thesis.

Ethics approval to conduct this research was obtained from Curtin University in November 2008 and was renewed for a further three years until November 2011. Applications for ethics approval for the other public institutions were made via emails to the Ethics Committees at these universities. Two of these committees gave written formal approval while the other requested that permission be obtained directly from the Heads of Schools. Copies of all correspondence to the Heads of School are in Appendices I and K. In all cases, the researcher followed the procedures and advice provided by the Ethics Committees at the four public institutions so at all times they were aware that the research was being conducted with their academic staff.

The anonymity of the academic staff who participated was protected. Their written consent to participate in the focus groups and semi-structured interviews was obtained prior to their commencement. Copies of the consent forms used for the focus groups and semi-structured interviews are presented in Appendices B and N, respectively. The online survey instrument enunciated in the 'Instructions to Participants' that academic staff were giving their implied consent by completing the survey. A copy of these instructions is in Appendix F.

In the analysis of data, all participants and their institutions were de-identified to ensure confidentiality and anonymity. The only persons with access to the data during and after this study were the researcher and her supervisors. All data are currently stored safely on password protected USBs and hard drives and on completion of this thesis will be transferred to a hard drive which will be kept confidential and stored, along with hard copies of all research documents, in a locked cabinet in the School of Education, Curtin University for a minimum of seven years.

1.8 Organisation of the thesis

This thesis is organised into the following chapters:

Chapter 1: Introduction. This chapter introduces the current situation regarding academic integrity and student plagiarism to set the context for this study. The chapter outlines the methodology, aims and the research questions that will be addressed. It concludes by presenting the significance and limitations of this study.

Chapter 2: Literature Review. As this chapter is lengthy and reviews the literature in not only the area of academic integrity but also the life of the modern day academic, it is divided into two parts. *Part 1: Academic Integrity in Institutions of Higher Learning* presents a comprehensive picture of research on academic integrity, academic misconduct, plagiarism and academic integrity policy and procedures. Studies on the perceptions of both academic staff and students are examined and a historical overview of studies attempts to show changes in their focus from perceiving plagiarism as a cheating issue to viewing it as a breach of academic integrity.

Part 2: The Academic in Modern Institutions of Higher Learning outlines some of the studies on academics themselves, their identities, roles and responsibilities in the context of the modern, changing landscape of Australian higher education. The reason for presenting such research will be made clearer in Chapter 5 where a model is proposed in the light of the both the literature presented in Chapter 2 and the findings of this research presented in Chapter 4.

Chapter 3: Methodology. This chapter outlines the methodology used in this research, the paradigm and theoretical approaches used to analyse the data obtained. After discussing in detail the participants, the chapter is divided into the different methods of data collection, namely document analysis, focus groups, survey and semi-structured interviews, being the order in which they were used in this research. The chapter ends with an examination of issues relating to validity, bias and ethics.

Chapter 4: Findings. This chapter presents the findings from the mixed methods used in this study. The findings are presented under each research question which will involve a mixing of the results from the different types of methods of data collection. Quantitative data are analysed using descriptive statistics aided by the use of SPSS software while qualitative data are analysed using either document analysis or coding to elicit common themes or terms. NVIVO software was used to some extent to aid in analysis of qualitative data. The chapter ends with a summary of the key findings for each of the seven research questions.

Chapter 5: Discussion. This chapter begins with a summary of all previous chapters and then discusses the key findings of this study in the light of the current literature. Then two significant outcomes of this study are identified: the first outcome, developed using document analysis, is a comprehensive definition of student plagiarism which includes nine elements; the second outcome, developed using grounded theory, is a 'Three-view' model to help explain the responses of academic staff to incidences of student plagiarism.

Chapter 6: Conclusion and Recommendations. This final chapter outlines the conclusions that have been drawn from this research and outlines some practical recommendations for both institutions and their academic staff to assist in the preparation, implementation and review of academic integrity policy and procedures relating to student plagiarism. The chapter ends with suggestions for future research on the issue of student plagiarism and academic integrity in the changing environment of institutions of higher learning.

1.9 Definition of terms

This section provides definitions for terms used in this thesis which may be open to interpretation by the reader.

Academic staff refers to any academic personnel such as a professor, lecturer, unit coordinator, or tutor, employed in a full-time, part-time, sessional or contract basis, to teach students at universities. It does not include administrative or professional staff at these institutions.

Alignment is defined as the extent to which two or more things are congruent or in agreement with one another. In this thesis the word is used to compare the responses of academic staff to incidences of student plagiarism with the responses expected of them by their institutions as outlined by institutional representatives.

Consistency is defined as the extent to which two or more things behave in the same way or are similar to each other. In this thesis, the word is used to compare the definitions of plagiarism provided by both academic staff and their institutions.

DVC refers to the Deputy Vice Chancellor in Australian universities. This is a senior managerial role.

ESB students refer to students who have English as their first language. In the Australian context, it could encompass students who are local.

Institutional representatives refer to academic staff, working in the Teaching and Learning departments at their university, who may be considered experts in the field of academic integrity.

NESB students refer to students from a non-English speaking background, that is, students for whom English is not their first language. The word may be seen as synonymously with words such as *international* or *ESL* students which have been used in the literature.

NVIVO stands for QSR NUD*IST VIVO. It is a software programme which can assist with qualitative analysis by sorting information, coding and autocoding or coding 'in vivo' as suggested by its name. The software, first created by Professors Lyn and Tom Richards from the US, helps manage large amounts of complex qualitative data. The 9th version of the software was used in this study.

PVC refers to the Pro Vice Chancellor in Australian universities. This is a senior managerial role.

QuestionPro.com is a fee-paying online service which assists with the development and dissemination of online surveys. It also generates reports based on the results from online surveys. It was utilised in this study as it could handle longer, more complex surveys than those offered by similar services such as SurveyMonkey.

Response as used in this study refers only to the first steps taken by academic staff when faced with incidences of student plagiarism. The term does not encompass any penalties which may be given to students by the academic staff or the institution.

Sessionals or sessional staff refers to academic staff who are not employed in a full-time or part-time capacity. It includes academic staff who work on a casual or contract basis.

SPSS stands for 'Statistical Package for the Social Sciences' and is software which can assist with quantitative analysis of data. It is similar to Excel but with more functionality. The 19th version of the software was used in this study.

Student plagiarism is defined in this study as plagiarism by students in higher education. It does not refer to plagiarism by other people such as academic staff or researchers or students not in institutions of higher learning.

Turnitin.com is a fee paying online text-matching service leased by most universities to assist their academic staff in finding incidences of plagiarism in the text-based work of their

students. The work is uploaded onto the Turnitin website which then provides the reader with details of where the text may be plagiarised. It is not a plagiarism detecting software as people might think, but a service which matches texts with other texts stored in Turnitin's database.

Unit coordinator refers to the person in control of a unit or course within a faculty in the university. Another term which is used synonymously with this term and which is found in the literature is *unit controller*.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

'Plagiarism' may be defined as "the presentation of another's work as one's own" (Edith Cowan University, 2008). It derives from the English word 'plagiary' which means to wrongfully take another's words and from the earlier Latin word 'plagiarius' meaning kidnapper (Park, 2003). These definitions give the impression that plagiarism is a serious act or crime which must be punished accordingly.

Similarly, institutions of higher learning in Australia and overseas appear to have defined 'student plagiarism' or plagiarism by students in their institutional documents on academic integrity. In Australia, public universities are subject to laws enacted by the Commonwealth Government in the form of legislation which gives these institutions power to enact their own statutes, rules, regulations, policies and procedures to manage all aspects of university life such as student disciplinary matters. These institutional documents are mandated and legally binding and must be adhered to by those that are employed and those that study at these universities.

Some of these institutional documents, and in particular the academic integrity policies and procedures are fairly recent introductions (in their current forms) and encase definitions of plagiarism and other forms of academic misconduct. The documents also range in length and depth and have been put in place by institutions to inform stakeholders and maintain standards. Academic integrity policies and procedures serve the purpose managing academic integrity within the institution by providing steps which must be taken by academic staff when responding to student plagiarism.

These academic integrity policies and procedures, though well intended, are usually phrased in legalistic terms and written, with little or no consultation with academic staff, by legal and administrative staff who may have little or no interaction with university students. For students and their teachers, plagiarism might be viewed as an emotive issue and one that might not be effectively dealt with by policies and procedures written by third parties. For example, some studies on academic staff responses to incidences of student plagiarism suggest that staff may often feel stressed, angry or even sad when they discover that their students have plagiarised, especially when they have invested a lot of time and energy into educating their class (East, 2010; Coalter, Lim & Wanorie, 2007; Nadelson, 2007; Simon et al., 2003; Roy, 1999; Keith-Speigel et al., 1998).

In the past few decades, universities in Australia and overseas have undergone changes due to a number of factors including increased pressure from external stakeholders. In Australia, universities face increasing scrutiny by government while at the same time, funding to institutions of higher learning has decreased. Universities are under pressure to comply with standards set by the Tertiary Education Quality Standards Agency (TEQSA) while accepting an increase in the number of students from diverse linguistic and educational backgrounds. Additionally, the casualisation of the academic workforce means there are a smaller proportion of academic staff employed in a permanent, full-time role in institutions. The globalisation, internationalisation and corporatisation of public institutions of higher learning, coupled with the changes in the curriculum, work and role of academics, means that all stakeholders are constantly adjusting to new ways of delivering and receiving a university education and adjusting to new rules and regulations governing teaching and learning (Senge, 2007; Ball, 2003; Trowler, 1998).

These changes can be seen in the higher education climate in how academic staff respond to issues involving students, such as student plagiarism. Since the beginning of this century, there has been a move away from a punitive to an educative approach in responding to plagiarism by students in universities, thanks to the work of researchers from the US (Fishman, 2009; Howard, 2001), UK (Macdonald & Carroll, 2006; Clegg & Flint, 2006; Carroll, 2005; Park 2003), other European countries (Foltýnek & Glendinning, 2015; Weber-Wulff, 2014) and more recently from the Asian region (Ramzan et al., 2012).

Hence, the complex nature of plagiarism, coupled with changes in the higher educational system, calls for an investigation into the academic and how they now perceive and respond to incidences of plagiarism by their students.

This study seeks to address some of these concerns. It is primarily concerned with the perceptions of academic staff of the academic integrity policy and procedures and of plagiarism by students in general at the universities in which they work. Although there have been a number of studies both in Australia and overseas on plagiarism and in particular on the perceptions of plagiarism by students and lecturers, there have been fewer studies examining the relationship between the policies and procedures which govern academic integrity and those who are bound by them.

Academic integrity policies and procedures are fairly new to most Australian universities having been introduced or amended to reflect current international research which calls for a holistic institutional approach for responding to academic misconduct issues (Carroll, 2005;

Park 2003). There is a need for research in this area of the nexus between academic staff and their institution's academic integrity policies and procedures as responses by academic staff to student plagiarism affect more than the student caught plagiarising and the lecturer involved in responding. Responses by academic staff that do not align with the institutional policies and procedures of their institution may lead to inconsistent penalties being given to students who plagiarise which, in turn, may affect the reputation of that institution and the validity of its awards.

Outline of Literature Review chapter

In order to investigate the perceptions of academic staff of policies and procedures concerned with plagiarism, it is necessary to present not only a comprehensive picture of the past and present research on the topic of plagiarism, but also to paint a picture of the academic themselves.

Hence this literature review is divided into two distinct parts. *Academic Integrity in Institutions of Higher Learning* investigates the literature on academic integrity, presenting notions of plagiarism and how plagiarism is perceived by institutions through their academic integrity policies and procedures, by academic staff and by students. This first part concludes with a discussion of how institutions respond to plagiarism through their institutional documents and also how academic staff respond to the issue of student plagiarism to show that, despite a seemingly consistent definition of the term, plagiarism is viewed and responded to differently by the stakeholders in institutions of higher learning.

To show the trends over a period of time in the study of plagiarism, the research is discussed in chronological order. The historical overview of studies shows changes both in the notion of plagiarism and in what the focus is in the research. Earlier studies appear to have looked solely at academic staff but then the emphasis appears to shift to students and then to institutions themselves and the steps they are taking to address the issue of student plagiarism. The review of the literature returns full circle to focus, in a new light, on the academic and their perceptions of student plagiarism and of policies and and procedures governing academic integrity in modern institutions.

In an endeavour to present a complete picture of the issue of plagiarism, reference is made to plagiarism studies from diverse fields of higher education, ethics, philosophy, behavioural psychology, texts, authorship, intellectual property. These studies illustrate that different theories or ways of knowing have been used in an attempt to interpret the complex issue.

The second part of the literature review, *The Academic in Modern Institutions of Higher Learning*, discusses the identity of academics themselves and the work they do. It presents studies on the identity, autonomy, roles and responsibilities of the academic in today's universities. The purpose of reviewing these studies is to show that how academics respond to issues of academic integrity may depend on their values, beliefs and world views. The studies will also reveal whether or not academics are adaptable to changes in the university environment.

Another reason for presenting these studies is that the issue of plagiarism by students in higher education cannot be viewed in isolation and this review would not be complete if it only examined works relating to plagiarism per se. Additionally, some of these studies employ well known concepts such as Pierre Bourdieu's (1988) theory of habitus and Max Weber's (1962) concept of power as their theoretical basis. Such theories were considered when trying to deteremine the theoretical basis to be utilised in this current research. They are further discussed in the Methodology chapter of this thesis.

In this chapter, some sections begin with a quotation from the literature. This is done to help assist the reader is setting the tone of that particular section and provide food for thought.

PART 1: ACADEMIC INTEGRITY IN INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING

2.2 Notions of plagiarism in the literature

"The term plagiarism is a social construct bound by time and place because of its specific cultural origin" (Blackford,1999, p.1).

This section identifies the trends in the study of plagiarism, beginning with research which indicates how the notion of plagiarism itself has changed. Early studies suggest that little distinction was made between the notions of plagiarism and cheating. However, later studies indicate an emphasis on academic integrity rather than misconduct. This section presents the notions of plagiarism found in the literature and illustrates how these notions may have changed as the focus of studies in the field has changed over time and across countries. A comprehensive and chronologically presented summary of the trends in plagiarism research is found later in this chapter in section 2.10.

2.2.1 Plagiarism as cheating

Much of the early research from the US does not distinguish between the terms 'plagiarism' and 'cheating' yet these studies remain relevant as examples of how plagiarism can, by default, be seen as a form of cheating. In comparison, later research conducted in Australia and the UK has specifically viewed plagiarism as separate from, rather than encompassed under, the umbrella of cheating.

Studies which have had an impact in the field of research into academic integrity and plagiarism may have originated in the US with research such as that by Drake (1941) going as far back as the middle of the last century. In the 1990s, PhD students were researching the issue of plagiarism and cheating (Burke, 1997; Sierup-Pincus, 1995; Kibler, 1992). Since that time, studies have increased with researchers, such as Donald McCabe, taking an interest in student cheating and academic honour codes (or 'honor' codes as they are known in the US). McCabe may be considered the father of plagiarism studies and his research, completed on his own or with others, spans two decades (1993 to date) and involves more than 200 000 students from hundreds of colleges and universities mainly in the US. His work, like many others, makes no clear distinction between cheating and plagiarism, defining cheating as copying.

Researchers Kidwell, Wozniak and Laurel (2003) list 17 cheating behaviours including "copying material, almost word for word, from any source and turning it in as your own", "copying a few sentences of material without footnoting them in a paper" and "plagiarizing a paper in any way using the Internet as a source" (p.208). These definitions of cheating behaviours appear, in effect, to be synonymous with what might today be defined as plagiarism.

2.2.2 Plagiarism as academic misconduct or dishonesty

In the early part of this century, it appears that the terminology used has moved from viewing plagiarism as cheating to perceiving it to be a form of academic misconduct. Research titles themselves might suggest this trend. For example, studies entitled *"Academic Dishonesty in Graduate Business Programs: prevalence, causes and proposed action"* (McCabe, Butterfield & Trevino, 2006), and *"Dishonesty in Academic Environments: the influence of peer reporting requirements"* (McCabe, Trevino & Butterfield, 2001b) appear to suggest a move away from viewing plagiarism as cheating to viewing plagiarism as academic misconduct. However within these articles, the researchers continued to refer to academic dishonesty as 'cheating', using the terms on an interchangeable basis.

In their article *"Academic Dishonesty, Plagiarism Included, in the Digital Age: a literature review"*, Ercegovac and Richardson (2004) sought to provide, among other things a summary of definitions of academic dishonesty including plagiarism, to assist educators in developing academic honesty policies, policies and programmes for their students. What their review of the literature seems to indicate is that some researchers appear to use the words plagiarism and academic dishonesty interchangeably, while others define academic dishonesty as including, but not limited to, plagiarism (Ercegovac & Richardson, 2004; Burke, 1997; Kibler, 1992).

2.2.3 Plagiarism as a breach of academic integrity

Articles written in the last decade appear once again to show a change in the focus of studies on plagiarism. Titles such are *"A Ten-Step Model for Academic Integrity: A Positive Approach for Business Schools"* by Caldwell (2009) suggest plagiarism is currently viewed as a breach of academic integrity rather than being cheating, academic misconduct or academic dishonesty. However, not all titles in articles in the field support this view and in fact, the word 'plagiarism' still appears often in the titles of journal articles.

In addition, conferences provide another illustration where this dichotomy of whether or not a change in the notion of plagiarism might be effected by a change in terminology is evident. For example, a conference in Australia concerned with issues of plagiarism, is named the "Asia-Pacific Conference on Educational Integrity (APCEI)" whereas a similar conference in the UK is called the "Plagiarism Conference", yet the papers presented at both these conferences are similar.

This change in terminology is also evident in the naming of some policies and procedures relating to plagiarism. For example, in some institutions of higher learning, the relevant document which addresses plagiarism issues is known as the "Academic Integrity Policy" whereas in other institutions it is called the "Plagiarism Policy" and in some cases the "Academic Misconduct Rules".

However, a change in titles of documents might not necessarily mean a change in how plagiarism is perceived and responded to. Swagerman (2008) asks us to review our notions of plagiarism and how we define it. He supports researchers such as Price (2002) who calls for redefining the term plagiarism from a punitive notion to an educative one, Briggs (2003) who seeks to reframe the notion of plagiarism from one of immorality to one of inability on the part of the student, and Howard (2001) who asks us to abandon the term altogether and

replace it with words like fraud or insufficient citation which appear “less culturally burdened” (Swagerman, 2008, p.701).

In her 2002 study of institutional policies on plagiarism, Price expressed concern that plagiarism was presented as a fixed and absolute notion and in a punitive tone in institutional documents, despite the call for change to a more educative approach or definition. She analysed policies from two institutions in the US and found that even the terms “author” and “one’s own work” were troublesome and could be interpreted differently by different audiences. Policies, she states, are “context dependent” and “what we understand to be plagiarism is highly context dependent” (Price, 2002, p. 105). Although she offers no template for a policy, she suggests that policies should be kept brief but flexible enough to be applied to diverse situations in diverse contexts and also that students should be told that lecturers’ ideas of plagiarism are continuously revised according to the changing contexts.

2.2.4 Summary of notions of plagiarism in the literature

The above section aimed to present changes in the notion of plagiarism as evidenced in the literature. The titles used in research articles suggest a moving away from viewing plagiarism as cheating to seeing it as one part of academic misconduct and then framing plagiarism in a less negative way by seeing it as a breach of academic integrity. However, the same cannot be said for articles on the issue where the term ‘plagiarism’ appears more often than the term ‘academic integrity’. Not only are the titles of articles changing, but some conferences and institutional policies and procedures relating to plagiarism also appear to be changing their titles.

It may be argued that this apparent change in how plagiarism is understood in the literature may affect how plagiarism is now perceived by institutions of higher learning, their academic staff and students. Where once plagiarism was seen as synonymous with cheating, it could now be seen as a breach of academic integrity. Or, in other words, the notion of plagiarism as punitive or immoral is replaced by the notion of plagiarism as a lack of education or ability. Whether a change in terminology has affected a change in perceptions and understandings of plagiarism is unclear; however it is hoped that the findings from this study may shed light on the matter.

The complex notion of plagiarism is further discussed in the following sections which review studies on how plagiarism is defined and responded to by key stakeholders, namely institutions, academic staff and students. However, before such studies are presented, the next section analyses reported experiences of student plagiarism which led to serious

consequences for all stakeholders involved and which show that plagiarism is not only a complex issue but an issue that has serious ramifications for all involved if it is not dealt with appropriately.

2.3 Academic misconduct by students

2.3.1 Types of student cheating behaviours

The type of cheating behaviours in which students partake in have changed over the years. Sterngold (2004) notes that there is now more 'cut and paste' plagiarism from the internet. This means students are taking whole sentences, paragraphs and even essays that they may find on the internet and copying them into their own assignments and submitting these to their lecturers. Whether the internet itself is the main reason for an increase in plagiarism by students remains unproven by studies. What can be said is that there is an increasing perception that there is more plagiarism and that the internet plays some part in this. One might credit the internet with a shift in emphasis where studies focus on plagiarism itself rather than cheating or other academic dishonesty behaviours.

Sterngold (2004) supports this idea of an increase in this type of 'cut and paste' plagiarism by referring to McCabe's studies where the latter found in an earlier study (McCabe and Trevino, 1997) that 10% of students 'cut and pasted' from the internet but that this number had increased to 41% in only a few years (McCabe, Trevino & Butterfield, 2001a).

Thus, plagiarism as 'cutting and pasting' from the internet appears to be the most common type of cheating behaviour among university students today and although students appear unclear about what constitutes plagiarism itself, it may be that they can agree on defining cutting and pasting from the internet as a type of plagiarism.

2.3.2 Profile of the 'cheating student'

The many studies on academic misconduct by students have led to a development of a profile of the type of student who might be more susceptible to cheating, plagiarism or other dishonest behaviour. For example, studies in the later part of the last century have suggested that the type of student who plagiarises is more likely to be male and come from large campuses (McCabe & Trevino, 1997), to be in science and technology-based units (Newstead, Franklin-Stokes & Armstead, 1996) and to be in their first year of an undergraduate degree. However, the study by Levi and Rakovski, (2006) suggests that it is business students who are most likely to engage in cheating behaviours and that these students are not always first year undergraduates, but postgraduates. Later studies argue that

these indicators are not definitive of the type of student who will engage in academic dishonesty (East, 2010; Park, 2003).

McCabe and his researchers have indicated that contextual factors, rather than the individual factors listed in the previous paragraph, are greater determinants of cheating behaviour (McCabe, Trevino & Butterfield, 2001a). Results from a study undertaken by Donald McCabe and Linda Trevino of approximately 1800 students from nine institutions pointed to these contextual factors as being more influential, with peer behaviour being the significant variable (McCabe, Trevino & Butterfield, 2001a). These factors included peer-cheating behaviour (if students' peers were cheating, then the students themselves would be more likely to follow suit); peer-disapproval behaviour (if peers did not disapprove of the cheating, then students were more likely to cheat) and perceived severity of penalties (if students believed that penalties for cheating were not severe, or that academic staff would not enforce them, then they were more likely to cheat).

2.3.3 Reasons students give for their cheating behaviours

There are a number of reasons suggested by the literature as to why students might cheat or plagiarise. The seminal works of McCabe and his colleagues, which span over more than a decade and involve thousands of students from hundreds of institutions, are prevalent in this area and most other studies support their findings. The reasons why students might engage in cheating and other dishonest behaviours include:

i) feeling pressure to obtain high grades (McCabe, Trevino & Butterfield, 1999; McCabe & Trevino, 1997);

ii) feeling pressure from their peers to engage in cheating as they felt others did it without getting caught and that this made it acceptable for them to do likewise (McCabe & Trevino, 1993);

iii) feeling pressure from parents to do well in their studies (McCabe, Trevino & Butterfield, 1999);

iv) the need to excel (McCabe, Trevino & Butterfield, 1999);

v) laziness (McCabe, Trevino & Butterfield, 1999);

vi) lacking personal integrity and pride in their work (McCabe, Trevino & Butterfield,1999);

vi) lacking the time to complete tasks (Harris, 2001, McCabe 1993);

vii) not fully understanding what constitutes plagiarism (Carroll & Appleton 2005; Roig 2001);

viii) poorly written assignment tasks (Harris 2001);

ix) receiving no instruction on how to avoid plagiarism (Roig 2001) and

ix) the beliefs they have of how lecturers and institutions would respond to incidences of cheating. For example, students would be more likely to engage in academic dishonest behaviours where they felt that lecturers ignored issues of academic dishonesty or responded in an individual way which was less severe than that outlined in policy; where they felt educators did not care about them as students; or where they felt disconnected from the learning process itself (McCabe & Trevino,1997).

Christopher Simon and his colleagues, in their study of students' perceptions of academic dishonesty, support this last point that if students do not feel they "fit" into the organisational culture of universities, then they will more likely not to follow the rules and procedures set out by their institution but act individualistically (Simon, Carr, McCullough, Morgan, Oleson & Ressel, 2004). Using quantitative methods of analysis, the researchers sought students' views on academic honesty and the climate of their campus. They found that:

> *When a student does not see the institution or fellow-students as being connected to the learning process, it is likely that they will adopt an attitude of indifference and lose (or fail to develop) a sense of commitment to the maintenance of a campus climate favouring academic honesty. [I]f a student feels that the process is fair and that faculty are committed to the educational process, they are more likely to become active participants in the maintenance of academic integrity through the reporting of academic integrity the reporting of academic dishonesty* (Simon et al., 2004, pp.82-83).

The attitudes of students have been found to be an important predictor of how they will behave. In particular, if students view cheating as acceptable, then they are more likely to cheat than those who view it unfavourably (Alleyne & Phillips, 2011; Whitley, 1998). In his study of cheating among college students, Whitley (1998) formulated a model which suggested that students from different, non-Western cultures viewed academic dishonesty as acceptable, but other studies do not support this idea (Alleyne & Phillips, 2011).

Utilising social-norm or behaviour-norm theory, Hard, Conway and Moran (2006) looked at both the beliefs of college students and faculty on the frequency of academic misconduct. Using the analogy of studies on peer alcohol use where students' over-estimation of the frequency of their peers' drinking led them to drink more, the researchers hypothesised that if students believed that fellow students frequently engaged in academic misconduct, then they would be more likely to engage in such behaviour (Hard, Conway & Moran, 2006). This view was also supported by Whitley's (1998) research.

However, studies on the academic misconduct behaviour of students have produced inconsistent and divergent results. For example, the study by Wajda-Johnston, Handal, Brawer and Fabricatore (2001) found students underestimate peer misconduct. On the other hand, the study by Koljatic and Silva (2002) found that students overestimate academic misconduct behaviour by their peers. This latter study is supported by the findings of Hard, Conway and Moran (2006) which suggest that the implications "may well lead to higher levels of misconduct that would occur if students had beliefs that are more accurate" (Hard, Conway and Moran, 2006, p.1077). A question which the study by Hard and his colleagues did not answer was why students' beliefs about the frequency of academic misconduct were found to be higher in most studies than faculty's beliefs. They conclude by suggesting further research is needed in this area of student and faculty beliefs about misconduct in general, not just about its frequency.

A similar study conducted in the UK by Jones, Reid and Bartlett (2005), which formed part of a larger research project with a particular emphasis on plagiarism, found that almost all students surveyed believed that their lecturers did not know where to look for plagiarised material online. This attitude caused concern for the researchers whose solution to internet-based plagiarism and other cases of plagiarism was for institutions to assist lecturers in identifying suspected cases of plagiarism and for these institutions to take cheating seriously by having clear policies and penalties for any transgressions. Thus, the onus is placed on institutions rather than the individual lecturer or the student.

The research by Brimble and Stevenson-Clarke (2006) is an example of work which examined students' perceptions of academic misconduct. This large scale project involving universities from around the world, investigated a large number of staff and students, including those from four Australian institutions. The study looked at not only perceptions, but also responses of both academic staff and students to incidences of academic dishonesty in their institutions. In regards to student perceptions of academic misconduct, surveys were

admininstered to over 700 students. The surveys contained 20 scenarios of cheating behaviours ranging from plagiarism to cheating in exams and students were asked to rate each scenario according to their perceptions of the scenario's seriousness, their perceptions of what might be the appropriate penalties for each, and whether they thought such behaviours were prevalent among students at their university. Surprisingly, the results from surveying the students found that 72% of them admitted engaging in academically dishonest behaviours, a finding that is supported by the studies of McCabe and his colleagues (McCabe, Trevino & Butterfield, 1999). However, 92% of these students said that they had never been caught for such behaviour. As the researchers state, "These statistics indicate an alarming disparity between the incidence of academic dishonesty and its detection and highlight the ineffectiveness of systems currently in place to manage academic dishonesty" (Brimble & Stevenson-Clarke, 2006, p.48). The researchers suggest that such high numbers may mean that there is a culture of acceptance by students of academic misconduct and that institutions are unable to control academic dishonesty nor meet standards of quality as required by the Australian Government which affects their funding (Brimble & Stevenson-Clarke, 2006).

In conclusion, this section has shown that there have been a number of studies which have examined students and why they engage in academically dishonest behaviours. Some studies appear to suggest that students do not have a clear definition of what constitutes plagiarism, despite efforts by institutions and academic staff to inform and educate them.

Even if students say they understand what academic dishonesty involves, they might still engage in cheating behaviours but justify such action by using different excuses based on one of many philosophical views the student may invoke.

Before exploring the understandings of plagiarism by students and academic staff and also the notions of plagiarism as found in the academic integrity documents of universities, the next section of this chapter will outline the exposure, by the media, of academic dishonesty in some public Australian universities to help set the context of this current research. The reasons for presenting such reports is to illustrate that plagiarism is an issue with not only affects those who work and study in institutions of higher learning, but is also of interest to society in general.

2.4 Exposure of plagiarism in Australian universities

2.4.1 The Curtin University experience

The case at Curtin University in the state of Western Australia illustrates the consequences of inconsistent decision-making on the issue of plagiarism. In 2001 an international Masters' student from a non-English speaking background (NESB) from the School of Media and Information was found by her tutor to have plagiarised her final thesis. At the time, Curtin did not have any academic integrity policy and procedures for responding to this issue. The response from the university was to dismiss both the sessional tutor and the lecturer in the unit who was a full-time academic staff member. These academics were dismissed despite the school fighting to have them reinstated. Not satisfied with the response from the university, the matter accelerated because the student and tutor went to the local media who in turn accused the institution of going on a 'witch hunt'. The papers wrote "After a dramatic week for Curtin's School of Media and Information, some staff are claiming tensions over management issues and the handling of the plagiarism affair have created an unhealthy working environment" (The Australian, 2001, April 4, in Pyvis 2002). The department, in which the school was placed, then decided to self-manage by appointing their own committee. The student was allowed to graduate but the damage had already been done with a whole department feeling that they had lost their academic freedom to make decisions.

In his article "Plagiarism and Managerialism" Pyvis (2002, p.36) states:

> *As the …saga ought to illustrate, the conviction that Australian universities can best progress by jettisoning collegial decision-making practices, treating their professional staff as employees to be ordered about, and entrusting individual 'bosses' with massive authority is bewildering, bizarre and potentially very dangerous. In pursuing 'world class' status […] respect professional expertise and allow that collegial decision-making is a logical approach to dealing with complex issues and ethical concerns.*

This quote and the tone of his article suggests that the school appeared to have adopted the "us versus them" mentality where management and administrative staff failed to allow academic staff any say in the matter.

Professor Deane Terrell was appointed to head an enquiry into the incident and he supported the collegial decision-making adopted by the school. His recommendations included the development of University-wide guidelines to ensure all academic staff understood their role in responding to incidences of academic dishonesty, a review of the university's Academic

Misconduct Policy, and guidance and assistance for academic staff on assessment options. After the incident, a new policy and procedures were implemented and additional written guidelines for both staff and students were developed (Pyvis, 2002).

2.4.2 The University of Newcastle experience

In the early 2000s a number of incidences involving allegations of plagiarism occurred at the University of Newcastle in the state of New South Wales which resulted in an investigation by the St. James Ethics Centre. One incident involved an allegation that a number of postgraduate business students from the university's offshore campus in Malaysia had plagiarised their assignments. The assignments were initially awarded a zero grade by one lecturer but the assignments were subsequently examined by another, more senior, lecturer who passed all the assignments without any resubmission by the students (Rivers, 2004). One of the reasons for this discrepancy was confusion in relation to the wording and application of the university's policy and although the academic staff members were not found to have engaged in any misconduct themselves, their actions were unsatisfactory and training and education was recommended.

The findings of the report indicated that there were difficulties in defining plagiarism as the definition provided by the university was not clear, that policies and procedures were not necessarily fair and consistent and that staff, students and the wider community were not consulted and so could not make any contribution to the discussion on plagiarism (Rivers, 2004). In fact, the university had a number of policies and procedures at different schools or faculties "expressed in multiple ways in multiple documents" (Rivers, 2004, p.10) which were not always consistent with each other.

2.4.3 The Victorian universities' experiences

In 2011, the Victorian Ombudsman prepared a report after investigating complaints made by international students from universities in the state of Victoria. The Ombudsman investigated four universities and interviewed 88 academic staff from these institutions and his investigation included how these institutions managed risks in the area of plagiarism. He concluded that, among other things, plagiarism was still an issue at these universities, despite students being informed and warned about it. In relation to academic staff, he found that "For some academics there are disincentives in reporting plagiarism because of the time it takes to investigate and respond to appeals. Others are uncertain about whether students are cheating deliberately or just lack the understanding or skills to avoid the problem" (Taylor, 2011, p. 50). His recommendations included reminding staff of their obligations under academic integrity policies and procedures. He also felt that the universities investigated were

"somewhat defensive" (Taylor, 2011, p.51) to this issue of academic misconduct and plagiarism in particular.

In conclusion, it seems that institutions are aware of the increasing problem of academic misconduct and have put in place clear policies and procedures to deal with plagiarism. The institutions were galvanised into taking action to address the issue though public scrutiny and pressure to ensure such incidences would not occur again. The stories highlight that policies and procedures alone are not sufficient to deal with the issue of student plagiarism. There needs to be a combined effort to address the problem by institutions, academia and students alike. In particular, academics need to be involved in the decision-making process with management as they have a vested interest to maintain academic standards and academic freedom and they are the ones who need to respond to incidences of plagiarism in the first instance. At the time of writing this thesis, there was little research as to whether or not institutions are engaging their academic staff in the development of academic integrity policy.

2.4.4 Media stance on student plagiarism and dishonesty

Newspapers appear to take some interest in the amount of plagiarism in Australian universities which may reflect the fact that plagiarism is an issue which affects not only students and staff in institutions of higher learning but also the general public. Although newspapers tend to sensationalise matters and report content which will sell papers, the actual reporting of and providing statistics about incidences of plagiarism for public consumption may to some extent affect the reputation of institutions, the integrity of their awards and those who work and study there.

Sutherland-Smith (2010) argues that the media report plagiarism in similar, legalistic terms found in academic integrity policies and procedures, viewing plagiarism as something that should be dealt with by way of retribution or punishment. Additionally, some newspapers perceive the issue of plagiarism as a battle that is being lost by universities. This is reflected in newspaper articles and their titles such as *"Campus in the grip of student dishonesty"* (McKinnon, 2006, September 8) and *"Thousands caught cheating"* (Hiatt, 2011, April 30).

The article in The West Australian newspaper entitled *"Campus in the grip of student dishonesty"* suggests that plagiarism is "an epidemic which universities are struggling to control" (McKinnon, 2006, September 8). Through the Freedom of Information Act, newspapers are able to obtain information on the number of cases of student plagiarism in Australian institutions of higher learning and the above article in particular presented data

obtained from the four universities in this study. In interviewing Deputy Vice Chancellors (DVCs) and other staff in an administrative role at these universities, the article paints a grim picture of plagiarism, suggesting that it is something that is difficult to extinguish.

An article published a few years later, using data obtained from the same institutions, suggested a marked increase in the number of students who were cheating and plagiarising. A Pro Vice Chancellor (PVC) at one of these institutions suggested that the numbers were "unremarkable" and that "efforts to educate students about academic integrity were working" (Hiatt, 2001, April 30).

In both these articles, no academic staff were interviewed, thus there was no discussion of how they might perceive and respond to student plagiarism at their institution. In contrast, in an article titled *"Half of students admit cheating at UK uni: poll"* academic staff at a UK university were interviewed and their reaction was quite different, with one lecturer stating "It's a depressing set of statistics" ("Half of students admit cheating at UK uni: poll", 2008).

2.4.5 Summary of experiences of student plagiarism

The experience of universities of student plagiarism and the negative exposure of such plagiarism by the media suggests that it is an issue of growing concern and that measures are required to stem its supposed spread. This is where institutional practices as found in institutional statutes, rules, regulations, policies and procedures may assist in maintaining documents, the reputation of the institutions and the validity of their awards and degrees. Policies and procedures relating to academic integrity in particular contain definitions of student plagiarism and steps which must be taken by academic staff once plagiarism is found.

2.5 Understandings of plagiarism

2.5.1 Plagiarism as defined by institutions in their academic integrity policies and procedures

"Administrative and bureaucratic practices and institutions constrain in that we are required to do things according to pre-established rules in particular ways, at particular times, and in particular places" (Iedema,1997, p. 80).

The above quote from Rick Iedema's chapter "*The language of administration: organising human activity in formal institutions"*, in a book edited by Christie and Martin, suggests that institutional policies and procedures are constraining and restrictive and, as the author states, written in the imperative language of "shouldness". Additionally, these texts are "unnecessarily formal, imposing or verbose" (1997, p.95) and in the case of policies and procedures written in a commanding tone, using legal terminology.

Policies and procedures on academic integrity are usually written not by academic staff but by university administrators who "operate in a different discourse community than do students and faculty, and ...has substantially different conceptions of how its documents are produced and owned...(and) operate under different conceptions of intellectual property" (Havilland & Mullin, 2008, p.130).

Not only is the language in policies and procedures restrictive and written by administrative staff, but most of these documents are worded in fairly legalistic terms. In Australia and the UK, academic integrity policies are relatively new, having been in place since the early 2000s. Prior to this time, some institutions had no policies at all for dealing with academic misconduct, including plagiarism, while others had different policies among different departments. Despite their currency, the language of the documents is still steeped in legalese and formality (Sutherland-Smith, 2010; Grigg, 2009; East, 2009; Fishman, 2009) and the wording of such policies and procedures appears to perceive plagiarism as a crime which must be punished.

In her article *"Retribution, deterrence and reform: the dilemmas of plagiarism management in universities"* Wendy Sutherland-Smith (2010) suggests that the discourse of academic integrity policies and procedures is still based on the language of law, and in particular, criminal law. Using critical discourse analysis based on Fairclough's critical discourse analysis theory, she analysed 18 plagiarism policies from internationally ranked, high quality reputable universities, six each from Australia, the UK and US and found that all these

institutions used legal discourse to frame plagiarism. She found that all institutions agreed that plagiarism was an offence with most using words such as "misconduct", "dishonesty" and "theft" with "offender" the most often used word to describe someone who has plagiarised (Sutherland-Smith, 2010, p.8). This is despite the institution's description of plagiarism varying from short definitions to those that gave examples of sources of plagiarism. She also found that the processes for responding to plagiarism were worded in highly formal language with words such as "penalties", "sanctions", "committee hearings" and actions such as "dismiss the allegation" and "prosecution of the case". "The use of this legal and formal vocabulary in plagiarism policies "is indicative of legal processes and designed to convey a sense of the full weight of university process" (Sutherland-Smith, 2010, p.8).

Sutherland-Smith (2010) argues that universities still have some way to go towards "sustainable reform in plagiarism management" (p.5). She, like others, feels that although universities constantly review and update their academic integrity policies and procedures to keep up with changing demands in higher education, "most of these strategies do not move beyond detection, deterrence and provision of information about plagiarism" (Sutherland-Smith, 2010, p.12).

Other studies on academic integrity policies and procedures have examined the wording of these documents and, in particular, the actual words used in their definitions of plagiarism. In her internationally conducted survey, the UK researcher Diane Pecorari (2001) investigated the academic integrity policies of 54 universities in the US, UK and Australia (14 of which were from Australia) with the aim of establishing whether these institutions shared a common definition of plagiarism. She found that most institutions gave much information and detailed examples of what did and did not constitute plagiarism. Terms such as "copying or paraphrasing without attribution, insufficient paraphrasing, purchasing a paper…verbatim repetition without acknowledgement…borrowing without acknowledging the source…" (Pecorari, 2001, p.237) were common among the definitions of plagiarism. On the other hand, most documents did not explain why plagiarism was wrong with only eleven documents indicating that plagiarism was "detrimental to the standards of integrity and honesty" (Pecorari, 2001, p.238) but went no further.

Importantly, most of the definitions studied by Pecorari (2001) viewed plagiarism as an academic crime and the policies contained legal terms such as "offence" "fraudulent" "theft" while procedures for dealing with suspected cases of plagiarism used words such as

"allegation" "hearing" "acquittal" (Pecorari, 2001, p.239) supporting the findings of other studies by other researchers (Sutherland-Smith, 2010, Fishman, 2009, Grigg, 2009). She warned that "the penalties reported show that once a question of plagiarism passes from the hands of the teacher to the academic judicial system, the outcome is more likely to be judgment and punishment than additional help with citation skills" (Pecorari, 2001, p.240).

Through analysis of documents including the university statutes, rules and regulations concerning academic integrity, she also discovered that most institutions (except 20%) had university-wide policies with definitions of plagiarism. Of these, 53 of the definitions of plagiarism were consistent with each other and included some or all of the following six elements; (1) "material that has been (2) taken from (3) some source by (4) someone (5) without acknowledgement and (6) with/without intention to deceive" (Pecorari, 2001, p.235).

Teddi Fishman (2009) highlights the problems with defining plagiarism in legal terms. She suggests that words such as 'theft', 'fraud' or 'copyright infringement' do not easily fit into the concept of plagiarism by students as one can plagiarise without depriving someone of their property (theft), without them suffering any financial loss (fraud), or when using a work without acknowledgement (copyright infringement). She provides a definition of plagiarism containing five elements; namely, plagiarism is when someone:

> *(1)Uses words, ideas, or work products (2) attributable to another identifiable person or source (3) without attributing the work to the source from which it was obtained (4)in a situation in which there is a legitimate expectation of original authorship (5) in order to obtain some benefit, credit or gain which need not be monetary* (Fishman, 2009, p.5).

The fifth element in Fishman's (2009) proposed definition, the element of benefit or gain from submitting an assignment, is not contained in Pecorari's (2001) definition. This element may be crucial in a comprehensive definition of plagiarism as it captures a reason of why plagiarism is wrong in that students gain a benefit from doing the work. If there is no gain or benefit or marks awarded for an assignment then it may be questioned as to why academic staff should respond to an incident of alleged plagiarism by students.

Similar to the definition provided by Pecorari (2001), Fishman's (2009) does not include the element of intent. It was on the issue of intent that the former found disagreement among the institutions she studied, with almost half the institutions' documents defining plagiarism as always being intentional. Defining plagiarism this way, and in a way which always views it

as intentional, does not help students, especially international students or students from a non-English speaking background (NESB) who may inadvertently plagiarise. The universities' response to plagiarism then becomes an 'all or nothing' approach, either ignoring the incident of plagiarism or punishing it all the way, without the option of giving students the support and assistance they need in terms academic writing and referencing skills (Pecorari, 2001).

Another researcher to study definitions of plagiarism is Gabrielle Grigg. She examined the characteristics in the language used in the academic integrity policies from 39 Australian institutions of higher learning, arguing that the wording of policies is important as it "permeate(s) the functioning of the institution in its actions regarding plagiarism: the definition has the potential to have a great deal of influence across the institution" (Grigg, 2009, p.3). Using an approach known as Appraisal, used in the field of Systemic Functional Linguistics, she found that most definitions of plagiarism in these policies contain a significant amount of judgment and that "many of these judgments appraise plagiarism and plagiarising students negatively in terms of truthfulness and ethics" (Grigg, 2009, p.4). An example of how the definition was framed in negative terms was in the phrase 'without appropriate acknowledgment' a common definition of plagiarism found in most academic integrity policies. She concludes by saying that most definitions of plagiarism are framed in negative terms, perceiving plagiarism as a problem for universities and seeing the student as being the rule-breaker.

The studies by Sutherland-Smith (2010), Pecorari (2001), Fishman (2009) and Grigg (2009) are useful in presenting the current definitions of plagiarism contained in academic integrity policies and procedures in modern institutions of higher learning. What they indicate is that there is no common understanding of the term plagiarism. Lisa Maruca (2003) in her paper *"Plagiarism and Its (Disciplinary) Discontents: Towards an interdisciplinary theory and pedagogy"* hints at the problem with defining the complex issue of plagiarism, suggesting the definitions provided by institutions are not working and that there is a need for a more pragmatic approach to understanding the term involving all stakeholders. She states:

> *…recognising the complexity of plagiarism as academic struggle puts the interdisciplinarian wishing to formulate new policy in the almost impossible position of negotiating…among multiple stakeholders with seemingly irreconcilable differences"* (Maruca, 2003, p.88).

In 2005, an audit was undertaken of academic integrity and plagiarism issues in Australia and New Zealand by the Australian Council on Open, Distance and E-learning (ACODE) led by Dr Rob Phillips. That audit included the four universities in this study. The project, known as the "Academic Integrity Project", involved open-ended telephone interviews with staff in ACODE member institutions and an analysis of documents and policies dealing with academic integrity at these institutions (Phillips, 2005).

The researchers on the ACODE project found that the institutions differed in where their plagiarism policy was located. For some it was a separate policy while for others the issue of plagiarism was found under an assessment policy. For others, plagiarism was treated as academic misconduct under rules and regulations, higher order documents. In addition, some institutions supplemented their policies with codes of practices or lists of principles (Phillips, 2005).

In addition to the differences in the formatting that academic integrity policies took in either the separation of policy from its procedures or incorporating matters related to plagiarism issues in rules or regulations, the ACODE project found that there appeared to be inconsistencies between how policy defines plagiarism and how procedures deal with the issue. The example given in the study is that most policies, especially the newer policies, define plagiarism in more positive terms as academic integrity but do not go any further than this. "[T]hese Academic Integrity policies provide little detail in the positive statement about academic integrity, and then go into lots of detail about discipline and penalties. While there is a positive 'spin' on the policy, the underlying meaning is unchanged" (Phillips, 2005, P-2).

In addition, the ACODE project suggested that policies and procedures tended to focus on the student and what happens to them when they plagiarise, yet most did not address staff issues on "the need for ethical behaviour [of staff] and appropriate assessment" (Phillips, 2005, P-2).

Another important finding from the ACODE project relates to the question of "disconnect", a theme or concept that may be important in this study as the literature suggests that academic staff will not respond to incidences of student plagiarism if they feel disconnected, or are fearful of, or do not trust their institution's academic integrity policy and procedures (Nadelson, 2007; Simon, Carr, McCullough, Morgan, Oleson & Ressel, 2003). The researchers from the ACODE project state:

> *there seems to be a **disconnect** at many institutions between plagiarism detection at the chalkface and disciplinary procedures at the faculty/divisional/university level. That is, while individual lecturers are required to identify and address suspected plagiarism, and disciplinary procedures are [in] place for serious breaches, there is a lack of information about what staff should do, and a lack of consistency about what staff actually do* (Phillips, 2005, P-3).

As the ACODE project primarily involved an audit of university policies and procedures, it does not provide solutions to this disconnect, although it hints that implementing further education and professional training sessions for staff might help reduce inconsistencies in the application of disciplinary procedures for plagiarism.

A review of the literature has not revealed any large-scale studies which have investigated in detail the questions of inconsistency and disconnection between the responses of academic staff to incidences of student plagiarism and the responses expected by them as set out in their institution's academic integrity policy and procedures. However, in the last few years there have been some government funded projects in Australia which have examined the academic integrity policies and procedures of some Australian universities in detail and suggested what elements might be included in the best of these documents.

These Australian-led studies shed some light on the current state of research and suggest that the trend might now be more on the analysis of institutional documents themselves rather than on the academic staff, students and institutions faced with issues of academic integrity.

As part of an Australian Learning and Teaching Council (ALTC) project, a group of researchers examined the academic integrity policies and procedures of 39 Australian universities which were publicly available online. In relation to the terminology used in these university documents, the researchers found that 51% of the policies used the words "misconduct" and "plagiarism" while only 41% of the policies contained the term "academic integrity" (Bretag, Mahmud, Wallace, Walker, James, Green, East, McGowan & Partridge, 2011).

Another important finding was that the best policies contained the five core elements of Access, Approach, Responsibility, Detail and Support (Bretag et al., 2011). An exemplary policy should be easy to locate (Access), educative rather than punitive as evidenced in its introduction or preamble (Approach), clearly outline the responsibilities of the institution, staff and students (Responsibility), give detailed information on the breaches, processes and

outcomes (Detail) and have practical systems in place, such as the education of students and the training of staff, to ensure the policy is implemented effectively (Support). The researchers present their elements in "Solomon's Seal Knot' as shown in Figure 2.1 to show that they need to connect to sustain a "culture of academic integrity" (Bretag et al., 2011, p.25).

Figure 2.1: Solomon's seal knot (Bretag et al., 2011, p.25)

Following on the above ALTC initiative, the researchers outline a framework to assist institutions in designing and implementing exemplary academic integrity policies. The framework includes the following recommendations: regularly review policies and procedures, make use of "academic integrity champions" (students, staff and institutions), educate all stakeholders on the importance of academic integrity education, engage students, have people within faculties to make strong decisions and keep centralised records of academic integrity data to assist in evaluation and improvement of academic integrity policies and procedures (*Exemplary Academic Integrity Project*, 2014).

These studies appear to suggest that definitions of plagiarism as found in academic integrity policies and procedures are limited and that the documents where the notion of plagiarism is found are worded in restrictive and legalistic terms. In addition, the studies show that such policies and procedures are primarily written by those who have no connection with students and with what is happening in the classroom. Havilland and Mullin (2008) appear to support this position and expand it further to websites when they say "even websites that shift from warning students not to "steal" or "cheat" to exhorting them to "maintain academic integrity" remain stuck in generic, rule-based language" (Havilland & Mullin, 2008, p.12). In their book, *"Who Owns this Text? Plagiarism, Authorship and Disciplinary Cultures"* the researchers looked at what academics considered was their own work, their "intellectual property" and how this would affect their understandings of and teaching of concepts like plagiarism. The editors wondered if different disciplines defined ownership differently and

thus how they would respond to student plagiarism would differ (Havilland & Mullin, 2008, p.4). Their study found that the institution's definitions of plagiarism did not support the different disciplinary learning goals enough (Haviland & Mullin, 2008, p.14), suggesting that different disciplines have different notions of ownership and thus what needs to be cited and that definitions of plagiarism found in institutional academic integrity policies and procedures may not adequately cover these diverse notions. The researchers suggest that "...we strongly urge a reconsideration of our terminology, our generalizations and our teaching practices, for they are and will continue to be inadequate without this careful and continual re-examination" (Havilland & Mullin, 2008, p.19).

An important, large scale study which examined the impact of plagiarism policies in higher education across Europe was the IPPEAE project conducted by Foltýnek and Glendinning (2015). The study spanned three years (2010-2013) and involved an exploration of the policies and procedures for responding to student plagiarism in 27 European universities. One of the research questions of the study asked if such policies and procedures existed and, if so, were they effective. The results showed that there were vast differences among the European countries, especially between the western European countries which had a longer tradition of academic integrity and democracy and eastern Eurpoean countries. The findings showed that some institutions did not have any policies and procedures for responding to student plagiarism. For those universities that did have such policies, their effectiveness depended on whether academics had any training (Foltýnek & Glendinning, 2015).

In summary, it appears from the literature that most policies and procedures in institutions of higher learning which relate to plagiarism by students are written by administrative staff with little or no input from academic staff who respond to issues of student plagiarism. The documents are framed in the language of the law, especially criminal law, and describe plagiarism as an "offence" and students as "offenders" who need to be punished. Responses to plagiarism are worded in terms of "penalties" or punishment to be applied rather than educational measures.

In addition, although it seems that most institutions have in place policies and procedures for responding to student plagiarism, the effectiveness of these documents depends on whether the processes are applied fairly and correctly. Responses of academic staff to student plagiarism are elaborated further in section 2.9.2.

This section has also illustrated different models outlining the key elements of plagiarism proposed by researchers like Pecorari (2001) and Fishman (2009) whose definitions of

plagiarism contain six and five elements respectively. The elements that constitute good academic integrity policies and procedures have also been discussed. What remains to be understood is how academic staff, who have little or no input in the formulation of these academic integrity policies and procedures, interpret plagiarism by students.

2.5.2 Plagiarism as understood by academic staff

"A cautionary word to faculty: to define student cheating is to put a transitory label on a process that is as ever changing and evolutionary as education itself" (Hulsart & McCarthy, 2011, p.93).

Whilst academic integrity policies and procedures relating to student plagiarism might appear to contain clear definitions of what constitutes plagiarism, how academic staff perceive plagiarism is less clear.

Studies conducted in the later part of the 20th century and early 2000s have examined lecturers' perceptions of academic misconduct, academic dishonesty and plagiarism and suggest that academic staff have diverse views on plagiarism, some viewing it as a moral or ethical problem while others perceive it as a falling of educational standards. In a review of the literature, most early studies on academic integrity investigated the perceptions of both academic staff and students to the notion of plagiarism. Fewer studies have explored the understandings of academic staff of the notion and in particular, how they define the term.

The literature remains divided on whether or not academic staff perceive plagiarism in a similar and consistent way. Seirup-Pincus and Schmelkin (2003) sought to uncover the underlying perceptions of faculty members at a private US university. Research conducted prior to their study suggested that faculty do not define and classify cheating behaviours consistently (Franklyn-Stokes & Newstead, 1995; Graham, Monday, O'Brien & Steffan, 1994). Using a survey instrument, faculty were asked to rate 28 cheating behaviours against factors such as the seriousness of the behaviour, the intent of the student, the ease of detection, and the type of response required. Faculty responses were analysed using multi-dimensional analysis, an analytical technique where a number of related concepts are grouped and presented in a spatial distribution. The results suggested that respondents perceived academic dishonesty on a "continuum of seriousness...which for faculty is related to the clarity of the definition" (Sierup-Pincus & Schmelkin, 2003, p.206). In other words, if clear definitions of academic dishonesty or cheating behaviours were provided by their institution in academic integrity policies and procedures, faculty could easily understand and respond accordingly. The problem was when there were "ambiguous behaviours" whose definitions

were missing from the documents, this might lead to penalties being applied in an inconsistent way. The researchers state the following in respect to institutional policies and procedures:

> *In addition, most policies do not take into account the fact that faculty's views about these issues are complex and that they see the behavior on various continua. When considering whether the response should be educational or punitive, there is usually no consideration of where the particular behavior "falls" on the continuum of seriousness. This lack of flexibility in many policies may be a contributing factor in understanding why faculty may be reluctant to report a student who they believe is involved in a less serious incident* (Sierup-Pincus & Schmelkin, 2003, p.208).

In addition, the researchers found no difference in the perceptions faculty had of cheating behaviours due to their gender, whether they were full-time or part-time, what their position or rank was in the university nor which subjects they taught or department they were from (Sierup-Pincus & Schmelkin, 2003). This is a noteworthy finding for this study as it suggests that perceptions of academic staff to academic misconduct do not differ based on their gender, position or faculty, and that academic staff will respond in fairly consistent ways to issues of academic misconduct, including plagiarism regardless of these factors. Considering this fact, it is not within the scope of this study to differentiate the perceptions and responses to plagiarism of academic staff based on such factors as their gender, position, age or faculty in which they work. This matter would be best explored in future studies in the area of academic integrity.

In contrast to Sierup-Pincus and Schmelkin (2003) who found that academic staff perceive plagiarism depending on the seriousness of the incident, Burke (1997) found that most faculty did not perceive plagiarism to be a serious problem at all. However, later studies reject Burke's findings, suggesting that lecturers do perceive plagiarism as a serious issue, that they also perceive plagiarism to be on the increase, and that the issue causes concern, and even outrage in some academic staff (East, 2009). The effect of the seriousness of the incident of plagiarism to academic staff responses is one factor that will be explored in this study.

Academic staff perceive student plagiarism in a number of ways. They might perceive it as immoral and unethical, as a decline in social and educational standards, as a serious issue, as a clash of culture or generation is an increasing problem or as a problem caused by students themselves which, in a way, shifts the blame for incidences of plagiarism away from

themselves and towards their students. Plagiarism for the latter is a problem for the university and for the students.

Studies which have examined these various perceptions of plagiarism by academic staff suggest there are inconsistencies in how academic staff understand plagiarism (Sutherland-Smith, 2008; Sierup-Pincus & Schmelkin, 2003). If there is no agreement on a clear and comprehensive definition of plagiarism, or a shared understanding of what plagiarism means, then it may be difficult for academic staff to respond to student plagiarism in ways which are consistent with others and which are also aligned to how institutions expect them to respond.

The literature reveals the following perceptions of student plagiarism by academic staff:

Plagiarism as immoral and unethical: Some lecturers see plagiarism as being immoral and unethical and the result of a decline in social and moral values, thus taking the high moral ground stance (Joyce, 2007). East (2010) argues it is limiting to view plagiarism as a moral issue, and if one does so, then one will react emotionally and one's judgment will be affected. "If plagiarism is seen as a breach of convention, students who plagiarise are likely to be seen as in need of an education; …when plagiarism is viewed as a moral problem…trangressors are vulnerable to being judged and penalised from an emotional reaction" (East, 2010, p.81). Rather she suggests that there are other factors involved which should be considered such as cultural and environmental differences.

Plagiarism as a crime: For other academic staff, plagiarism is seen a crime which must be punished (Sutherland-Smith, 2010; Leask, 2006). It is suggested that such language is a reflection of the language used in academic integrity policies and procedures where legal terminology, particularly from the field of criminal law, is employed.

Plagiarism as a decline in social and educational standards: Gourlay and Deane (2012) showed, through focus group data, that academic staff tended to perceive plagiarism as being the result of falling educational standards, and thus the responsibility lay with the students to remedy the situation. These perceptions of plagiarism by academic staff were in stark contrast to the perceptions of support staff who viewed plagiarism as something for which all parties were responsible without "a preoccupation with blame or cause" (Gourlay & Deane 2012, p.26).

Plagiarism as a clash of values, culture or generation: Gross (2011) suggests that students and academic staff perceive plagiarism differently due to a clash of values between the two parties. She argues that lecturers and students perceive plagiarism and other forms of

academic misconduct differently due to different value orientations. That is, academic staff who are mainly baby boomers (born before 1965) have more traditional values than their students who are mainly from Generation X (born 1965-1982) and Generation Y (born after 1982) who have more emergent, post-modern values.

Gross (2011) presents ten differences in tabular format and with reference to plagiarism, the traditional view/value orientation is that ownership of property belongs to the individual and it needs attribution of credit if one is using it whereas the emerging view/value orientation is that "anything published, especially over the Internet, (is) regarded as community property not requiring attribution of credit" (Gross, 2011, p.436).This difference in views might help explain why lecturers take plagiarism more seriously than students as, in their eyes, more property/texts are available to be plagiarised. The seminal work of Blum (2009) supports this finding of a shift from viewing property or text as private to perceiving it as a communal one, thus impacting on the concept of plagiarism itself (Blum, 2009). Gross (2011) concludes her argument by suggesting that lecturers need to change how they interact with their students in line with changing societal values. This does not mean having to bend to students' demands but making efforts to accommodate and engage actively with students.

Plagiarism as difficult to define: Havilland and Mullin (2008) found that academics uniformly define plagiarism in the negative, for example, as "a direct copying *without* citation". Their study shows that the flexibility and complexity of information sharing makes defining plagiarism and intellectual property in academia even more difficult. The researchers suggest that academics rely on the definitions in their policies and procedures because they are unable to articulate what they actually nor explain the concept to their students (Havilland and Mullin, 2008, p.158). Leask (2006) and Clerehan and Johnson (2003) agree that academics are not really sure of how to define plagiarism except that the metaphors chosen to define plagiarism include metaphors of fighting battles and campaigns.

Plagiarism as a problem caused solely by students: Some studies, especially early ones, appear to support the notion that academic staff place the blame for plagiarising solely on the students (Burke, 1997). East (2010) states that some appear "outraged" that students continue to behave in a dishonest way. "These attitudes (of staff) could be based on perceptions that plagiarism is evidence of ignorance of norms, or poor competence in handling conventions, or a transgression of standards, or low levels of morality" (East, 2010, p.70).

This placement of blame solely on students is reflected in studies which focus on students themselves. For example, McCabe's work on why students cheat suggest that there is a

particular profile of the dishonest student, a notion supported by other research that indicates that it is primarily young, male students in their first years of higher education studies that are more susceptible to cheating behaviours (McCabe & Trevino, 1996; Newstead, Franklin-Stokes & Armstead, 1996; McCabe, 1993). Others suggest that international or NESB students are more likely to plagiarise due to, among other things, the conventions of writing in English and differences in cultural notions of plagiarism (Stappenbelt, Rowles & May, 2009; Deckert, 1993; McCabe, 1993).

Plagiarism as an increasing problem: Research suggests that plagiarism is on the increase, with academic staff feeling that it has increased because of the increase in the use of technology, particularly the internet (Joyce, 2007; Anderson, Johnson & Saha, 2002).

A report commissioned by the Australian Commonwealth Department of Education, Science and Training (now known as the Department of Education and Training or DET) suggests that almost all academics viewed plagiarism as an important issue with 54% believing that plagiarism by students had increased (Anderson, Johnson & Saha, 2002). However, other works suggest that incidences of plagiarism have not increased over time but have been made more apparent though better detection using text-matching software such as Turnitin and greater admission by students that they do plagiarise (Joyce, 2007).

Some academic staff believe it is the differences in the cultures of students and their attitudes towards "textual borrowings", together with the increase in numbers of international students and the ethnic diversity now found in Australian universities that have increased plagiarism (Joyce, 2007).

While the above discussion investigates how academic staff perceive the notion of plagiarism in general terms, the following describes in more detail the understandings or definitions of plagiarism provided by academic staff.

Plagiarism as cheating: Flint, Clegg and Macdonald (2006) explored how academic staff perceive plagiarism and found that some staff view plagiarism as the same as cheating, some view it as a subset of cheating while others see plagiarism as entirely separate from cheating.

Plagiarism as copying: Bennett, Behrendt and Boothby (2011) suggest that some common ground is emerging in how academic staff define plagiarism. Utilising an electronic survey of 158 instructors in American institutions of higher learning, they found that most respondents shared a common understanding of what types of behaviours constituted plagiarism saying essentially that it was copying that constituted the main element of plagiarism. Where

instructors differed was in whether or not they perceived recycling of assignments by students as plagiarism.

Plagiarism as a lack of academic writing conventions: Some works suggest that first year undergraduate students or international or NESB students plagiarise because they have not yet been taught the conventions of academic writing at a university level (Johnson & Clerehan, 2006; McGowan, 2005b; Dawson, 2004). Ursula McGowan (2005b) states that new students need to first focus on developing a "culture of enquiry" rather than be taught rules and strategies to avoid plagiarism.

In summary, the perceptions of academic staff of plagiarism remain varied. Some view it as immoral and a crime while others view it as a clash of values or intergenerational and cultural issue. Some academics view plagiarism as a problem for which the student is solely to blame and thus responsible for, while others perceive it to be a lack of academic writing conventions on the part of the student and something which can be remedied through education. All these examples appear to contain elements of emotions, suggesting that it might be difficult to understand the notion of plagiarism in purely objective ways or to separate any responses to student plagiarism from a knee-jerk, behavioural or emotional reaction by the academic staff who are confronted with the issue.

The research which has been reviewed above suggests that most academic staff are in agreement of the seriousness of plagiarism in today's institutions of higher learning, viewing plagiarism as an ever increasing problem. In addition, the literature suggests that academic staff define plagiarism mainly in terms of copying and fewer academic staff see it as being difficult to define, suggesting a more common or consistent understanding of the term. Where there is a lack of consensus is in the grey areas such as, for example, whether recycling of a student's assignment by another student could be construed as plagiarism by both the student who recycled the work and the student who provided the same.

2.5.3 Plagiarism as understood by students

The following section examines the literature on how plagiarism is perceived by university students. The reason why this literature is presented is not only to show the amount of research on students' understandings and perceptions of plagiarism, but also to contrast these with research where the emphasis was on academic staff. The review suggests that the number of studies on why students plagiarise and cheat outweighs those on lecturers' perceptions and responses to academic misconduct This imbalance needs to be addressed for a more comprehensive review of the complex issue of plagiarism to be undertaken.

The focus on student behaviour rather than faculty behaviour is evident from the the early work by Drake (1941). This means that there is a wealth of research on students' perceptions of academic misconduct or academic dishonesty compared with that on academic staff perceptions.

It is generally thought that students' views of plagiarism are different from the views held by academic staff. Studies suggest that although students, especially students from an international or culturally diverse background, view plagiarism as wrong or bad (Buranen & Roy, 1999; Deckert,1993), they cannot distinguish between different forms of cheating behaviours, considering plagiarism to be the same as cheating and copying and being unable to explain the difference between plagiarism and what could be seen as other legitimate forms of imitation (Buranen & Roy 1999).

Despite knowing that plagiarism is not acceptable, students have a difficult time understanding what constitutes plagiarism. Students seem to understand what constitutes cheating (e.g. cheating in examinations) but are confused as to what plagiarism involves and need to be told what it is (East, 2010). Universities 'tell' students it is wrong through their academic integrity policies, honour codes or codes of conduct but that does not necessarily translate into students understanding what exactly the term means. Some studies suggest that NESB or international students, are more likely not to understand or be able to detect plagiarism in their work (Deckert, 1993). In comparison, Stappenbelt, Rowles and May (2009) found that despite NESB students claiming that they were culturally ignorant of plagiarism, they did in fact possess some understanding and skills to avoid plagiarism but that the definition of plagiarism was unclear for them. In addition, the students did not fully comprehend the consequences of their acts of plagiarism.

In a study of over 2,500 students from UK and Australian universities, Sutton and her colleagues found there were differences in the understandings of plagiarism by the students depending on where they had come from, which faculty they were studying in and what was their level of study (Sutton, Taylor & Johnston, 2012). The researchers proposed a three-factor model to explain these students' perceptions of plagiarism. The factors as perceived in order of severity were 'dishonest behaviours', 'poor referencing' 'group work' with students viewing dishonest behaviours, such as copying another's assignment, as serious and group work as the least serious. The authors suggest that students be provided with workable definitions of plagiarism applicable to their discipline rather than definitions of plagiarism subscribed at an institutional level (Sutton, Taylor & Johnston, 2012). This study, and others

like it, illustrate that it is important for institutions and their academic staff to define and reinforce the notion of academic integrity and behaving with honesty and integrity, in other words to inform students, at every stage of a student's university life and not just in their first year of undergraduate studies (Suton, Taylor & Johnston, 2012; Green, Williams & van Kessel, 2005; McGowan, 2005).

2.6 Differences in the understandings of plagiarism

2.6.1 Academic staff versus institutional understandings of plagiarism

Research on the relationship between academic staff and their university's academic integrity policy and procedures is scarce, probably because these documents, in their current forms, have only recently been introduced into many institutions of higher learning. This is despite many Australian universities having published what can be described as misconduct policies such the early 1980s and using them as early as the 1960s (Bretag, et al., 2011; Sutherland-Smith, 2010, 2008; Grigg, 2009) . Using semi-structured interviews, Flint and his researchers investigated how plagiarism was perceived by 26 academic staff from a UK university and also whether there were differences in the definitions of plagiarism given by staff and those definitions found in institutional policies (Flint, Clegg & Macdonald, 2006). Any differences, they stated, "have important implications for the implementation of policy and the way in which discourse about plagiarism is framed" (Flint, Clegg & Macdonald, 2006, p.147).

The researchers found considerable differences in the way staff defined student plagiarism and felt that these differences were based on the individual academic staff member and their own understanding of what constitutes plagiarism rather than any differences based on the discipline area of these staff. They also found that the most common view held by academic staff was to understand that cheating and plagiarism were distinct types of academic misconduct but that in some instances they had characteristics in common (Flint, Clegg & Macdonald, 2006). The problem with these individual, personal definitions of plagiarism was that the definitions were not always consistent with the definition found in the policy of the institution. In particular, the researchers state:

> *...the fact that staff have internalized definitions of plagiarism means that all instances of plagiarism are mediated by these before consulting policy. This may result in inconsistent application of policy and differential treatment of students...For instance, our data revealed some staff felt that, because their experience of the formal process did not match their personal understandings of how instances of plagiarism should be dealt with, they would be more inclined to deal with plagiarism at an*

> *individual and informal level. Furthermore, many staff place considerable value on academic professional judgement and may perceive centralized policy to pose a threat to this* (Flint, Clegg & Macdonald, 2006, p.152).

This finding is in line with the findings from the ACODE project (Phillips, 2005) where the issues of inconsistency and disconnect were raised.

2.6.2 Academic staff versus students' understandings of plagiarism

This section introduces literature that has examined both students' and academic staff perceptions of plagiarism. This research illustrates the point that students and academic staff have diverse understandings of the concept of academic integrity and of plagiarism in particular.

It appears from the literature that academic staff feel more strongly about the issue of plagiarism and view it more seriously than do their students because the former have more of a vested interest in the topic (Brimble & Stevenson-Clarke, 2006; Hard, Conway & Moran, 2006; Sutherland-Smith, 2005). "Lecturers who have acquiesced to standards and worked hard to achieve their positions, have an interest in ensuring those standards are not undermined" (East, 2010, p.71). They view plagiarism as a breach of trust while students might view obtaining a degree and successfully graduating from university as more important (East, 2010; Evans, 2006). Lecturers seem to take the issue of plagiarism personally whereas, as previous studies on student behaviours show, students may justify their cheating behaviours without feeling anxiety or remorse (Granitz & Loewy, 2007).

There are a number of reasons suggested by these investigations which might explain this difference in perceptions. How students perceive plagiarism may simply be explained by the fact that they have differing and sometimes opposing interests and purposes for engaging in university studies. Students wish to succeed and move on from university whereas academic staff might see their purpose as one of educating, developing the student as a whole, morally as well as academically (East, 2009). Or as Gross (2011) suggests, the difference in perceptions could be due to a clash of traditional (staff) values versus emergent (student) values.

In her work on internet plagiarism and international students' writing, Sutherland-Smith (2005) surveyed students who had English as a second language and their teachers at an Australian university to discover how each perceived using the internet for assignments. The students were found to perceive the internet as a free zone which could be used whereas their instructors "upheld traditional Romantic notions of the author as sole creator of a

work...which produces a conflict between the formal requirements of university regulations to enforce traditional notions of authorship and the reality of their classroom experience*"* (Sutherland-Smith, 2005, p. 25).

2.6.3 Academic staff versus other academic staff understandings of plagiarism

A review of the literature has revealed few studies that have examined the issue of whether or not academic staff from diverse backgrounds and from different faculties or departments within an institution have varied understandings of the term plagiarism. What has been found from the research is that there may be varied responses to student plagiarism depending on the academic staff member who is faced with the issue (Zwagerman, 2008; Brimble & Stevenson-Clarke, 2006; Flint, Clegg & Macdonald, 2006; Sutherland-Smith, 2005; Keith-Speigel et al., 1998; Burke, 1997; Ritter, 1993). Studies on the responses of academic staff to student plagiarism are examined later in this thesis in section 2.9.2.

2.7 Perceptions of academic integrity policies and procedures

2.7.1 Academic staff perceptions of academic integrity policies and procedures

There has been very little research on the perceptions of academic staff of their institution's academic integrity policy and procedures, due in part to the fact that academic integrity policies and procedures, in their current forms, are fairly recent introductions. One of the aims of this study is to add to the literature in this area.

A study examining academic staff attitudes towards institutional policies on academic integrity is that of Crisp (2007). The Australian researcher administered an online survey to academic staff at an Australian university to investigate their attitudes towards their institutional plagiarism policy and the use of resources, such as the text-matching service, Turnitin, which were available to assist staff. The responses from 39 academic staff suggest that, although they do not have a shared or common understanding of plagiarism, most perceived their institution's policies and practices for responding to incidences of student plagiarism to be adequate. Although the findings from Crisp's (2007) study cannot be generalised due to the limited number of respondents surveyed and the fact that only one institution was involved, they do suggest that further research in the area of academic integrity policies and procedures, including the perceptions and understandings of academic staff understandings of these institutional documents, is required.

2.7.2 Students perceptions of academic integrity policies and procedures

Although the focus of this study is on academic staff and their perceptions of student plagiarism and of their university's academic integrity policy and procedures, a review of the literature would not be complete without reference to work on students' perceptions of plagiarism and academic integrity policies and procedures. This section will present the literature on students' perceptions of plagiarism for two reasons. Firstly, presenting such works provide a fuller picture of the current state of research in the area of academic integrity and help to identify the gaps in certain areas. Secondly, the findings from projects which focus on students and their perceptions of

academic integrity may offer useful information to help address the research questions in this study. For example, if the research discussed in this chapter suggests that academic staff and students have diverse understandings of plagiarism, it may also be the case that the perceptions of academic staff may also differ from the perceptions of their institutions as set out in academic integrity policies and procedures. These diverse perceptions may lead to responses to student plagiarism which do not align with the response expected by the university where the academic staff member is employed.

Although much of the research, originating mainly from the US, has examined students' perceptions of cheating and plagiarism, fewer works have explored their perceptions of academic integrity policies and procedures relating to plagiarism, probably due to the fact that these institutional documents are fairly new additions to instutions of higher learning. A recent project that has explored this area was undertaken by Australian researchers Gullifer and Tyson (2013). In their study, over 3000 students at an Australian university were surveyed to investigate how they understood their institution's policy on academic integrity. The researchers found that students were confused about what behaviours constituted plagiarism and more importantly that only half of the students surveyed indicated that they had read their institution's academic integrity policy despite it being a requirement of their study at this institution and despite being referred to the policy by their instructors. The researchers suggest that their findings show a lack of engagement and also that the institution needs to do more than just provide students with access to a policy (Gullifer & Tyson, 2013).

2.8 Institutional approaches or responses to student plagiarism

The previous sections in this chapter have discussed how plagiarism is viewed differently by different stakeholders. In particular, it appears that academic staff and students view plagiarism in diverse ways, with academic staff taking a more serious view of the issue. Additionally, the language used by institutions in their academic integrity policies suggest that the act of plagiarism is something akin to a crime which must be punished; a view which may be in conflict with the views held by academic staff at those institutions. Considering these diverse perceptions of plagiarism, this section examines the approaches and responses to plagiarism by both institutions of higher learning and academic staff. It will be suggested that responses to student plagiarism by academic staff are not always aligned to the responses expected of them by their institutions.

The section outlines how institutions approach the issue of student plagiarism through the use of academic integrity policies, honour codes or pedagogy. It concludes by suggesting that approaches from assessment studies might be a useful alternative or an approach which could be used in addition to other solutions found in the literature.

The importance of a university-wide approach to academic integrity is recommended by many researchers as crucial to ensuring consistency in the management of cases of suspected plagiarism (Macdonald & Carroll, 2006; Brimble & Stevenson-Clarke, 2006; Carroll, 2005; Park, 2004; Park, 2003). Adotping an institution-wide approach may help address the issue of inconsistency in the penalties awarded by different academic staff in different faculties, schools or departments as found in studies conducted by Volpe, Davidson and Bell (2008), Carroll and Appleton (2005) and Sierup-Pincus and Schmelkin (2003). Inconsistencies in penalties awarded are due in part to the diverse understandings of what constitutes plagiarism that are held by these academics and their departments (Volpe, Davidson & Bell, 2008; Carroll & Appleton, 2005; Sierup-Pincus & Schmelkin, 2003). These inconsistencies became a problem for institutions, particularly those in Australia and the UK, given the increasing scrutiny from the media, governments and the public. This outside pressure may be one of the reasons why some instittuions have reconsidered their approaches to academic integrity and introduced policies and procedures which would more adequately respond to the issue of student plagiarism.

2.8.1 Use of academic integrity policies and procedures

Compared with the use of honour codes in US colleges, the introduction of academic integrity policies and procedures is common among both Australian and UK institutions of higher learning to address the issue of student plagiarism. The universities in this study have in place policies and procedures for responding to plagiarism and these are, in their current forms, either recent (introduced after 2000) or have recently been amended.

At the start of the 21st century, UK institutions were beginning to review their policies and researcher Jude Carroll was commissioned to prepare a report in response to concerns that UK universities and colleges were not properly addressing the growing issue of increasing plagiarism (Carroll, 2005). In her briefing paper to the UK universities, the researcher stated that "a holistic, coordinated, institution-wide approach is a more effective way to proceed, as any single focus interventions…will not have a significant effect on the complex issue of student plagiarism" (Carroll, 2005, p.2) and called for a top-down approach with administrators developing clear policies and easy to follow procedures for dealing with plagiarism in consultation with other parties such as lecturers (Carroll, 2005). In addition to reviewing policies, she called for more strategies to deter plagiarism, such as better assessment design, better education of students and staff rather than putting large amounts of energy into "catch and punish approaches (which are) self-defeating in that they absorb huge amounts of staff time" (Carroll 2005, p.6).

Others who call for an institution-wide approach to responding to student plagiarism include Park (2004) who outlined a framework used by his institution that looked at preventing plagiarism through detection and education and which provided clear penalties for dealing with the issue. Park developed this framework after reviewing the literature on plagiarism (mainly US studies) and the researcher noted in an earlier paper that "Whether or not the problem (of plagiarism) has reached epidemic proportions…plagiarism is a major challenge to institutional aspirations of academic integrity and a major threat to institutional quality assurance and enhancement and it needs to be taken into account when developing and implementing institutional learning, teaching and assessment strategies"(Park, 2003, p.483).

Thus, while it had been suggested in some earlier research that it was the students' responsibility not to plagiarise (Keith-Speigel et al., 1998; Burke, 1997), researchers like Carroll (2005) and Park (2003) now posit that it is the responsibility of institutions to address the issue of student plagiarism through implementing good policies and procedures.

Studies conducted in the last decade suggest that not only are institution-wide policies and procedures important and necessary, but also that the promotion and implementation of these policies and procedures by universities needs to be consistent or aligned (East, 2009; Carroll & Appelton, 2005; Park, 2003). There is no point in having a good policy if it is not properly implemented and supported by other good practices or if there are variations in the practices and penalties given by academic staff to students who plagiarise. "(T)he problem of plagiarism and cheating [is] to be dealt with as a whole of institution concern, where teaching practices, texts, advice, assessments and penalty processes are aligned" (East, 2009, p.A-39).

There is also no point in having good policy and procedures if students are not made aware of these. By having students read a statement about plagiarism, UK researchers Brown and Howell (2001) found that students perceived plagiarism more seriously than before. This has positive implications as it brings the perception of the seriousness of plagiarism closer to the perceptions that academic staff have of plagiarism as a serious issue as discussed in studies by Hard, Conway and Moran (2006), Brimble and Stevenson-Clarke (2006) and Sutherland-Smith (2005).

The wording of current academic integrity policies and procedures may be problematic to its implementation. As Sutherland-Smith (2010) states, these documents are worded in legal terminology which can be restrictive and that the solution might not be more of the same but a focus on "developing plagiarism management strategies grounded in the web of ethical relationships that constitute the living organism of the university" (Sutherland-Smith, 2010, p.13) would be a better, more responsible starting point. Changing the wording of policy documents might lead to a more consistent understanding of the issue of plagiarism by academic staff and their students and subsequently, a more consistent approach to responding to plagiarism by institutions and their academic staff.

2.8.2 Use of honour codes

Honour (or 'honor') codes are typically found in US institutions of higher learning, rather than universities in the UK or Australia. They are a code of conduct which students agree to follow. It is a bottom up rather than a top down approach as students are responsible for maintaining academic standards and values. The system offers a holistic approach to issues such as academic misconduct, much like institution-wide academic policies and procedures but the latter are more top-down and are worded in legalistic, penalising terms. The honour code system, "with its emphasis on the promotion of good scholarly practice, provides a strong counterbalance to the commonly used negative rhetoric of 'academic misconduct' and

'academic cheating'" (Yakovchuk, Badge & Scott, 2011, p.139). Most honour code systems are found in US institutions, and there is little evidence of any systems outside of the US. Thus, research in this area is limited to the US, although some recent exploratory research is starting to emerge from the UK (e.g. Yakovchuk, Badge & Scott, 2011).

Yakovchuk, Badge and Scott (2011) sought to explore the perceptions of staff and students to the use of honour codes in the UK as an alternative system to the current one of institutional academic integrity policies and procedures. Using focus groups, the researchers found although staff and students were open to and supportive of the new system, they thought it would be impractical to implement and difficult to transfer into the UK context for a number of reasons. Firstly, students in this pilot study appeared reluctant or not confident to carry out the responsibilities required in an honour code system; secondly, respondents did not support the moral element found in honour codes; and, finally, they thought the tone and style of the honour codes were "too American" (Yakovchuk, Badge & Scott, 2011, p.139).

Most of the studies on honour codes have been conducted in the US by Donald McCabe and his team of researchers with over 6000 students in 30 US colleges and universities (McCabe & Trevino, 1993). They found that the rate of cheating by students at institutions which had honour codes was less that those without honour code systems. In addition, McCabe had hypothesised in his earlier research that lecturers from institutions with honour codes were more likely to follow their institution's procedure and report incidences of student plagiarism than were institutions without honour codes and this hypothesis was supported in his later study (McCabe, Butterfield & Trevino, 2003). He also suggested that institutions with honour codes were more likely to have fewer incidences of student plagiarism than those without honour codes (McCabe, Butterfield & Trevino, 2003). Additional projects by McCabe suggest that institutions that have modified honour codes have fewer incidences of cheating than those without honour codes but these levels are not as low as those found in institutions which have traditional honour codes (McCabe, Trevino & Butterfield, 2002).

In comparison, Edward White (in Buranen & Roy, 1999, p. 209) states "I am not convinced that an honor system in itself deters plagiarism…But such institutions do take their moral responsibility seriously as a community and they do see dishonesty as affecting the entire community". In support of this notion that honour codes in themselves do little to reduce academic misconduct, studies conducted in the last decade found that honour codes had no effect on cheating behaviour and that strict policies were more a deterrent than peer disapproval (Yakovchuk, Badge & Scott, 2011; Vandehey, Diekhoff & LeBeff, 2007).

However, the project by Vandehey and his colleagues examined an honour code which had only been in place for two years as compared to McCabe's studies of colleges and institutions where honour codes had been in place for decades.

With regards to the relationship between academics and honour code systems, McCabe and his colleagues found that lecturers teaching in institutions with honour code systems had more positive attitudes towards their institution's academic integrity policies and procedures and were therefore more likely to follow the system of responding to student misconduct rather than take personal action against the students who were found to be cheating (McCabe, Butterfield & Trevino, 2003).

Whatever the case may be, it appears that having an honour code is insufficient, in itself, to deter or reduce academic misconduct. Like academic integrity policies and procedures, the honour codes need to be understood by students and academic staff and be followed and enforced by those academic staff in institutions of higher learning.

Little research can be found on the use of honour codes in Australian universities possibly because few, if any, universities in Australia have implemented such a system. There appears to be some interest in the use of honour codes in the Australian context. A study by Nayak and his colleagues sought to explore the perceptions of students of the efficacy of student-led approaches, such as student societies, and the use of honour codes to engage students in academic integrity (Nayak, Richards, Saddiqui, Homewood, White, Mcguigan, Taylor, & Sureshkumar, 2013). They found that only a small percentage of students would welcome this 'bottom-up' approach suggesting that the concept is too foreign to Australian students who are more used to a top-down approach to educational issues. The reason for this may be that students have not experienced an honour code system and might not understand how they function. It is the researcher's view that, like our UK counterparts, it would not be easy to implement their use in Australian institutions of higher learning due to the 'American-ness' of these honour code systems and more importantly because students and academic staff in Australian universities may not have experienced the honour code system and how it works.

2.8.3 Use of pedagogy

To respond effectively to the issue of plagiarism, it is important to align policies, procedures and assessments (Sutherland-Smith, 2010; East, 2009; Grigg, 2009). Thus, appropriately designed assignment tasks are important. The use of pedagogy is one of the ways, but not the only approach, to respond to student plagiarism.

Researchers suggest that the best place to start educating is in the first year of undergraduate courses-making students aware of the university's stand on plagiarism, providing support in the form of writing classes and teaching students how to reference and cite sources (Dawson, 2004; Buranen & Roy, 1999). Some writers even see pedagogy as more important than other forms of responses to student plagiarism, recommending that universities spend more time and resources on teaching and learning strategies to help students avoid plagiarism, rather than on detection and punishment (Dawson, 2004).

The importance of focussing on, and teaching, academic writing skills rather than punishing students for plagiarism, is supported by many researchers (Swagerman, 2008; Havilland & Mullin, 2008). In his paper *"The Scarlet P: Plagiarism, Panopticism and the Rhetoric of Academic Integrity",* Swagerman (2008) supports the notion that faculty needs to focus on teaching writing and critical thinking skills rather than on catching the plagiarists. He goes a little further, saying that if students and academics are engaged in the learning process, then plagiarism does not have room to grow. "The reduction of plagiarism surrenders it's leading role in the teacher's engagement with students and their writing, and instead takes its proper place as the desirable by-product of a collaborative, trusting relationship" (Zwagerman, 2008, p. 702). He hints that lecturers should adapt to students' perspectives or have more empathy with students and engage more in the learning process. This is in line with Gross's (2011) view that lecturers should be more flexible in terms of understanding and engaging collaboratively with the student without "going native" by giving up all their autonomy and becoming like the student (Gross, 2011, p.439). Haviland and Mullin (2008, p.159) suggest that students need to be taught the "who, where, when, what, and ...why of disciplinary knowledge and knowledge building". In other words, students need to be not only taught about the rules governing academic integrity, but also need to be given strategies to help them avoid plagiarism so as to gain a better understanding of the concept of plagiarism which the authors suggest is not only complex but "constantly evolving". (Haviland & Mullin, 2008, p.159). The researchers state "[W]e can start by interrogating the definitions we presently use to name these concepts, terms that have shaped and limited our own understandings and thus the understandings that we transmit to students" (Haviland & Mullin, 2008, p.159). They call

for replacing the definition of plagiarism with one that has been developed through open discussion with all stakeholders, including faculty, administrators and students so that the notion of plagiarism becomes something which need not be feared. In addition, as a means of reducing plagiarism, the authors call for a 'community of practice', in other words, where all stakeholders work together to reduce incidences of academic misconduct through their developed, shared understanding of the term plagiarism.

Many authors have written books and handbooks which provide strategies to assist academics to detect and respond to plagiarism. In *"The Plagiarism Handbook: Strategies for preventing, detecting and dealing with plagiarism"*, Robert Harris (2001) stresses that faculty need firstly to educate themselves about plagiarism (understanding what it is, and why students plagiarise) and subsequently need to educate their students about the issue. He provides strategies for staff to use for detecting and dealing with plagiarism including instructions for approaching and questioning the student. In one chapter of his book, he also provides institutions with mechanisms for dealing with the issue (e.g. implement honour codes and/or develop a policy, have reporting systems, maintain consistent penalties, train and support staff and invest in software detection devices). In *"A Handbook for deterring plagiarism in higher education",* Jude Carroll gives similar suggestions, focussing more on course and assessment design as possible solutions to deter plagiarism. In addition, she devotes one chapter of her book to institutional policy and culture stressing that review of policy is necessary (Carroll, 2007). Lathrop and Foss's (2005) book *"Guiding Students from Cheating and Plagiarism to Honesty and Integrity: Strategies for Change"* is more a handbook for students with contributions from many researchers such as Donald McCabe.

In terms of assessment solutions to the problem of plagiarism, Liebler (2009) suggests oral examinations, rather than written work, from students to make it easier for faculty and to reduce costs as well. However, the researcher goes on to say that there is no 'one size fits all' solution to such a complex issue (Liebler, 2009) and fails to provide provide any evidence that the solution outlined would actually work.

In support of pedagogical solutions in the classroom, Hulsart and McCarthy (2011) suggest that faculty develop an "ethical classroom climate" (p.95) which can be done in two ways; firstly, lecturers need to show ethical behaviour and communicate clearly to their students what constitutes academic misconduct and secondly, they need to redesign their classroom environment and assessments to reduce the opportunities for students to cheat. The implementation of such a solution may prove onerous for academic staff faced with diverse

pressures, such as increased workloads, and who would need to be provided with additional training and education.

2.8.4 Use of technology

Some institutions of higher learning use technology for responding to incidences of student plagiarism. In particular, Turnitin, a text-matching software service developed in the US, is an example of a tool which is being implemented to assist academic staff in detecting cases of suspected plagiarism. It compares a student's work, submitted to the service, with the millions of web pages, books, journal articles and other student papers which it has in its database and generates a similarity report which highlights the amount of text which has been allegedly copied (*Turnitin.com*). The service only matches text and thus is not a plagiarism detector, per se. The decision on whether or not plagiarism has occurred in a student's work rests with the academic.

Turnitin and other similar text-matching software can also be seen as a means for institutions to protect themselves from "unwanted media scrutiny received by some high-profile cases" (Keuskamp & Sliuzas, 2007, p.A-92). It can also be seen as a way for institutions to manage academic integrity and safeguard their reputations and the integrity of the degrees they award. However, as with all technology, it must be implemented properly by universities for it to be effective. In other words, universities need to decide whether or not it will be mandatory to use Turnitin across all faculties, departments and units and academic staff need to be educated in how to use the software efficiently.

Its effectiveness also depends on the perceptions held by both students and academic staff as seen in the study by Atkinson and Yeoh (2008). Using a mixed methods approach, the researchers surveyed and interviewed students and academic staff from an Australian public university on their perceptions of a text-matching software known as EVE2, a precursor to Turnitin. They found that only 45% of students thought that the software was useful. There were similar findings for academic staff who thought the software useful only to some extent as further investigations were required on their part to determine if the plagiarism suspected had actually occurred (Atkinson & Yeoh, 2008). The academic staff were also concerned that using the software was time-consuming and involved extra work on their part (Atkinson & Yeoh, 2008).

A similar but small scale project by Sutherland-Smith and Carr (2005) found that while Turnitin had some benefits in helping academic staff detect text that was matched or copied, it was on its own not enough in helping students avoid plagiarism in their assignments. The

researchers call for training and education of both academics and students to "better understand and cope with the issue of plagiarism in academic writing" (Sutherland-Smith & Carr, 2005, p.101).

The use of Turnitin and similar text-matching software to help academic staff detect incidences of student plagiarism is subject to wide debate. Sceptics, such as Weber-Wulff (2014), consider such software neither effective nor helpful in detecting plagiarism. The complex debate over the use of technology to detect and respond to student plagiarism, although interesting, is beyond the scope of this study.

2.8.5 Approaches from studies on assessment

Studies on assessment practices may have some bearing on issues pertaining to plagiarism. Similary to studies outlined in this chapter that suggest that academic staff responses to student plagiarism are not uniform, research on the marking practices of academic staff also suggests that there are inconsistencies among and between markers (Sadler, 2011; Price, Carroll, O'Donovan & Rust, 2011; Bloxham, 2009). It may therefore be possible to apply approaches developed from the literature on assessment practices to academic integrity issues, and visa-versa.

There are a number of academic integrity studies which have highlighted the issue that inconsistency among academics in their responses to student plagiarism may lead to wide variations in penalties applied and affect the reputations of both academics and institutions (Sadler, 2011; Carroll & Appleton, 2005). When UK researchers, Jude Carroll and Jon Appleton, asked 1000 participants from four countries to select what they thought were the most appropriate responses to three cases of plagiarism from a list of possible actions, they found wide variations in the penalties given by the respondents (Carroll & Appleton, 2005). For example, in one case the actions ranged from receiving a zero for the paper, through to expulsion from the university. Factors which helped reduce these inconsistencies included reducing the number of decision makers and reducing the number of penalties available but the most important factor was "the growing community of practice which developed amongst ACOs (Academic Conduct Officers) through regular meetings and shared information about practice. This mirrors experience concerning assessment since consistency in both cases can only occur through discussion of the tacit and implicit knowledge which underpins decisions" (Carroll & Appleton, 2005, p.9).

If there is no agreement with the grades awarded to students by academics, institutions will also face tensions and dilemmas. In his paper *"Academic freedom, achievement standards*

and professional identity" Sadler (2011) suggests that tension exists between these two parties as they often have different purposes and responsibilities: the academic's objective is to have the right or freedom to award grades as they see fit and the university's objective is to maintain its reputation and regulate academic standards to ensure the value of its degrees to society in general. He argues that others might see these as opposing arguments that cannot be resolved, but suggests that the values of each party can converge only if academics see themselves not as individuals acting alone but as a community of professionals who make decisions collaboratively with each other and with their institution (Sadler, 2011). That is, by being a 'community of practice' in addressing issues of academic integrity, consistent responses to student plagiarism would be achieved and maintained. "If this line of thinking was adopted, the location and exercise of responsibility for collaboratively setting, controlling and assuring academic standards would reside primarily with the body of academics but be managed [by the institution] using many of the same processes used in other professions"(Sadler, 2011, p. 99). In other words, if academics collaborate with institutions and view plagiarism as part of academic achievement standards which they are all responsible for maintaining and for which they possess the academic freedom as a community of professionals to make decisions or respond to consistently, then there would be no "us versus them" mentality and no infringement of academic freedom which academic staff seek to maintain.

One of the effects of not co-operating or collaborating with each other or not being part of a 'community of practice' is that unfortunate results may occur which affect all stakeholders. The negative experiences of the Australian institutions, their academic staff and students which were outlined previously in this chapter may serve as examples of a lack of such consistency and alignment in responding to student plagiarism.

2.9 Responses to student plagiarism

It is crucial that institutions and their academic staff respond to student plagiarism in a consistent, uniform way to maintain the reputation of the institution and to protect the integrity of the degrees it awards. For academic staff and students, it is also important that student plagiarism is responded to in a consistent manner to allay any confusion and deter any appeals. Responding to plagiarism effectively means that all stakeholders follow institutional policies and procedures in a consistent manner. This section will outline how both institutions and their academic staff respond to breaches of academic integrity.

'Responses' in this thesis have been defined in a specific way. When one speaks of responses by institutions, it is not the penalties for plagiarism that are referred to, but the steps or process outlined by institutions in their academic integrity policies and procedures. Similarly for responses by academic staff, it is not the penalty for plagiarism that they believe should be imposed, but what initial steps they take when first encountering an incidence of plagiarism. In most cases in most institutions, the penalties for plagiarism are imposed not by the academic staff but by the university.

2.9.1 Institutional responses

"A balance needs to be struck between expediency on the one hand, and justice on the other" (Lindsay, 2010, p.31).

Since the emphasis of much research has been on students and their lecturers, there are few studies on how institutions respond to breaches of academic integrity through the use of academic integrity policies and procedures. In particular, there appears to be a lack of both quantitative and qualitative data on what sort of disciplinary action institutions take, through their policies and procedures, against students who plagiarise and why they take such action.

One study which is relevant in this area is that of the Australian researcher, Bruce Lindsay (2010) who sought information on the rates of disciplinary action taken by seven Australian public universities against their students. He found that there were a significant number of students investigated and sometimes sanctioned for misconduct which predominantly consisted of plagiarism. In addition, he discovered that most responses to these incidences of plagiarism were handled at the faculty or school level rather than at the higher institution-wide level and even in these lower levels the administrative effort required to respond to the cases was demanding and time consuming. Lindsay (2010) also expressed concern that there might be some inconsistency in the decision-making process between different schools or faculties in any given institution but did not have enough data to confirm this. His concern is

supported by the studies in section 2.9.2 that suggest that academic staff responses to issues of student plagiarism also appear to be inconsistent, varied and informal.

2.9.2 Academic staff responses to plagiarism

"Like a traffic cop on the moral high road, I was just doing my job" (Zwagerman, 2008, p.677).

Compared with:

"Others voiced their distress, one said, "it makes me sad"; another said, "it makes me so mad I want to scream'" (Roy, 1999,in Buranen & Roy, 1999, p.54).

The above quotes indicate how varied responses by academic staff to student plagiarism might be. In the first quote, the respondent appears to be like a police officer, adopting an all-out crusade to catch and punish the perpetrators which in response, Zwagerman (2008, p.667) argues, "is a far greater threat than is cheating to the integrity and the ideals of academic communities". Fortunately, Zwagerman (2008) also adds that this punitive-like response is from the minority of academic staff. The second quote suggests a more emotional plea from academic staff to incidences of student plagiarism where they feel sad or distressed about the whole situation. These examples of diverse attitudes might indicate that academic staff understand the notion of plagiarism in different ways and could indicate that student plagiarism along a continuum from blaming and punishing the student to blaming or punishing themselves.

The following paragraphs will outline studies showing how academic staff respond to incidences of student plagiarism. This will be followed by paragraphs showing research which gives reasons why academic staff might respond to student plagiarism in the way they do.

How academic staff respond to student plagiarism

Most research suggests that academic staff either fail to respond to, and thus ignore incidences of student plagiarism, or they respond in less formal ways to it (Pickard, 2006; Brimble & Stevenson-Clarke 2006; Flint, Clegg & Macdonald, 2006; Barrett & Cox, 2005; Sutherland-Smith, 2005; Keith-Speigel, Tabacknick, Whitley & Washburn, 1998; Burke, 1997; Ritter, 1993).

Some studies suggest that academic staff will ignore incidences of student plagiarism (Pickard, 2006; Barrett & Cox, 2005). UK researcher, Jill Pickard (2006), examined staff and

student attitudes towards plagiarism at a UK university through firstly a survey and then through semi-structured interviews. She found that the majority of academic staff said in the survey that they had detected plagiarism in their students but that not all of them dealt with these instances of plagiarism. In addition, the study by Barrett and Cox (2005) found that over 50% of academic staff ignore cheating.

Apart from ignoring the issue of academic misconduct, other studies suggest that if academic staff respond to incidences of student plagiarism, they tend not to follow the procedures outlined by their institution, preferring to deal with the issue their own way and on a case by case basis (Nadelson, 2007; Brimble & Stevenson-Clarke 2006; Flint, Clegg & Macdonald, 2006; Sutherland-Smith, 2005; Simon et al., 2003; Burke 1997; Ritter, 1993). For instance, if academic staff consider the incident of academic misconduct to be minor, they will deal with it informally. Conversely, if academic staff view the incident as major, they will deal with it through formal channels (Bermingham, Watson & Jones, 2009).

In her study of nearly 300 faculty members at a large, public US university, Nadelson (2007) reports that academic staff suspected unethical behaviour of their students but only about 40% of them actually responded to these incidences. After analysing the survey responses, she reached the following conclusions:

(i) Academic staff suspected an average of eight occurrences of academic misconduct a year: - the most cases were of students who accidentally or unintentionally plagiarised, followed by students who submitted papers which they had copied from the Internet (Nadelson, 2007, p.6); and

(ii) Academic staff dealt with just under half of these suspected cases of academic dishonesty and ignored the rest by either not proceeding through formal university channels for most cases or preferring to deal with unethical behaviour informally. The reasons for this was that some faculty felt uncomfortable or anxious about using the formal channels due to believing they lacked evidence to proceed, or due to feeling anxious about reporting cases to administrators. A small number also seemed to mistrust those in authority or administration (Nadelson, 2007, p.7). The main informal methods of intervention used by staff were to teach students how to reference and to use counselling.

The findings by Nadelson (2007) are consistent with those of Simon and his researchers who suggest that academic dishonesty is a larger-than-classroom problem concerning both faculty and administration (Simon et al., 2003). The researchers used organisational culture theory to

explain that universities are “loosely-coupled organisations shaped by administrators, faculty and students where each appears to operate independently of the others” (p.196) and the more disconnected each of these parties feels to the institution, the greater the likelihood that they would follow their own individual practices rather than those set out by the universities. This resonates with the findings they made in relation to students in their other work; namely that that if students feel that they are disconnected from the institution and from learning, they will be more likely to engage in academically dishonest behaviours (Simon et al., 2004).

Utilising a survey of nearly 500 faculty in a mid-sized US institution, with quite a high response rate of 47%, the researchers asked lecturers about their perceptions of academic dishonesty and their responses to it. They wanted to test two hypotheses: firstly, that faculty who are confident in the institution are more likely to use formal processes for dealing with academic dishonesty than those who are sceptical of such processes; and secondly, that female instructors are less likely than their male counterparts to use formal processes for dealing with suspected academic dishonesty. Both their hypotheses were proved with findings that if faculty members were trusting of their institution, then they were more likely to follow the formal institutional processes for dealing with academic dishonesty and they found that female staff members were less trusting than their male counterparts and that this “stark gender difference in terms of institutional confidence” was statistically significant (Simon et al., p.199). This difference they suggest is because most female faculty feel marginalised from the culture of the university - often they are junior faculty members who are outnumbered by more senior, usually male, counterparts. The research by Simon and his colleagues indicates that there are two ways the instructor can deal with academic dishonesty- either through the university’s formal channels or informally through classroom-based techniques (Simon et al., 2003). They suggest that academic staff will deal with the issue in a way where they feel more powerful and in most instances, this is when they are in the classroom and independent of outside influences (Simon et al., 2003, p.197).

While early studies such as Burke’s (1997) found that most lecturers would ignore incidences of student misconduct, later studies suggest that academic staff no longer ignore the issue and many report the matter to a higher authority in accordance with their institution’s policies and procedures (Bermingham, Watson & Jones, 2009; Kelley and Bonner, 2005).

In their large scale project involving 2,500 participants, Kelley and Bonner (2005) examined the perceptions of student academic dishonesty of both academic staff and administrators from various US colleges and universities to see if there were any differences between the

two groups. They found that academic staff were more likely to view student academic dishonesty as serious and pervasive. However, the researchers also found that despite this view, academic staff tended not to report actual incidences of misconduct to those in authority. The majority of academic staff would respond by failing the student in their assignment or awarding them a lower grade while reporting the matter to someone in authority was the second most frequent response. The authors state:

> *[Our findings] mirror previous studies that reported that instances of academic dishonesty rarely result in formal action against a student but instead are more often handled by the faculty member approaching the student involved on a one-on-one basis. However, our findings do not provide evidence that there is a greater likelihood that faculty members will formally report an incidence of academic dishonesty than they would have 10 years ago. It is interesting that faculty responses have not changed significantly in the 10 years since the McCabe study was completed* (Kelley & Bonner, 2005, p.46).

The researchers also studied the perceptions of academic staff of student dishonesty and found that the majority of respondents did not view student academic dishonesty as a pervasive problem, and posited that if they did view it as a serious issue, then they would they would change their behaviour and possibly respond in a more proactive way, reporting the matter to those in authority (Kelley & Bonner, 2005).

In contrast to the above works which suggest that academic staff ignore or respond in an informal way to incidences of student plagiarism, Havilland and Mullin (2008, p.157) found that when academics responded to plagiarism they "defaulted to their traditional nineteenth century Germanic roots-those nested in notions of expertise, disciplinarity and single authorship" which would result in academics responding to plagiarism in a severe way by punishing their students for lack of original thought. A review of the literature has failed to show other studies which support this idea. On the contrary, Zwagerman (2008) suggests that punitive responses to incidences of student plagiarism are from a minority of academic staff.

To sum up, the literature suggests that there are various ways that academic staff respond to incidences of student academic dishonesty, including student plagiarism. They will either not respond to the incident, respond in an informal way, or they will respond in a formal way as expected of them by their institution. The research also suggests that that the majority of academic staff would tend to ignore incidences of student plagiarism, especially if the incident was considered minor (Nadelson, 2007; Coalter, Lim & Wanorie, 2007; Pickard,

2006; Brimble & Stevenson-Clarke 2006; Flint, Clegg & Macdonald, 2006; Barrett & Cox, 2005; Sutherland-Smith, 2005; Simon et al., 2003; Keith-Speigel et al., 1998; Burke, 1997; Ritter, 1993). On the contrary, if academic staff viewed student academic dishonesty as a serious or pervasive problem and the incident as serious, then they would be more likely to report the incident to those in authority (Bermingham, Watson & Jones, 2009; Kelley & Bonner, 2005).

The section which follows elaborates on the reasons outlined in the literature which have been given by academic staff when they ignore or tend not to follow the procedures outlined by their institution for responding to incidences of student plagiarism.

Reasons for academic staff responses to student plagiarism

Studies suggest that many lecturers fail to respond to incidences of student academic misconduct and plagiarism for various reasons, including: not perceiving academic dishonesty as a serious problem, lack of time, lack of evidence, fear of retaliation by students, and reduced trust in institutional systems (Coalter, Lim & Wanorie, 2007; Nadelson, 2007; Simon et al., 2003; Keith-Spiegel et al., 1998; Burke, 1997; Ritter, 1993). These reasons will be elaborated in this section. It should be noted that there appears to be some difference in the reasons given in earlier studies compared with later ones. This difference in reasons may be seen as analogous to the changing notions of plagiarism discussed previously in this chapter.

From a review of the literature, a number of reasons are proposed, in the paragraphs which follow, to explain why academic staff respond to student plagiarism in the ways they do. In presenting these reasons, the five-factor model proposed by Keith-Spiegel and her colleagues is referred to. The factors were: "Emotionality, Denial, Fear, Guilt and Difficulty" (Keith-Speigel et al., 1998). However, there is not always a perfect fit between the reasons offered below and the factors in the model. Even the researchers themselves suggested that it is difficult to categorise academic staff responses to student plagiarism into neat groups as their reasons for responding may be varied (Keith-Speigel et al., 1998). This supports the idea that the perceptions and responses of academic staff to incidences of student plagiarism are as complex as the notion of plagiarism itself.

The reasons why academic staff respond to student plagiarism in the ways they do include:

<u>It is a problem for students not academics</u>: In earlier studies, academic staff felt that it was not their job to pursue cases of cheating as "...policing is not part of a professor's role" (Keith-Speigel et al., 1998, p.223). Rather, academic staff believed it was the student's

responsibility to behave honestly (Burke, 1997). The blame and responsibility was placed solely on the student with academic staff assuming a passive or disconnected role. This reason for inactivity was placed under the "Difficult" category in the five-factor model by Keith-Speigel and her researchers (Keith-Speigel et al., 1998). While earlier studies such as Burke's (1997) suggest that academic staff ignore incidences of student academic misconduct because they did not feel responsible for it, this reason is not referred to, and may have been rejected, in some later studies (Nadelson, 2007; Simon et al., 2003). However, it may also be the case that academic staff ignore student plagiarism because they do not detect it. Research by Diane Pecorari found that supervisors appear did not see plagiarism in the draft theses of their postgraduate students for whom English is a second language (Pecorari, 2006). After analysing what she referred to as the 'occluded' aspects of citations in students' scripts, and after interviewing supervisors, Pecorari found that "these occluded aspects of academic writing were …a blind spot for supervisors and students alike" (Pecorari, 2006, p.24).

It is not serious: Similar to viewing plagiarism as a problem for students only, in some instances, if academic staff do not view academic misconduct as a serious issue which needs to be addressed, then their responses will reflect this view. For example, studies suggest that if academic staff view the particular incident of student academic misconduct as not serious, then they will respond in an informal manner and on a case-by-case basis (Brimble & Stevenson-Clarke 2006; Sutherland-Smith, 2005; Burke 1997; Ritter, 1993). It is suggested by the researcher that this belief that cheating is not serious could fall under the category of "Denial" in the five-factor model outlined by Keith-Speigel and her colleagues (Keith-Speigel et al., 1998).

There is no plagiarism: Though most of the current literature suggests that academic staff are now aware that there is an issue and that student plagiarism and other forms of academic misconduct can no longer be ignored, it appears that some continue to underestimate the prevalence of such behaviour and so rarely challenge their students.

Using psychology-based theories, researchers Hard, Conway and Moran (2006) studied the beliefs of both staff and students towards academic misconduct. The researchers posited that the beliefs that lecturers have in the frequency of academic misconduct of their students influenced their behaviour towards them, hypothesising that the more prevalent academic staff believed academic misconduct to be, the more motivated they were to challenge such behaviour and try to prevent it. They surveyed 157 staff from a medium-sized US college and using quantitative methods, found their hypothesis held true. In their study "faculty members

who underestimated the frequency of misconduct very rarely take action to challenge students' misconduct" (Hard, Conway & Moran, 2006, p.1077). The researchers suggested that a possible remedy for this problem would be to educate academic staff to become more aware of the different types of misconduct and to have a greater understanding of their institution's policy and procedures in respect of misconduct. They found that the more familiar academic staff became with their institution's academic integrity policy and procedures, the more likely they would be to challenge incidences of student misconduct (Hard, Conway & Moran, 2006). The researchers also found that faculty's belief about the frequency of students' academic misconduct was significantly lower than students' beliefs, that is that lecturers did not think their students behaved as badly as students thought their peers did. This finding is supported by other studies on both lecturers' and students' perceptions of academic misconduct (East, 2010; Keith-Speigel et al., 1998).

In their paper, Hard, Conway and Moran (2006) state that despite viewing student academic misconduct as not being common, faculty overestimated the frequency of misconduct that actually occurred. However, they also refer to two studies which appear inconsistent with this finding. Koljatic and Silva (2002) found that on average faculty were quite accurate, while Wajda-Johnson et al. (2001) found that faculty underestimated misconduct. These contradictory findings suggests that further research in the area is needed.

Unsure about policies and procedures or restrictive policies and procedures: Some earlier studies suggest academic staff did not respond to incidences of academic dishonesty in accordance with institutional policies and procedures because, especially at the time these studies took place, there were no such documents or if there were, they were unclear (Franklin-Stokes & Newstead 1995; Kibler 1994; Graham, Monday, O'Brien & Steffen, 1994). It is not clear whether this reason would be applicable in the present day with many institutions having academic integrity policies and procedures which are often reviewed and updated. It is suggested by the researcher that this reason might be placed under the "Difficult" category in the five factor model outlined by Keith-Speigel and her colleagues (Keith-Speigel et al., 1998).

Additionally, researchers Sierup-Pincus and Schmelkin (2003) suggest that institutional policies are not flexible enough to take into account the various perceptions academic staff have of academic dishonest behaviours. They state that "This lack of flexibility in many policies might be a contributing factor in understanding why faculty members may feel

reluctant to report a student who they believe is involved in a less serious incident" (Sierup-Pincus & Schmelkin, 2003, p.208).

No support from the university: Some works suggest that academic staff who felt they did not get sufficient support from their institution to help them deal with incidences of student misconduct were more likely not to follow their institution's policies and procedures (Franklin-Stokes & Newstead 1995; Kibler 1994; Graham, Monday, O'Brien & Steffen, 1994). It is suggested by this researcher that having no support may be placed under the "Difficult" category of the five factor model by Keith-Speigel and her researchers (Keith-Speigel et al., 1998).

Time-consuming: One reason that is pointed out in the literature as to why academic staff do not respond to incidences of student academic dishonesty is because pursuing the issue is time consuming (Simon et al., 2003; Keith-Speigel et al., 1997). This reason is categorised as "Difficult" by Keith-Speigel and her colleagues under their five factor model (Keith-Speigel et al., 1998).

Hard to prove: In Nadelson's (2007) study many academic staff felt that they did not have sufficient evidence of academic misconduct to discuss the issue openly and in an informative and educational way in the classroom with their students, preferring to deal with this unethical behaviour informally. It is suggested by the researcher that this reason might fall under the "Difficult" category of the five factor model illustrated by Keith-Speigel and her researchers (Keith-Speigel et al., 1998).

Anxiety and stress: Some studies suggest that academic staff do not respond to incidences of student academic misconduct or respond in informal ways because they feel anxious, not confident or stressed about proceeding with incidences of academic misconduct for a number of reasons which include a fear of retaliation by the student or fear of legal action by students (Coalter, Lim & Wanorie, 2007; Nadelson, 2007; Simon et al., 2003; Keith-Spiegel et al., 1998). It is suggested by the researcher that anxiety and stress might be placed under the "Emotionality" category in the five factor model Keith-Speigel and her colleagues (Keith-Speigel et al., 1998).

Lack of trust in institutional processes: In some studies, academic staff did not respond to student plagiarism due to a lack of trust in the institution's processes (Nadelson, 2007; Simon et al., 2004; Simon et al., 2003). It is suggested by the researcher that this reason could also fall under either the category "Emotionality" or the category "Difficult" in the five factor

model outlined by Keith-Speigel and her researchers (Keith-Speigel et al., 1998). This difficulty in placing lack of trust in institutional processes neatly into one category suggests that the five factor model proposed by Keith-Speigel and her associates may be limited.

Although the five factor model proposed by Keith-Speigel and her researchers has been utilised in an attempt to place the reasons given by academic staff into the categories of Emotionality, Denial, Fear, Guilt and Difficulty (Keith-Speigel et al., 1998), not all reasons fall neatly into one particular category. Despite this, it appears from a review of the literature that most reasons provided by academic staff as to why they do not respond to incidences of student plagiarism or respond in ways inconsistent with the processes of their institution fall under the category of "Difficulty" in the five factor model. Responding to incidences of student plagiarism is too difficult because following up on an issue is time-consuming, or it is sometimes difficult to prove or to find sufficient evidence for, or it causes stress and anxiety to the academic (Coalter, Lim & Wanorie, 2007; Nadelson, 2007; Simon et al., 2003; Keith-Spiegel et al., 1998).

In conclusion, there appear to be a number of reasons, as outlined in the literature, as to why academic staff might either not respond to incidences of student plagiarism or respond to student plagiarism in ways which are inconsistent with procedures outlined by their institution or inconsistent with other academics. From the studies outlined above, it appears that academic staff will ignore incidences of student plagiarism if the believe there is no plagiarism, if they cannot see if , or if they feel that the student, rather than the academic, is responsible (Pecorari, 2006; Hard, Conway & Moran, 2006; Burke, 1997). If academic staff do respond to incidences of student plagiarism, the research suggests that they do so on a case by case basis or in an informal way because they feel it is too difficult or time-consuming, they lack the resources and evidence to proceed, they feel anxious or stressed, they fear retaliation or legal action by their students, or if they do not completely understand or trust their university's policy and procedures for responding to the issue (Coalter, Lim & Wanorie, 2007; Nadelson, 2007; Simon et al., 2003; Keith-Spiegel et al., 1998). In such cases, the responses by academic staff are more likely to be inconsistent with the responses expected of them by their university.

2.9.3 Students' responses to accusations of plagiarism

In their study of undergraduate students' responses to being accused of plagiarism, Granitz and Loewy (2007) wished to investigate which of six philosophical theories students used to explain why they plagiarised. The six philosophical underpinnings which students could subscribe to as outlined by Granitz and Loewy (2007) were:

Deontology - the belief that humans have fundamental rights and duties; and thus views plagiarism as something which is "morally wrong";

Utilitarianism –the belief that humans should act to benefit the most people, weighing up the costs and benefits before acting; and thus sees plagiarism as sometimes being necessary if the outcomes of the transgression are good;

Rational self-interest – the belief that humans act to benefit themselves in a transactional or business-like contract without the need to sacrifice themselves; thus viewing plagiarism "as justified only if they feel they were engaging in a fair exchange…if the assignment is boring or irrelevant" (p.297);

Machiavellianism – the belief that humans can sacrifice others for their own benefit without feeling guilty; therefore perceiving plagiarism as justified if they could get away with it without being caught;

Cultural relativism – the belief that ethical standards differ based on one's culture; thus seeing plagiarism as acceptable in their culture; or

Situational or contingent ethics- the belief that elements in a particular situation affect responses to that dilemma; thus explaining away plagiarism by citing their own personal circumstances or situation as an excuse.

Using content analysis of past plagiarism cases, the researchers found that students mainly invoked the theory of deontology when seeking to defend their misconduct, meaning students said that they were sorry for their actions or said they did not know they were plagiarising. They thought it was important for lecturers to understand the reasoning students used to explain why they plagiarised so that they could respond in a specific way to address the issue. In particular, lecturers needed to implement the following strategies: ensure that students understood what plagiarism was and how it could be avoided through the use of honour codes; teach proper referencing techniques, design assignments which were difficult to plagiarise, use anti-plagiarism software (e.g. Turnitin) and be a role model for students (Granitz & Loewy, 2007, pp.301-302).

Apart from investigating the reasons why students plagiarise or behave dishonestly, there are other works that explore students' responses to the misconduct of other students. Simon and his colleagues studied the perception of students of the 'climate' of their institution and whether gender played an important role in whether or not they would report suspected infractions by other students to those in authority (Simon et al., 2004). Surveying 172 undergraduate Chemistry students, they found that the students who were likely to report academic dishonesty were mainly women, those who felt supported by academia and those who thought that the educational process was fair (Simon et al., 2004, p.83). This suggests that if students find the procedures of their university for responding to misconduct are fair and clear to them, and also that they feel part of the university culture, then they are more likely to report suspected cases of misconduct. What is noteworthy in this study is that no difference was found in the reporting by first year students and the reporting of those more advanced in their studies. These results support the notion that education to reinforce the value of academic integrity needs to be maintained throughout a student's university life and not just in their first year of undergraduate studies where most of the teaching of academic integrity is usually carried out.

In conclusion, it appears that a lot more is known about students' perceptions and responses to suspected cases of academic misconduct than is known about the academic staff who are responsible for educating them. Just as there are a number of reasons why students might engage in academic misconduct, there are also different responses suggested by them as to why they might do so. The literature appears to support the notion that if students feel disconnected from their institutions and feel their instructors do not care for them, then they are more likely to engage in academic misconduct and be able to justify such conduct.

2.10 An outline of the trends in the study of plagiarism

Developments in studies on academic misconduct, including plagiarism, cannot be clearly delineated in terms of decades or countries. However, this section endeavours to show that over time and with the increasing amount of research in the field, there have been some changes in how the notion of academic misconduct is perceived. Also, in any given decade and any given country, researchers appear to explore different aspects of the issue with some focussing on the perceptions of students, others on the views of academic staff, and a few examining both students and staff. A minority of researchers explore institutions and their academic integrity policies and procedures for responding to student plagiarism. This section aims to place the literature in chronological order, according to its country of origin and

particular area investigated, in an effort to present a clearer picture of the trends in the study of plagiarism.

2.10.1 The 1980s: student cheating behaviours

Prior to the 1980s there were few studies that looked at student cheating behaviours. The earliest project on academic dishonesty was an investigation of why students cheat in examinations (Drake, 1941). The US researcher, Charles Drake, found that students with poorer grades tended to cheat the most and the main reason they give for cheating is the competitive nature of colleges (Drake, 1941). In addition, his findings suggest that cheating occurs in both honour and non-honour code institutions and that students do not appear interested in doing anything about it (Drake, 1941). It was not long before the seriousness and increase in cheating could be ignored by institutions. In 1964, Bowers investigated over 5000 students in 99 US institutions and found that 75% of them had engaged in cheating behaviours (Bowers, 1964, in McCabe, Trevino & Butterfield, 2001a).

These early works made no clear distinction between cheating and plagiarism. The notion that plagiarism is a different form of academic misconduct does not appear until later in the 1980s. A study often referred to in the literature is that of Nuss which compared the attitudes of US college faculty and students to plagiarism. It found that there were distinct differences in the attitudes of these two groups, with faculty viewing the issue of plagiarism more seriously than students (Nuss, 1984, in Sierup-Pincus & Schmelkin, 2003).

2.10.2 The 1990s: staff and student perceptions of academic misconduct

In the 1990s, there appears to be an increase in the amount of research on the attitudes and perceptions of both students and staff of academic misconduct. Most of these studies originated from the US. The most prolific researchers were Donald McCabe and his colleagues whose work mainly dealt with students and their understandings of academic misconduct in both in both honour and non-honour code institutions and colleges in the US (McCabe, Trevino & Butterfield, 1999; McCabe & Trevino, 1997; McCabe & Trevino, 1993; McCabe, 1993). In the area of academic staff perceptions of student misconduct, McCabe (1993) first hypothesised that lecturers from institutions with honour codes were more likely to follow their institution's procedure and report incidences of student plagiarism than were institutions without honour codes but his findings showed otherwise. However, one of his later projects supported this hypothesis (McCabe, Butterfield & Trevino, 2003).

In this decade, there were few studies on the perceptions of academic staff of academic misconduct. The projects that did involve academic staff as their primary subjects of research

originated mainly from the US and found that academic staff had varied responses to academic misconduct and various reasons for responding as they did. Most of the research conducted during and after this decade appear to support the idea that academic staff ignore issues of cheating and dishonesty or at most, respond to them in an informal way and on a case-by-case basis (e.g. Keith-Speigel, Tabachnick, Whitley & Washburn, 1998; Burke, 1997; Ritter, 1993).

Reasons suggested by the literature of this decade as to why academic staff do not respond in consistent ways to incidences of student academic misconduct include a lack of clarity of policies and procedures themselves, a lack of institutional support for dealing with the issue, not trusting their institutional processes, a lack of evidence to proceed, the emotional stress of dealing with the issue, fear of retaliation by students, or feeling that the misconduct was not serious (Keith-Speigel et al., 1998; Burke, 1997; Franklin-Stokes & Newstead 1995; Kibler, 1994; Graham, Monday, O'Brien & Steffen, 1994).

Furthermore, the research suggests that these differences in the perceptions and responses of staff towards academic misconduct cannot be explained away by the gender, position, rank or tenure of the faculty member, nor the subjects or area in which they teach (Seirup-Pincus, 1995).

In the area of students' perceptions of plagiarism, McCabe and Trevino (1993) found that students had varying reasons why they cheated but the main one was peer behaviour. Students cheated because others did so and got away with it. In a later study, the researchers found that contextual factors such as peer behaviour, peer disapproval of cheating, the severity of penalties influenced students' cheating behaviour rather than individual factors such as gender and age (McCabe & Trevino, 1997).

Following McCabe's lead, other research from the US and UK examined students' perceptions of academic misconduct in terms of how students understand the terms 'plagiarism' and 'cheating', why they cheat and the reasons they give for cheating (Ashworth, Bannister & Thorne, 1999; Newstead, Franklin-Stokes & Armstead, 1996; Kibler, 1994). The studies suggest that students define plagiarism and cheating differently from academic staff with with the majority of them unsure of what constitutes plagiarism (Ashworth, Bannister & Thorne, 1997). The literature also reveals that cheating among students is more common among younger males from science and technology based units (Newstead, Franklin-Stokes & Armstead, 1996). The reasons why student cheat are many, and include a lack of motivation, moral development and commitment to study (Ashworth,

Bannister and Thorne, 1997; Newstead, Franklin-Stokes & Armstead, 1996), feeling disengaged from the staff and the assessment (Ashworth, Bannister & Thorne, 1997). Time and peer-pressure because everyone else does it may be considered other reasons why students cheat (Newstead, Franklin-Stokes & Armstead, 1996). Despite investigating the causes of cheating, few studies from this era offer any solutions or strategies to address academic misconduct.

Thus, the focus of research from the 1990s appears to be twofold: firstly studies undertaken in the early 1990s examine academic staff and their perceptions and responses to student plagiarism while studies in the latter part of the decade explore students'and their perceptions of academic dishonesty, with a view to offering plausible reasons as to why they might engage in academically dishonest behaviour.

2.10.3 The 2000s: strategies for responding to academic misconduct

The 21st century has seen a great increase in the amount of research from around the world, including Australia, on the areas of plagiarism and academic integrity in general. The studies appear to show that academic misconduct by students is on the increase and is a cause of concern for all. The cause of this increase is uncertain, athough there appears to be two reasons why this is so. Researchers are divided as to whether the increased use and reliance on the internet by university students is to blame, or whether there is an increase in cases due to increased ability by academic staff to recognise and identify cases of plagiarism. Whatever the case may be, the new millennium heralded a large amount of research in the areas of policy, lecturers' and students' perceptions of plagiarism and possible solutions to the issue.

For the first time, there was an emphasis on examining university policies and procedures in an effort to find a holistic, institution-wide solution to the problem of academic misconduct. The majority of studies emerged from the Europe, in particular, the UK (e.g. Macdonald & Carroll, 2006; Carroll & Appleton, 2005; Carroll, 2005; Larkham & Manns, 2002; Park, 2004; Park, 2003; Pecorari, 2001) and Australia (e.g. East, 2009; Grigg, 2009; Yeo & Chien, 2007; Yeo, 2007; Devlin, 2006; O'Regan, 2006).

In 2001, British researcher, Jude Carroll, published a report at the request of the UK government for British institutions of higher learning suggesting there was an urgent need for institutional-wide responses to academic responses rather than at a department or unit level approach to ensure consistency in responding to the issue of plagiarism. The impetus for this report was the need for a better approach for managing plagiarism effectively and the need

for fewer decision-makers to ensure consistency in any approach. Based on her research, Carroll (2005) suggested that plagiarism could only be managed effectively if there was a holistic approach to the issue, an approach supported by other researchers (Devlin, 2006; Leask, 2005; Park, 2004). The report offered guidelines to help universities manage issues of academic misconduct, including plagiarism. In the light of the findings by Carroll (2005) and others, and also due to unfavourable media and public attention highlighting the inadequacies of how plagiarism was managed at some institutions, universities in both the UK and Australia began to revise their policies and procedures as they related to academic misconduct and, in particular, plagiarism. It was recommended that policies and procedures be worded in more educative rather than punitive terms (Carroll, 2005; Park, 2004) and some institutions rewrote or introduced new policies and made their procedures more clear and transparent.

Despite the fact that new policies and procedures were being developed which would be clearer and more transparent, there was still concern that penalties for plagiarism were not being applied consistently in UK institutions. In response to this, the Amber Project, conducted by British researchers Tennant, Rowell and Duggan, looked at the ranges and types of penalties available in over 160 universities in the UK for responding to academic misconduct. They found that even though two-thirds of these institutions had clear procedures, the range of penalties varied between and even within institutions and that institutions differed in how much guidance was given when applying penalties. For example, most (86%) universities provided advice but of these only 76% made explicit the types of factors that should be considered when applying penalties (Tennant, Rowell & Duggan, 2007).

In comparison, very few projects on institutions and their academic integrity policies and procedures emerged from the US at this time (Whitley & Keith-Spiegel, 2001; Harding, Carpenter, Montgomery & Steneck, 2001). The reason for this is unclear but it could be that policies and procedures remained unchanged in the US with the emphasis being on developing honour codes for students rather than changing policies. That is, the research looked more at what students and academic staff could do rather than what the institutions could do to address the issue of academic misconduct.

In the 2000s, the US continued to dominate in the area of studies examining lecturers' perceptions of student plagiarism and cheating (Nadelson, 2007; Coalter, Lim & Wanorie, 2007; Henderson, 2007; Levy & Rakovski 2006; Coren, 2006; Kelley & Bonner, 2005;

Liddell & Fong, 2005; McCabe, Butterfield & Trevino, 2003; Seirup-Pincus & Schmelkin 2003; Kidwell, Wozniak & Laurel, 2003; Roig 2001). In comparison, only a handful of projects on the perceptions of academic staff were starting to emerge in Australia (Sutherland-Smith, 2005; Bretag, 2005; Zobel & Hamilton, 2002).

The findings from these studies conducted in this decade appear in line with those from the 1990s and 1980s and suggest that there has been little change in both the perception and responses of academic staff to student academic misconduct. In particular, studies from the 2000s suggest that faculty members understand academic dishonesty differently to their students (Seirup-Pincus & Schmelkin, 2003) and that they respond to incidences of student plagiarism in varied and inconsistent ways (Bermingham, Watson & Jones, 2009; Brimble & Stevenson-Clarke 2006; Kelley & Bonner, 2005). In particular the research suggests that academic staff respond to incidences of student plagiarism in two ways: they deal with plagiarism autonomously and informally on a case-by-case basis, or they report the matter to those higher in authority (Nadelson, 2007; Brimble & Stevenson-Clarke, 2006; Flint, Clegg & Macdonald, 2006; Pickard, 2006; Barrett & Cox, 2005; Kelley & Bonner, 2005; Sutherland-Smith, 2005; Simon et al., 2003).

The reasons for this inconsistency in responding to plagiarism include factors similar to those discussed in the literature from the 1990s. That is, the reasons for not responding to or ignoring incidences of student plagiarism include not having enough evidence to prove the misconduct has occurred, finding the whole issue too difficult or time consuming, being too anxious to act for fear of retaliation by students, feeling stressed, lacking trust in institutional procedures or not understanding what is expected of them by their institution (Coalter, Lim & Wanorie 2007; Nadelson, 2007; Simon et al., 2003).

While research continues to be conducted on students and their perceptions of plagiarism overseas, the early 21st century has seen an increase in projects originating from researchers in Australia and New Zealand (e.g. Stappenbelt, Rowles & May 2009; Yeo 2006; Yeo & Chien 2007; Marshall & Garry 2005; Breen & Maassen 2005; Dawson 2004). However, there still remains fewer studies on the perceptions and responses to plagiarism of both academic staff and students (Brimble & Stevenson-Clarke 2006; Sutherland-Smith 2005a).

Reasons from the literature of this decade as to why students plagiarise are similar to those suggested by earlier projects from the 1990s. They include a lack of time or motivation, the belief that peers are doing it and not getting caught, not knowing that they have plagiarised or denying that they have cheated at all (Granitz & Loewy, 2007).

The early part of the 21st century saw an increase in the number of studies that outlined possible solutions or strategies to address the issue of student academic dishonesty and in particular, student plagiarism. Many books were also published outlining possible strategies or solutions to help students avoid plagiarism (e.g. Carroll, 2007; Harris, 2001). In these documents, academic staff are instructed to teach research and referencing skills, change writing tasks and assessment criteria and explicitly teach students about academic integrity. Students are instructed on how to avoid plagiarism by referencing, paraphrasing appropriately, developing writing skills and understanding what was expected of them at university. The introduction of software detection devices, such as Turnitin, by some institutions of higher learning can be viewed as another strategy for reducing the incidences of plagiarism.

In Australia, many studies on solutions to the issue of student plagiarism emerged in the 2000s (Keuscamp & Sliuzas, 2007; Leask, 2006; Johnson & Clerehan, 2006; Crisp, 2007; Sutherland-Smith & Carr, 2005; Hasen & Huppert, 2005; McGowan, 2005; Dawson, 2004; Vuori, Joseph & Gurajan, 2004; McGowan, 2003). They explored the efficacy of such solutions to determine whether they were effective in reducing student plagiarism. Suggestions include implementing institutional-level strategies such as developing ethics across the curricula, fostering an environment of academic integrity and consistently applying penalties for those students who plagiarise (Brimble & Stevenson-Clark, 2006), developing a centralised system where incidences are recorded rather than ignored, forgotten or not known to all staff (Zobel & Hamilton, 2002). Other suggestions include having a model to address issues of plagiarism which looks at the long-term response to the issue rather than the short-term response outlined in policies (Vuori, Joseph & Gurarajan, 2004), and investing more time and resources on teaching and learning strategies to help students avoid plagiarism, rather than on detection and punishment (Dawson, 2004).

The solutions outlined above are similar to those outlined in studies from the US and UK which call for intervention measures and education of students to reduce the incidences of plagiarism. Viable solutions include having academic staff share information and beliefs about student plagiarism (Carroll & Appelton, 2005), introducing specialist officers (Carroll & Appelton, 2005), restricting the number of penalties that can be chosen (Carroll & Appelton, 2005), having many definitions of plagiarism (Borg, 2009), educating students on the seriousness of plagiarism (Brown & Howell, 2001), introducing plagiarism detecting software (Mainka, Raeburn & Earl, 2006; Barrett & Malcolm, 2006), and approaching assessment tasks differently or using varied assessment tools such as the i-map (Walden &

Peacock, 2006). Whatever the solutions may be, it appears that all researchers are in agreement that student plagiarism in institutions of higher learning cannot be entirely eliminated, but can be reduced if appropriate measures like those outlined are taken.

It appears that in the 2000s, studies, especially those from Australia, were investigating the issue of student plagiarism as broadly as possible. For example, at an institutional level some projects sought large-scale solutions for plagiarism while at the classroom level, others found practical, pedagogical responses to the issue.

2.10.4 From 2010 onwards: where to now?

In the second decade of the 21st century, it is too early to say what area of academic integrity- policies, students or staff- will be the focus of research. Currently, Australian researchers are continuing to study academic integrity policies and procedures (Bretag, Mahmud, Wallace, Walker, James, Green, East, McGowan & Partridge, 2011; Green & Van Kessel, 2011; Martin & Van Haeringen, 2011). In particular, they are examining the wording of policies from a number of Australian universities to determine what constitutes an ideal and effective approach. Utilising a framework they developed, they found that good policies include five core elements; namely, Access, Approach, Responsibility, Detail and Support (Bretag et al., 2011).

To date, it appears that there are few projects on lecturers' and students' perceptions of plagiarism emerging from the UK (e.g. Yakovchuk, Badge and Scott, 2011). There is more recent work in other parts of Europe, particularly Finland, Sweden, Hungary and Romania (Löfström, Trotman, Furnani & Shephard, 2015; 2014; Pecorari & Shaw 2012ö), however not aöl the studies focus on the perceptions of academic staff. For example, although the work by Löfström and her colleagues suggested that academics were confused about academic integrity policies, the focus of her research was on the roles of academics in teaching academic integrity to their students (Löfström et al., 2015).

In the US, apart from work by Howard (2007) on internet plagiarism and her suggestion that more robust policies and procedures are required to combat this, there appears to be little research on the relationship between academic integrity policies and procedures and the stakeholders they affect. In Canada, Coren's research on how faculty respond to student cheating supports the notion that most academic staff continue to ignore student cheating (Coren, 2012, 2011).

In Australia, the most current research still appears to be directed towards an examination of the student (Nayak et al., 2013; Gullifer & Tyson, 2012) and at the Asia-Pacific Conference

on Educational Integrity held in 2013, there were very few papers on the perceptions and responses of academic staff to student plagiarism.

Other countries have become interested in the issue of student plagiarism, with work on lecturers' perceptions emerging from South Africa (de Jaeger & Brown, 2010), Turkey (Eret & Gokmanoglu, 2010), Hong Kong (Li, 2003) and New Zealand (Brimble & Stevenson-Clarke, 2006). These studies and their results appear to be similar to those conducted in the US in the 1990s.

The findings from the small scale qualitative study by Li (2013) support previous research on lecturers' perceptions and responses to student plagiarism. Interviewing 16 instructors at an English-medium university in Hong Kong, she found that that academic staff believe that an institution-wide, holistic approach is required and that pedagogy is a useful tool for addressing the issue of student plagiarism. However, her findings differed from previous studies in that she found that respondents appear to have a "modulated, sensitive perspective" on the issue rather than an emotional response as had been suggested in earlier projects (Li, 2013, p.10). Although her findings cannot be generalised, they appear to suggest that there is still a lack of data on how and why academic staff respond to incidences of student plagiarism.

In summary, the last 40 years has seen an increase in the amount of literature on academic dishonesty, in particular, student plagiarism. Through the decades, there appears to have been a shift in the type of research that takes place. For example, studies from the 1980s and 1990s appear to explore lecturers' and students' perceptions of plagiarism while studies from the 2000s onwards examine institutional academic integrity documents with a view ot providing viable, practical solutions to address the issue of student plagiarism.

A summary of the trends in the studies on plagiarism is presented in the Figure 2.2.

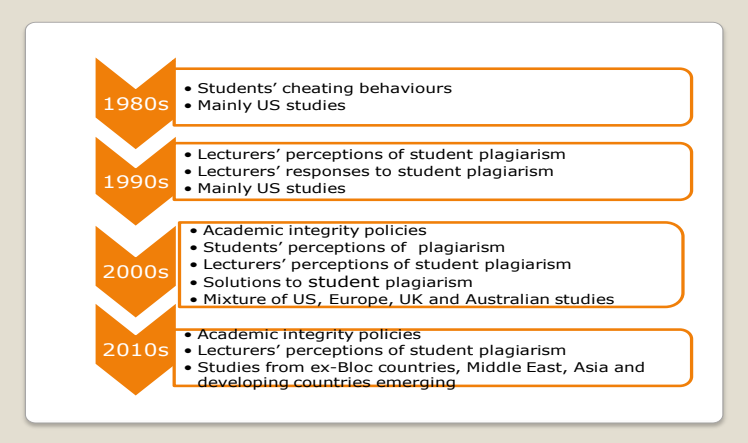


Figure 2.2: Timeline showing the development of research on academic integrity

2.11 Summary of studies on academic integrity

The studies examined in Part 1 of this literature review chapter have attempted to establish the current state of affairs in regards to research on academic integrity. It is clear that there has been a shift in the focus of studies and as more research becomes available, the complexity of plagiarism by student in institutions of higher learning becomes more apparent. Part 2 of this chapter will examine studies from a field outside academic integrity. These studies on the academic themselves are presented in an effort to gain a greater understanding of how academics behave in a university context to help generate a theory which might help explain how and why they respond to incidences of student plagiarism in the way they do.

PART 2: THE ACADEMIC IN A CHANGING HIGHER EDUCATION ENVIRONMENT

"The chains of habit are too weak to be felt, until they are too strong to be broken" (Samuel Johnson, 1709-1784).

In order to better understand the perceptions of academic staff of student plagiarism and their responses to the issue, it was considered necessary to examine a wider range of general studies outside the field of academic integrity. This part of the literature review will outline the current state of research on the academic and how their beliefs and values may have been altered or shaped in light of the current tertiary environment in which they work.

Modern institutions of higher learning are evolving due to external pressures from governments and the public and due to advances in society and technology. These changes are reflected in such things as workplace practices and in institutional rules and policies. Academics need to keep abreast of developments and may be faced with increase pressures which require them to undertake activities and skills which they might not originally have contemplated. For example, in addition to their normal role of teaching and learning, there is a call from both institutions and external stakeholders to 'publish or perish'. These increased demands lead not only to stress and strain, but also confusion and ambivalence as to what it now means to be an academic.

The sections which follow present the current literature on academic identity, values, beliefs and roles of the academic in modern institutions of higher learning. This research is included as it is seen as vital in presenting a clearer, more comprehensive picture of the modern academic. Findings from these studies will be useful in understanding how and why academic staff respond to incidences of student plagiarism: an issue which forms part of their work as academics.

2.12 The academic in institutions of higher learning: early research

There have been a number of papers published on the academic, such as Pierre Bourdieu's "*Homo Academicus*" (1998) in which the author suggest that academia is a place of both detachment and conflict, of capitalism and power conflicts between those higher in authority and the ordinary lecturer. His theory of 'habitus' states that academics will band together in the face of conflict and form friendships "into an active and institutionalized solidarity, founded on an organization orientated towards support for or restitution of order" (Bourdieu,

1998, p.151). This theory suggests that academic staff present a united front against alternate powers of authority in their institution.

Prior to Bourdieu's ideas, Max Weber's concepts of sociology alluded to the concepts of power and domination in society which could be applicable to organisations such as universities. He defines power as "the opportunity within a social relationship which permits one to carry out one's own will even against resistance and regardless of the basis on which this opportunity rests and domination as "the opportunity to have a command of a specified content obeyed by a given group of persons" (Weber, 1962, p.117).

Although the theories enunciated by Bourdieu (1998) and Weber (1962) have been applied in subsequent studies, it is suggested by this researcher that the application of their theories to modern institutions of higher learning may have been diluted due to both advances in research and changes in the cultural and social environment modern universities find themselves in. Hence while acknowledging the contribution of Bourdieu (1998) and Weber (1962) to help explain the behaviours of modern academics, this study examines other relevant literature in an effort to generate possible new theories.

2.13 Notions of academic identity in modern universities: current research

2.13.1 What it means to be an academic: perceptions of identity, roles and responsibilities

Like the notion of plagiarism, academic identity is difficult to define. It may include concepts of beliefs, values, attitudes and perceptions and also it may include multiple and diverse understandings of what it means to be an academic. Studies suggest that the role of the academic is changing, however their identity, roles, perceptions and beliefs may remain intact (Feather, 2010; Churchman, 2006; Henkel, 2005, 2000; Taylor, 1999; Martin, 1999).

Clegg (2008, p.329) believes that identity is defined by looking at the culture or "communities of practice that a person is based in". In her interviews on the lived experiences of 13 academics from a variety of backgrounds, she found that academic identity, although a complex notion, remains distinctive and sustained despite changes in university structures and environments (Clegg, 2008). "[R]espondents in all roles were able to maintain highly distinctive, strongly framed academic projects of the self" (Clegg, 2008, p.340).

In contrast, Fletcher (2007) feels there is a loss in the autonomy of the academic due to the changing role of institutions of higher education. He states that "knowledge has become a product that must be marketed, packaged, and branded …performance indicators have given

control to the administrators, and …objectives set today in education institutions are not those of the academic, but of senior management" (Fletcher, 2007, p.303). This quote suggests that academic staff play little or no role in the development of policies, including academic integrity policies, in their institutions although they are expected to adhere to the rules. It may be the case that, more recently, universities are engaging their academic staff in the development of policies, but there is limited research on this.

Feather (2010) attempts to define "academic identity" based on interviews and a focus group with 26 academic staff in 12 institutions of further, rather than higher, education in the UK. Similary to the developments in Australia, there have been changes in institutions of higher education in the UK which include increased government control, decreased funding and more accountability to external parties and Feather (2010) sought to explore whether these changes impacted in the identity of academics and how they viewed their roles. His findings support the views of both Clegg (2008) and Fletcher (2007) in that he found that there was increased conflict in the roles of the academics and a feeling of dissonance among them. "They cannot make sense of their environment, because it is always in a state of flux due to the changes it has to go through, and they are never given time to implement one policy before another one comes along" (Feather, 2010, p.193).

However, he felt that authors in the past only looked at the role of academics to define them, but he attempts to go further to provide a definition of academic identity which includes the 'essence' of what an academic is, rather than what they do. For him, an academic is more than a scholar or practitioner, but someone who has autonomy and eminence and whose main role is to produce and disseminate knowledge (Feather, 2010).

2.13.2 Academics and their relationship to the modern institution: commitments versus compromises

With institutions of higher learning appearing to become more managerial in nature, the question arises as to whether or not academics feel the need to compromise their work with managerial and administrative staff to ensure the effective running of their institutions. In her ethnographic study of academic staff in an Australian university, Deborah Churchman (2006) explored how they deal with the increased corporatisation of universities and how this might change their understandings of what academic work entails in the new, changing environment. She refutes the idea that there is one academic identity shared by all academic staff, stating:

> *Academics experiencing the corporatization of their profession and institutions assign meanings to academic tasks and their altered environment which correspond with their understandings of the academic role. Through these meanings, they construct and protect their individual academic identity, which is not necessarily forged in the same terms or with the same definitions as those of the "corporate" university environment, nor in terms shared with their colleagues* (Churchman, 2006, p. 7).

From her qualitative data of narratives, Churchman (2006) postulates three constructs or discourses that academics might have of their identities and roles; namely, "a righteous moral discourse of making a difference; a relational discourse of social interaction; and a pragmatic discourse of corporatism" (Churchman, 2006, p.9). These constructs may overlap to some extent and all, as the researcher suggests, have their place in the institution.

The first construct refers to those academics who view themselves in the traditional sense in that they see things as right or wrong, moral or immoral, just or unjust and these, the researcher argues, are more likely not to compromise and so not engage with new corporate systems in the institution. The second construct refers to those academics who partake in actions that they feel will increase their self satisfaction and sense of comradeship or working with other like-minded individuals. For Churchman (2006) this second group of academics are more likely to compromise with the corporatised university even if it means giving up some of their ideals of what it means to be an academic. Despite this act of compromise, the researcher found that this second group felt the most disappointment and did not identify with management or their discourse. The last group of academics were most likely to compromise with the managerial university, embracing and thriving in the new working conditions. These staff aligned "their work behaviours with their interpretation of management vision in order to achieve recognition and reward" (Churchman, 2006, p.11).

The idea of Churchman's three constructs or views of how academic staff identify themselves in the modern university may prove useful for this study as an example of another model to help explain the behaviour of academics.

2.13.3 Academics and policies: an absence of self

As seen from section 2.5.1 of this chapter, policies and procedures that affect academics are usually drafted by those in administrative or managerial roles in the university, with little or no input or consultation with academic staff (Havilland & Mullin, 2008; Iedema, 1997). Examples of such documents are rules and regulations relating to student discipline and assessment, including academic integrity policies and procedures. It has been suggested by

Sabri (2010) that leaving policy making to management leads to an absence of the academic in policy making. This 'absence' might explain why some academics resist new policies or changes to policies.

Perhaps, the most influential work on academic identities is that of Mary Henkel. In her book "*Academic Identity and Policy Change in Higher Education"*, published in 2000, she identifies three factors – the institution, the discipline and the sense of the profession- as being important in shaping academic identity. In addition, Henkel's (2005) qualitative study of 97 academics in UK universities suggests that the identity of the academic has remained stable and consistent despite external changes such as policy changes and the changing status of institutions of higher education. Clegg (2008) is of the similar view that the academic identity remains strong despite changes or external threats while Davies and Petersen (2005) feel that academics "succumb" to changes. Churchman's (2006) idea that academic staff have three different constructs of their identity can best explain this dichotomy and reinforce the notion that there is no one academic identity but multiple identities.

Although relating to postgraduate research students, the study by Fotovatian and Miller (2014), is important when it comes to the notion of shaping academic identities. In their investigation of informal, 'tea-room' interactions of eight, international PhD students with academics in an Australian university , they found that academic identities were constructed and negotiated through these informal interactions (Fotovatian & Miller, 2014) and involve "a continual construction of the self in relation to instituions and to the communities that arise and endure within these institutions (Eckert & Wenger, n.d., in Fotovatian & Miller, 2014, p. 292). They also found that individuals differed in the way that they constructed their own academic identities based on their diverse backgrounds, goals and agendas (Fotovatian & Miller, 2014). When applying these findings to academic staff, it is posited that, depending on the communities of practice that academics find themselves in, they will construct and maintain their own academic identities based on their own backgrounds, views and perceptions of self.

Although Sabri (2010) interviewed policy-makers and not academic staff, her findings are relevant in that they support the notion that there is a gap between policy makers and academics in relation to government initiatives or directives. She found in interviews with policy-makers that they did not use the word 'academic' but rather 'practitioner', focussed on the student as customers and viewed academics as being self-centred and not interested in their students. The researcher noted that "...it is striking how seldom there was talk of

understanding the professional needs of academics, of engaging with them or problematising their reluctance to engage with national initiatives [policies]" (Sabri, 2010, p.199). Thus it could be said that academic staff are absent as key stakeholders from institutional policies and procedures which although prepared by others, must usually be implemented by them in the university environment.

2.14 Summary of studies on the academic in the modern institution

Although the studies on the modern academic outlined in this literature review are fewer than the studies on academic integrity, their inclusion provides a more comprehensive picture of the the life and work of academics and their views, perceptions and behaviours in today's institutions of higher learning. They were also added in an effort to generate a plausible framework which might help to explain why and how academics respond to incidences of student plagiarism in the way they do.

These studies on the academic in today's institutions of higher learning have shown that the role of the academic has shifted over time. It appears that academic staff need to balance teaching and learning with more managerial and administrative tasks, leaving them time-poor and highly pressured. However, as was from studies outlined at the start of this chapter, the increase in administrative tasks does not always include input into developing policies and procedures such as those relating to student plagiarism (Havilland & Mullen, 2008; Iedema, 1997). The research has also shown that academic staff in today's universities may not be as involved in the development and implementation of policies and procedures that affect their working life and their relationship with their students (Sabri, 2010). With these changes in their roles, academics feel a sense of disconnect or disillusionment with their institution (Feather, 2010; Clegg, 2008).

However, despite these changes, the studies suggest that the identities and autonomy of academics remain virtually intact (Henkel, 2005, 2000) and that academics will continue to maintain their own academic identities based on their own backgrounds, views and perceptions of self.

2.15 Limitations of the existing research

This literature review has primarily shown that there are gaps in the research on academic integrity that need to be addressed. In particular, a large amount of research has been conducted on students. The studies conducted by McCabe and his researchers, which span over a decade, have investigated university students and why they might cheat. At the same

time, less research has been conducted on academic staff and on their perceptions and responses to plagiarism issues and even less on the perceptions of academic staff of their institutional policies and procedures for responding to plagiarism.

The lack of research in the area of academic staff perceptions of academic integrity policies and procedures may be partly because such academic integrity policies and procedures are, in their current forms, fairly recent introductions into Australian universities. Thus, it is too early to determine the efficacy of these policies and their effects on academic staff, students and institutions. This is a gap that this research seeks to fill.

In relation to studies on academic staff perceptions of plagiarism, there appears to have been some change in how academics perceive the issue. While earlier research suggested that academic staff were unclear about a definition of plagiarism, viewing it synonymously with cheating, later studies suggest that staff have a clear understanding of the term. However, although these understandings appear consistent among academic staff, the literature suggests that responses to incidences of the student plagiarism among academic staff vary and do not always align with the responses expected of them by their institutions.

This study will explore the understandings of academic staff of the term 'student plagiarism' to see if these understandings are more consistent in light of the introduction of academic integrity policies and procedures, which include definitions of their own. Based on the literature and the findings of this study, it is hoped that a more comprehensive definition of student plagiarism will ensue.

A review of the literature also shows a lack of research to either confirm or refute findings from early projects. For example, in the areas of reasons considered by academic staff when responding to incidences of plagiarism, it has been suggested that if academic staff perceive their institutional processes to be time consuming, then they will be less likely to follow formal procedures and deal with incidences of plagiarism in an informal way. The findings from this study may support these reasons and may find additional reasons to explain the responses of academic staff.

Finally, few studies in the field of academic integrity have proposed theories which might explain the responses of academic staff to incidences of student plagiarism. From the findings of this research, it is hoped that a model which is easily applicable to future cases, will be developed to add to the literature on academic integrity and be of use to all stakeholders.

2.16 Summary of Chapter 2

The first part of this chapter presented the relevant literature on academic integrity. Firstly the notions of plagiarism were presented to illustrate that plagiarism is a complex issue and hard to define (Carroll, 2005; Park, 2004). Studies over a period of four decades suggest that the focus is now on viewing plagiarism in more positive terms as a breach of academic integrity rather than seeing it as synonymous with cheating (Caldwell, 2009). In addition, writers such as Fishman (2009) and Pecorari (2001) posit a number of elements that should be included in a comprehensive definition of plagiarism. However, it appears that academic staff continue to view plagiarism not only as serous, but also as immoral, unethical and a decline in social and educational standards (Gourlay & Deane, 2012; Gross, 2011; Sutherland-Smith, 2010; East, 2009; Joyce, 2007; Leask, 2006).

In the 21st century, there has been a call for a more holistic, educative approach to responding to plagiarism (Carroll, 2005; Park, 2004) with all stakeholders concerned playing their part. This change is called for as plagiarism is seen as an increasing issue, especially with the advent of the internet and the globalisation and internationalisation of universities. Institutions in Australia have responded to this call by implementing academic integrity policies and procedures. However, it appears that academic integrity policies and procedures are often drafted by administrators and managers in institutions with little or no input from academic staff and these documents are worded in the punitive language of criminal law (Sutherland-Smith, 2010).

Despite changes in the notion of plagiarism and the fairly recent introduction of academic integrity policy and procedures, in their current forms, in institutions of higher learning, it appears that neither the perceptions held by academic staff of plagiarism nor their responses to the issue have altered (Swagerman, 2008; Price, 2002; Howard, 2001). The research on academic integrity, dating back to 1941, suggests that academic staff respond to incidences of student plagiarism in diverse and varied ways. In particular, the most common response from lecturers to plagiarism by their students is to either ignore the incident or respond to it in an informal way, on a case-by-case basis which is often not consistent with the response expected of them by their institution as outlined in academic integrity procedures (Brimble & Stevenson-Clarke, 2006; Pickard, 2006; Flint, Clegg & Macdonald, 2006; Sutherland-Smith, 2005; Barrett & Cox, 2005; Burke, 1997; Ritter, 1993; Drake, 1941). The reasons for this inconsistency in responses are many and include being unsure of or not trusting institutional processes, feeling unsupported by the university, being anxious and stressed and not having the time or resources to pursue the issue (Coalter, Lim & Wanorie, 2007; Nadelson, 2007;

Brimble & Stevenson-Clarke, 2006; Flint, Clegg & Macdonald, 2006; Hard, Conway & Moran, 2006; Sutherland-Smith, 2005; Simon et al., 2003; Morgan, Oleson & Ressel, 2003; Keith-Speigel et al., 1998, Burke, 1997; Franklin-Stokes & Newstead, 1995; Kibler, 1994; Graham, Monday, O'Brien & Steffan, 1994; Ritter, 1993).

The second part of this chapter presented some current literature on the academic identity. It suggests that despite changes in the nature of the modern institution, academic staff continue to maintain their identity or identities (Henkel, 2005). However, academics face the added burden of managerial and administrative matters rather than teaching, leading them to adjust their behaviours in a time-poor, highly pressurised environment. This may lead them to feel disconnected or disillusioned with their institution (Feather, 2010; Clegg, 2008).

Research on academic identity was presented to more deeply examine academics' values, beliefs and behaviours towards a number of issues related to the life of an academic in today's universities. An understanding of theories developed in such studies will enable the generatation of a clear and plausible model to explain the responses of academic staff to incidences of student plagiarism. This model might then be applicable outside the field of academic integrity.

The next chapter outlines the methodology used in this study.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

This section outlines the methodology utilised in this research on the perceptions of academic staff to their institutional policies and procedures that deal with student plagiarism. It begins with an overview of the research methodology, paradigm and theoretical stance adopted and the research design methods used to collect and analyse both quantitative and qualitative data to answer the research questions put forward in this study. Details of the participants in this research together with the specific types of data collected follow. The chapter concludes with an outline of the issues relating to the collection, analysis and interpretation of data which were found to be relevant to this study.

3.1 Methodology, Paradigm, Research Design and Theoretical Approaches

3.1.1 Methodology

Mixed methods research is a methodology that combines both qualitative and quantitative philosophies, methodologies and methods (Cresswell & Plano-Clark, 2011). Mixed methods offers the freedom to use both qualitative and quantitative methods of collection and analysis of data without being tied down to the distinguishable philosophical frameworks that supposedly support each, for example positivist for quantitative and interpretist or constructivist for qualitative (Cresswell & Plano-Clark, 2011).

Mixed methods can encompass a variety of philosophies and for some mixed method researchers like Tashakkori and Teddlie (2003) philosophical assumptions are fundamental, yet for others like Cresswell and Plano-Clarke (2011) a broader, more general definition of mixed-methods is given to allow for the adoption of a variety of philosophical perspectives.

3.1.2 Paradigm

A paradigm may be defined as "a set of generalizations, beliefs and values of a community of specialists" (Kuhn, 1970, in Cresswell & Plano-Clark, 2011, p.39). The paradigm with the best fit for this study is that of *pragmatism*, an alternative, "middle ground" to other paradigms or ways of observing the world or one's epistemological stance (Denscombe, 2011). Pragmatists accept that there are no separate objective or subjective world views but how one sees the world can be a combination of the two (Feilzer, 2010; Cresswell, 2007; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003). Morgan (2007) defines pragmatism as being abductive, intersubjective and transferable. It is:

> *...reasoning that moves back and forth between induction and deduction-first converting observations into theories and then assessing those theories through action [abductive],*

> *working back and forth between various frames of reference…to achieve a sufficient degree of mutual understanding or shared meaning [intersubjective] with a focus on what people can do with the knowledge they produce and not on abstract arguments about the possibility or impossibility of generalizability [transferability]* (Morgan, 2007, p.72).

Applying the above definition, it is possible to view this study as moving back and forth between the data obtained from the real world experiences of academic staff in an effort to develop theories or shared understandings of the issue of student plagiarism to inform others in the field.

The paradigm of pragmatism appears to be the best fit as it aligns with the purposes of this study; namely, to explore the particular subjective and world views and any possible shared understandings that academic staff may have to the issue of student plagiarism and to suggest the practical implications which may arise as a result of these diverse views.

3.1.3 Research design

Creswell and Plano-Clark (2011, p.5) define mixed methods research as the 'mixing' of data by "combining or merging the data or having one set of data build the other, or by embedding one data form in another". Denscombe (2011) views mixed methods as the 'relating' of data, with emphasis on triangulation. However it is defined, mixed methods research allows the researcher to move, mix and relate data obtained from both qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection and analysis to obtain a deeper understanding of the issues under investigation. Using mixed methods will provide the information needed to more clearly understand, among other things, the perceptions of academic staff to student plagiarism and to academic integrity policy and procedures than would one method on its own.

The research design implemented in this study is convergent, the most common design in mixed methods research. Initially known as "triangulation design", it occurs when both quantitative and qualitative data are collected and analysed at the same time or phase of the study and then the two sets of data results are merged or triangulated "by directly comparing and contrasting quantitative statistical results with qualitative findings for corroboration and validation purposes to give an overall interpretation" (Cresswell & Plano-Clark, 2011, p.77).

The data in this study have been collected sequentially, beginning with qualitative data obtained from both the academic integrity policies and procedures of four, public Australian universities and focus groups, followed by quantitative data from a survey instrument and concluding with qualitative data obtained from semi-structured interviews.

Data from the documents and focus groups were analysed to find themes, and the results of this analysis were then used to prepare the survey instrument. The survey instrument was subsequently administered online and the results from the survey were analysed to develop the questions to be asked in the semi-structured interviews. More detailed explanations of the data collection methods and analysis used in this research are found in sections 3.3 and 3.4.

3.1.4 Theoretical approaches

A theoretical approach may be defined as a particular framework or theory which guides the researcher and their research questions when approaching the data (Cresswell & Plano Clark, 2011). Theoretical approaches drawn from the social sciences such as Bourdieu's (1988) theory of habitus and Weber's (1962) theory of power were considered as were the psychological or behavioural theories utilised in some of the studies outlined in the review of the literature. However, none of these approaches seemed a perfect fit and appeared too restrictive to explain and interpret the findings from this study. Taking into consideration that firstly, approaches utilised in other studies on the issue were diverse and varied; secondly, that mixed methods allows for a mixing of theoretical approaches; and thirdly, in light of the researcher's own philosophical stance of pragmatism, it was decided that no one theoretical approach could address the complexity of the data obtained. Thus, grounded theory and document analysis were the two approaches that were used in the analysis and interpretation of data obtained from this research.

Grounded theory

The focus group data, survey results and interviews were analysed using the grounded theory framework of Strauss and Corbin (1990) where "the inquirer generates a general explanation of a process, action or interaction shaped by the views of a large number of participants" (Strauss & Corbin, 1998 in Creswell, 2007, p.55). This is the first theoretical approach used in this study.

Although this approach originates from the qualitative research paradigm, it is useful in mixed methods studies where one is attempting to make sense of the data though generating a theory or a schema to help explain the perceptions of academic staff to academic integrity policy and procedures as well as their perceptions of student plagiarism.

In explaining their theory, Anselm Strauss and Juliet Corbin state that "grounded theory seeks not only to uncover relevant conditions but also to determine how the *actors* under investigation *actively respond* to these *conditions*, and to the *consequences* of their actions" (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, p.419). Applying the terminology of grounded theory to this study,

it can be said that “actors” are the academic staff at the four public Australian universities; “conditions” include the academic integrity policies and procedures found at these institutions together with incidences of student plagiarism; “actively respond” refers to how these academic staff perceive their institution’s academic integrity policies and procedures and how they respond to incidences of student plagiarism; while “consequences” refers to the effects of their perceptions and responses on all parties involved.

Grounded theorists can vary in their views to theory generation. Traditionalists such as Strauss (1990) suggest that the researcher acts as an independent, objective observer while others like Charmaz (2005, in Cresswell, 2007) and Clarke (2005, in Cresswell, 2007) view the researcher as someone who participates in the whole process in a reflexive way and essentially develops a theory based on their own view, “learning about the experience within embedded, hidden networks, situations and relationships, and making visible hierarchies of power, communication and opportunity” (Cresswell, 2007, p56.). The researcher sought to be as objective as possible despite being a sessional academic staff and did not become an active participant in this study in an effort to reduce any possible bias when developing a theory or set of concepts. Issues of bias are addressed in more detail later in this chapter.

Grounded theory moves back and forth between inductive and deductive thinking: “a constant interplay between proposing and checking” (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, p.111). This terminology of moving back and forth is also consistent with the paradigm and mixed methods research design employed in this study.

Document analysis

The second theoretical approach used in this research is document analysis. The academic integrity policies and procedures from the four institutions were analysed using document analysis based on a combination of the work on content analysis by Krippendorf (2004) and the framework of Miles and Huberman (1994). Essentially, the documents were analysed at the word or semantic level to understand the definitions of plagiarism provided by each university, and these definitions were then compared with the definitions provided by the participants in the survey instrument. The definitions provided by the academic staff were also analysed using document analysis. Document analysis was also used in understanding the responses to plagiarism as set out in the four institutions’ policies and procedures, and also the responses by academic staff and by institutional representatives to the three vignettes described in the survey instrument.

Document analysis, an essentially qualitative research method, has been defined as "a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from texts or other meaningful matter to the contexts of their use" (Krippendorf, 2004, p 18). Miles and Huberman (1994) suggest an interactive framework for analysing documents and other forms of data types which starts with data reduction, then data display and finally data verification. Data should be coded using key themes and themes that appear to be central or are used frequently (Miles & Huberman, 1994). In this study, document analysis was used to analyse the data collected from the academic integrity policies and procedures of the four public institutions and the definitions of plagiarism provided by academic staff in the survey instrument.

Figure 3.1 shows an adapted version of the Miles and Huberman (1994) framework. Essentially the process is continuous, beginning with data reduction where the data is reduced without losing information, followed by coding where the data is organised under central or frequently appearing themes. The data is then displayed in a clear and organised manner to enable conclusions to be derived from it. Finally, the conclusions are verified by going back to the data to check that the propositions made are meaningful.

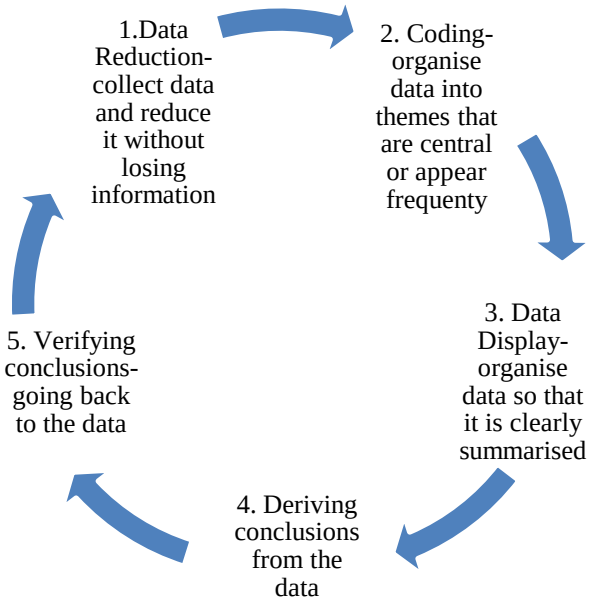
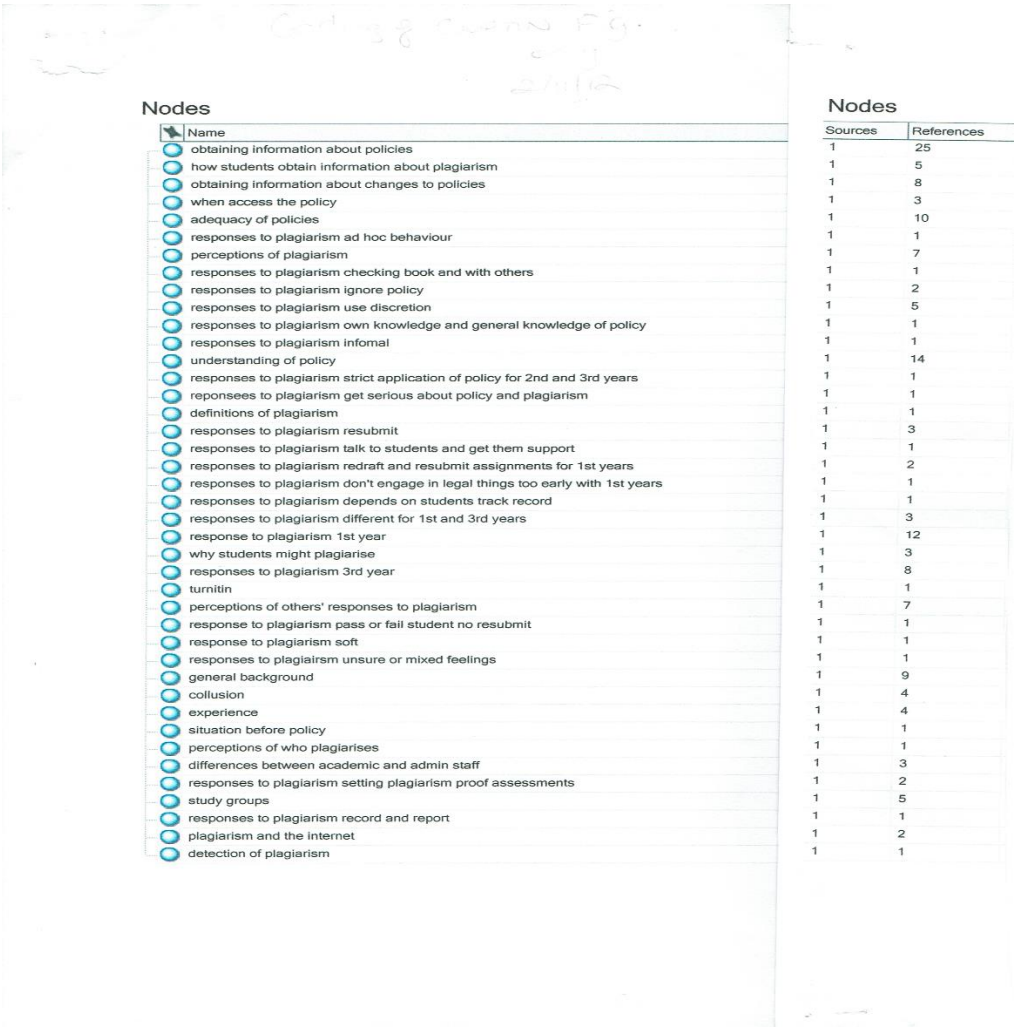


Figure 3.1: Document analysis framework (adapted from Miles & Huberman, 1994)

In terms of the practical application of Miles and Humberman's (1994) framework to this study, the researcher did not reduce the data but rather it was coded and recoded to elicit hey themes. Figure 3.2 shows the list of the nodes elicited from the first focus group, using NVIVO software. As can be seen, there were many nodes at first and these were later reduced. There was no loss of data, only more refined themes. Figure 3.2 shows the difficult

faced by the researcher when using NVIVO software with a grounded theory approach to elicit key themes, an issue outlined by Bringer, Johnston and Brackenridge (2004).



Nodes

Name	Sources	References
obtaining information about policies	1	25
how students obtain information about plagiarism	1	5
obtaining information about changes to policies	1	8
when access the policy	1	3
adequacy of policies	1	10
responses to plagiarism ad hoc behaviour	1	1
perceptions of plagiarism	1	7
responses to plagiarism checking book and with others	1	1
responses to plagiarism ignore policy	1	2
responses to plagiarism use discretion	1	5
responses to plagiarism own knowledge and general knowledge of policy	1	1
responses to plagiarism infomal	1	1
understanding of policy	1	14
responses to plagiarism strict application of policy for 2nd and 3rd years	1	1
reponsees to plagiarism get serious about policy and plagiarism	1	1
definitions of plagiarism	1	1
responses to plagiarism resubmit	1	3
responses to plagiarism talk to students and get them support	1	1
responses to plagiarism redraft and resubmit assignments for 1st years	1	2
responses to plagiarism don't engage in legal things too early with 1st years	1	1
responses to plagiarism depends on students track record	1	1
responses to plagiarism different for 1st and 3rd years	1	3
response to plagiarism 1st year	1	12
why students might plagiarise	1	3
responses to plagiarism 3rd year	1	8
turnitin	1	1
perceptions of others' responses to plagiarism	1	7
response to plagiarism pass or fail student no resubmit	1	1
response to plagiarism soft	1	1
responses to plagiairsm unsure or mixed feelings	1	1
general background	1	9
collusion	1	4
experience	1	4
situation before policy	1	1
perceptions of who plagiarises	1	1
differences between academic and admin staff	1	3
responses to plagiarism setting plagiarism proof assessments	1	2
study groups	1	5
responses to plagiarism record and report	1	1
plagiarism and the internet	1	2
detection of plagiarism	1	1

Figure 3.2: Coding of focus group data using NVIVO

3.1.5 Summary of Methodology used

Adopting a pragmatist approach, this study utilised mixed methods research and design as enunciated by Cresswell and Plano-Clark (2011) to explore the perceptions of academic staff in four Western Australian public universities of their institution's academic integrity policies and procedures and also their responses to student plagiarism. The reason for using mixed methods in this research is that it allows for both quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection and analysis to be utilised and allows flexibility in the choice of one or more philosophical frameworks to be used without being tied down to any specific paradigm. Pragmatism was the best fit as a paradigm for this study as it allows for both objective and subjective views of the world (Cresswell & Plano-Clark, 2011; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003).

Two theoretical approaches were used to analyse the quantitative and qualitative data collected through the use of institutional documents, focus groups, an online survey and semi-structured interviews. The framework of document analysis as outlined set out by Miles and Huberman (1994) was adopted for use in this study. It was used to analyse definitions of plagiarism contained in institutional documents obtained from the four public universities and also in the responses provided by academic staff in the focus groups and survey instruments.

Grounded theory as enunciated by Strauss and Corbin (1990) was used to analyse the rich, qualitative data obtained from the academic staff participants in the focus groups and interviews. Using a grounded theory approach, it was possible to generate models for defining plagiarism and for understanding why academic staff respond to student plagiarism in the way they do.

Table 3.1 summarises the methodology, paradigm, approach and design used in this study is found in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: *Summary of methodology, paradigm, approach and design of this study (adapted from Cresswell & Plano-Clark, 2011)*

Components	Elements of mixed methods in this study
Content area and field of study	Academic integrity policies; student plagiarism; academic staff understandings of student plagiarism; academic staff responses to student plagiarism
Philosophical foundations	Pragmatism
Theoretical foundations	Grounded theory and document analysis
Content purpose	To understand the perceptions of academic staff of their academic integrity policies and procedures and their understandings of student plagiarism and investigate the reasons for any inconsistencies or non-alignment
Sample (for QUANTITATIVE)	Survey n=226
Data collection	Online survey including a matrix (scales to measure attitudes)
Data analysis	Descriptive statistics
Sample (for QUALITATIVE)	Focus groups n=9 Interviews n=26 Policies and related documents n=6
Data collection	Documents (policies, procedures and artefacts) from university websites/online materials Semi-structured interviews Focus groups
Data analysis	Document analysis and grounded theory
Reasons for mixed-methods	Need to relate quantitative measures of attitudes/consistency with qualitative measures of attitudes/consistency to get a more complete picture
Priority of strands	Equal
Timing of the strands	Mostly sequential QUALITATIVE-QUANTITATIVE-QUALITATIVE (focus group-survey-interviews) but one concurrent QUALITATIVE (documents)
Primary points of mixing (point of interface)	Data analysis and interpretation
Mixed methods design type	Convergent
Notation	QUANTITATIVE + QUALITATIVE =complete understanding

A mixed methodology is the best fit for this study as it allows for both qualitative and quantitative methods to be used in the different stages of the research to answer the research questions. Table 3.2 outlines the research phases and how the methods of data collection and analysis were used to answer specific research questions.

Table 3.2: *Linking methodology with the research questions of this study*

Research phases	Methods used	Data collection-methods used	Data analysis-theories used	Research questions*
Stage 1	Qualitative	Focus groups Documents	Grounded theory Document analysis	1,3,4,5 1,2,5,6
Stage 2	Quantitative	Online survey	Document analysis	1,2,3,4,5,6,7
Stage 3	Qualitative	Interviews	Grounded theory	3,4,5,6,7

***Research Question 1**= How is the term 'student plagiarism' understood by academic staff at four Western Australian public universities?

Research Question 2= To what extent are academic staff understandings of the term 'student plagiarism' consistent with how the term is expressed in the academic integrity policy of their institution?

Research Question 3= What are the perceptions of academic staff of student plagiarism in their institution?

Research Question 4= What are the perceptions of academic staff of their institution's academic integrity policy and procedures?

Research Question 5= How do academic staff respond to incidences of student plagiarism in their institution?

Research Question 6= To what extent do the responses of academic staff to incidences of student plagiarism in their institution align with the academic integrity procedures of their institution?

Research Question 7= What are the reasons for lack of alignment, if any in academic staff responses to student plagiarism?

3.2 Participants

Data for this research were obtained from the Perth campuses of the four public universities in Western Australia, and primarily from two sources, namely, the institutional documents of these institutions and the academic staff employed there.

3.2.1 The four Western Australian public universities

There are five universities in Western Australia with only one of these being private and the other four being public and subject to the laws of the Commonwealth Government of Australia. This research explores and analyses both the institutional documents that relate to student plagiarism or academic integrity and the academic staff that are employed at the four public universities in this State. The rationale for choosing these particular institutions of higher learning is that they appear to be representative of most universities in Australia due to their diversity in terms of their origins and areas of specialisation. According to Marginson and Considine (2000), universities in Australia may be identified as being one of five types; namely, *Sandstone* universities which are the oldest in each State, *Redbricks* which are large in terms of their size, academic role and incomes, but holding less status as Sandstone institutions, *Gumtrees* which were founded between 1960 and 1975 when there was a period

of expansion in public finance, *Unitechs* which are large, vocational and industry based institutions, and *New Universities* which were founded after 1976. The four institutions in this study represent all but one of these types.

For the purposes of this study, and to protect the anonymity of participants, the four West Australian universities have been de-identified.

It is believed that findings from these four institutions and their academic staff will give comprehensive regional coverage of the issues explored in this study. For this reason, the researcher decided that only metropolitan campuses of these four institutions would be studied. Other reasons for limiting the participants of this study to the metropolitan campuses include the fact that each institution had a number of campuses not only outside of the Perth metropolitan area but also in other countries and it would be difficult to identify the academic staff working in these campuses as their details were not available on the universities' websites. Also it was difficult to know what support these academic staff had (e.g. in terms of their access to policies and procedures) at campuses outside of Perth and Australia.

To maintain the anonymity of the participants, and in keeping in line with the conditions of ethics approval given for this research, the institutions are named as University A, University B, University C and University D, respectively. In some tables in this thesis, the universities have been colour coded to allow for better readability.

University A
University B
University C
University D

Brief descriptions of data obtained from the four Western Australian public universities

University A began as an institute of technology and has a population of over 40, 000 students and about 3,700 academic staff spread over its main campus in Perth, overseas and regional campuses. It is the largest of the universities examined both in terms of numbers of students and campuses. It can be classified as a *Unitech* institution according to Marginson and Considine (2000). Information obtained from the human resource department of this institution state that at the time this research was undertaken University A had 689 full-time academic staff, 628 academic part-time/limited staff and 2419 sessional academic staff at its

Perth campus (Pers. comm. Kelvin Lee, March 16, 2011). The following sample sizes were obtained from University A:

- Documents n=1
- Focus group participants n=3
- Survey respondents n=91
- Interview respondents n=10

University B began as a teacher training college and achieved university status in the 1990s. It may be classified as a *New University* according to Marginson and Considine (2000). It has two metropolitan campuses in Western Australia and is the second largest public institution with a student population of just over 20,000. Information obtained from the institution's human resources department and its website show that at the time of this research, the university had 522 full-time academic staff and 139 part-time academic staff and 105 casual academic staff (Pers. comm. Nicole Stewart, May 9, 2011). The following sample sizes were obtained from University B:

- Documents n=2
- Focus group participants n=2
- Survey respondents n=50
- Interview respondents n=5

University C, constituted in the 1970s, may be defined as a 'boutique' university in that it is the smallest of the four institutions in terms of student size of approximately 18,000 students, and in terms of its offerings of a range of specialised courses. It may be classified as a *Gumtrees* institution according to Marginson and Considine (2000). It has no overseas campuses and only one regional campus. At the time of this study, information obtained from the human resource department stated that University C had 463 full time academic staff, 114 part-time academics and 805 sessional and casual/contract academics (Pers. comm. Linda Barton, July, 7, 2011). The following sample sizes were obtained from University C:

- Documents n=2
- Focus group participants n=0
- Survey respondents n=35
- Interview respondents n=8

University D is the oldest of WA's public institutions, having been established in the early 1900s. It may be classified as a *Sandstone* university according to Marginson and Considine (2000). It is considered the state's most prestigious university, being part of the Group of Eight in Australia and having a strong research focus. Data from the institution's website and from emails with its human resource officers show that in 2011, the institution had 750 full-time academics (from "teaching and research" and "teaching only" categories), 123 part-time academics and approximately 298 sessional or casual academic staff (Pers. comm. Luke Minchin, July 4, 2011). The following sample sizes were obtained from University D:

- Documents n=1
- Focus group participants n=4
- Survey respondents n=50
- Interviewee respondents n=3

It is important to note that these four institutions will not be compared and contrasted, per se. It is not the intention of the researcher to investigate which is the "best" in terms of their academic integrity policies and procedures and where the perceptions and responses of their academic staff to student plagiarism most align. Rather, this study explores each institution's academic integrity policies and procedures and each institution's academic staff perceptions of these policies and procedures and their responses to incidences of student plagiarism to explore the degrees of consistency and alignment between these institutions and those employed therein. In essence, this study ties together contemporary academic staff and their institutions under the common threads of 'academic integrity', 'plagiarism' and 'policies and procedures'. A summary of the sources of data used in this study, including the sample sizes obtained from each method of data collection is found in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3: *Sources of data and sample sizes obtained from methods of data collection used in this study*

UNIVERSITIES	DOCUMENTS	FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANTS	SURVEY RESPONDENTS	INTERVIEWEES
A	1	3	91	10
B	2	2	50	5
C	2	0	35	8
D	1	4	50	3
TOTAL	n=6	n=9	n=226	n=26

3.2.2 The academic staff

The key participants in this research were the academic staff from four Western Australian public universities. Data from 226 academic staff members from the survey, nine from the focus groups and 26 from the interviews were found usable. Although this number appears small and thus makes it difficult to generalise the results to the entire population of academic staff in Australian institutions of higher learning, the number is representative of the sample population in terms of the response rate obtained from the original numbers invited to participate. For example, the survey instrument was sent via email to 420 academic staff from University C and 50 academic staff responded (n=50), giving a response rate of 12%. For University D, the survey was emailed to 913 academic staff and 50 (n=50) responded, giving a low response rate of 5%. The response rates for Universities A and B cannot accurately be determined as the number of academic staff who received the survey instrument is uncertain since academic staff from these universities were not individually emailed but rather were emailed via the universities' own internal communications systems. The participants were chosen as representing a homogenous group limited to academic staff working in the four Western Australian public universities and easily identifiable as such a group.

It is important to acknowledge that the data from this small-scale study is not generalisable as the study took place in only one State in Australia and was limited to the Perth campuses of the four public Western Australian institutions. However, the study makes an original contribution in terms of the 'three-view' model which is explained in detail Chapter 5 of this thesis.

3.3 Methods of data collection

Data in this study were collected from two main sources-documents relevant to the issue of plagiarism from the four institutions and the academic staff from these universities. In most cases the documents were policies and procedures but in some instances they appeared to be 'higher order' documents called rules and regulations. All however dealt with the issue of academic integrity and all were used as they contained the definitions of plagiarism and outlined procedures and responses to student plagiarism required to be followed by those working and studying in these institutions. Data from the academic staff were collected through the use of focus groups, a survey and semi-structured interviews.

3.3.1 Documents –academic integrity policies and procedures of four Western Australian public universities

The documents relating to academic integrity and in particular plagiarism, of the four Western Australian public universities were found on the official websites of these

institutions. These documents were current and up-to date as at the date collection of data began in April 2008 and all but one document from one institution were reviewed by the time the collection of data was completed in November 2011. The revisions made in University A's policy and procedures document in 2010 was administrative in nature and did not affect the actual content or philosophy behind the document. Importantly, the definition of plagiarism found in the document was not altered, nor were the procedures for responding to plagiarism amended by the review. At the time of writing this thesis, a review of the documentation revealed that only the title of the document from University A had been amended. The document is now called "Management of Plagiarism Policy"; however, the definition of plagiarism provided by this institution in its documents remains unchanged.

A summary of the types and titles of the documents which were collected from each of the four public Australian universities in this study is found in the Table 3.4.

Table 3.4: *Types and titles of institutional documents obtained from Universities A-D*

UNIVERSITY	TYPE OF DOCUMENT	TITLE OF DOCUMENT
A	Policy and procedures	*Plagiarism Policy and Procedure, 2011*
B	Rules	*Academic Misconduct Rules ,2007*
		Academic Misconduct Protocol
C	Policy	*Assessment Policy, 2011*
	Regulations	*Student Discipline Regulation, 2009*

3.3.2 Focus groups

A focus group may be defined as "a carefully planned series of discussions designed to obtain perceptions on a defined area of interest in a permissive, nonthreatening environment" (Kreuger & Casey, 2000, p.5). In this study a total of nine academic staff (n=9) from the sample population participated in two focus groups.

The focus groups were conducted primarily as a method to inform the development of the survey instrument through collection of preliminary information on the general issues of student plagiarism and academic integrity policies and procedures from a smaller number of participants who form part of the sample population.

Another reason why focus groups were used is that they are an efficient way of providing insight into the perceptions of a small group of participants which might otherwise be difficult to obtain using quantitative data alone. Thus focus groups, rather than interviews were initially used for their economy and also because they provide synergies through the interaction among and between participants which interviews cannot.

As this research explores the perceptions of academic staff to academic integrity policies and procedures and to student plagiarism, using focus groups helped in obtaining views and feelings on what might be considered a sensitive topic. The literature suggests that participants feel comfortable to share their views with their peers in a relaxed environment and hearing someone else talk about issues they have encountered helps them voice their opinions (Bloor, Frankland, Thomas & Stewart, 2000). It is believed that participants in the focus groups in this study spoke open and honestly about their personal experiences of plagiarism by their students.

In addition, the use of focus groups was of assistance in finding common themes, phrases and vocabulary among the participants so that a subsequent survey, administered to the sample population, could contain relevant questions written in a vocabulary which could be understood by all.

In terms of selection of participants, twelve academic staff from all of the four public universities were invited via their work emails to take part in focus groups. These twelve were chosen by the researcher from previous interactions with them or from recommendations by other academic staff as being knowledgeable in the field. It is believed that they were representative of the subjects of this study as they were academic staff in their respective institutions and some of them had encountered and dealt with issues of student plagiarism. Of those invited, a total of nine academic staff participated in two focus groups held in April 2008 at two of the institutions researched. Choosing familiar and comfortable environments (and providing refreshments) is important so that participants feel relaxed and happy to answer questions so that their responses are given freely and honestly (Kreuger, 1988).

Although the number of participants in each of the two focus groups appears small, a range of six to eight participants is considered the optimal size by some researchers (Bloor, Frankland, Thomas & Stewart, 2000) as more than this number means that not all voices may be heard on the recording. Furthermore, it would have been difficult to distinguish between the individual participants' voices during transcription if there were too many speaking in the focus groups and they spoke all at once.

There was a total of nine participants in the focus groups (n=9). The first focus group was convened at University A and consisted of four participants from Universities A and B. The second focus group, convened at University D, consisted of five participants from Universities A, B and D. Despite efforts to invite participants from University C and tentative

acceptances from these participants, none could be available at the times and places set for the focus groups. Two focus groups were seen as sufficient to generate enough ideas or themes or questions for the development of the survey instrument.

All participants in the focus groups were invited, through the use of their work email addresses, to attend one of two focus groups. A copy of this email invitation is in Appendix A. This email gave information about the focus group, and participants were informed at the outset that their answers would be recorded by audio tape but that they would remain anonymous and would be de-identified. Participants were given a guide sheet containing five general questions and a "vignette" , which outlined a hypothetical situation involving student plagiarism, prior to participating in the focus groups. They also signed a consent form at the start. A copy of the consent form is in Appendix B and the guide sheet used in the focus groups is in Appendix C.

Each focus group ran for approximately 45 minutes with the data being recorded onto both an electronic tape and a cassette tape as a backup in case the electronic recording system failed recording system failed to function properly. An independent note-taker or scribe, who was also an academic staff member at one of the four institutions, was present at each of the focus group sessions. These notes were referred to when the recordings became inaudible. The results from the focus groups were transcribed and the results presented in Chapter 4. The transcripts from both focus groups are in Appendix D.

As the primary aim of the focus groups was to inform the survey instrument, the participants were vital in providing themes, definitions and vocabulary which could be understood by the sample population and which could be incorporated into the survey instrument which was the second method of data collection used in this study.

3.3.3 Survey

A survey is a structured instrument consisting of a number of questions and one of the most common methods used to collect quantitative data (Bryman, 2008). The survey in this study was administered as the second stage of this mixed methods research using *QuestionPro.com*, an online service to assist with preparing and disseminating online surveys. The survey instrument was the largest method used in this research in terms of the number of questions it contained and the number of responses it generated from the sample population. The survey instrument was developed after both pre-pilot and pilot surveys were sent to a smaller number of the sample population who were familiar with academic integrity policies and procedures in their institution and had some experience in responding to plagiarism by students. This

process of development and detailed information about the pre-pilot, pilot and final survey are outlined below.

Pre-pilot and pilot surveys

From the focus group findings, the first version of the survey, a pre-pilot survey, was developed. Purposive sampling took place with a hard copy version of the pre-pilot survey emailed to the work email address of all participants from the focus groups and 20 other academic staff from the four institutions who had some experience in the area of plagiarism. A total of 17 respondents replied. These respondents were asked not only to complete the survey but to edit it if necessary and add comments. This pre-pilot survey was lengthy, consisting of more than 50 questions of which 12 were vignettes which required written answers. The feedback received from these respondents was that the survey was too long and that the vignettes took a considerable amount of time to answer. Based on this feedback, the vignettes were later reduced to three as this number of vignettes was felt to be sufficient enough in terms of being varied and being able to cover a diverse range of scenarios of student plagiarism which might be faced by academic staff.

Based on feedback received from the respondents of the pre-pilot survey, a pilot survey was then developed using the online service *QuestionPro.com*. It was decided to use the online service *QuestionPro.com*, after researching similar software, to prepare and administer the survey electronically as the online survey could reach more respondents more effectively and economically and allowed for a computer adaptive approach.

Fifteen academic staff from the sample population from the four institutions were invited, through the use of their work emails, to complete the pilot survey which was sent as a link in the email. They were also provided with a feedback form as an email attachment to elicit their thoughts on the pilot survey, to investigate how long they took to complete the pilot survey and to see if there was room for improvements to the instrument. Fourteen respondents completed the pilot survey and of these, five completed the feedback form. A copy of the feedback form is in Appendix E.

The final online survey

Based on the feedback received from the respondents to the pilot survey, the survey was further amended to clarify some questions, remove others, and add more opportunities for respondents to add their own comments. The final online survey instrument contained 35 closed and open-ended questions. These questions sought the following information:

- Questions 1-11: Demographic information, including age, gender, nationality, years of experience in tertiary education;
- Questions 12-16: Experiences with academic integrity policies and procedures.
- Question 17: Understandings of the term student plagiarism.
- Question 18-25: Experiences of student plagiarism.
- Question 26: Perceptions and attitudes of academic staff of academic integrity policies and procedures and student plagiarism.
- Question 27: Provision for further comments.
- Questions 28-34: Responses to three vignettes outlining three different incidences of student plagiarism and factors considered important in these responses.
- Question 35: Provision for further comments.

The final question invited respondents who were interested in a follow-up interview to leave their work email address which was kept separate from the survey questions so that their responses remained anonymous and they could not be identified from them. A copy of the final survey is in Appendix F.

The final, online survey instrument was administered in a number of ways in an effort to reach as much of the sample population as possible. Academic bounce lists were utilised to administer the online survey for University A, advertising in an online magazine was used for University B, and sending an email invitation to participate using *QuestionPro.com* was utilised for Universities C and D.

For University A, the survey was able to be administered through the use of academic bounce lists which meant that the survey would have been sent to all academic staff teaching at University A's metropolitan campus. The survey was attached as a link to this "all-staff" email which included information about this study, the supervisors to contact if there were any questions and an invitation to participate in the study. A copy of this email invitation can be found in Appendix G.

This method of dissemination was not possible for the other universities where different methods were employed. The perceived advantage of using this method is that ideally all of the sample population is invited to participate in the study. Anonymity of the participants is also maintained using this method of sending out the survey as individual email addresses are not used. The disadvantage of using this method of dissemination of the online survey is that the actual number of academic staff who received the email invitation and survey cannot be

determined. There may be instances where academic staff may not have been included on the "bounce lists" and thus would not have received the survey. It can only be said that at the time the survey was administered, the total number of academic staff (including full-time, part-time and sessional academics) employed at University A's metropolitan campus was approximately 3, 700.

For University B, the survey was administered electronically as a link to an advertisement placed in the university's online magazine for staff on the 11th and 25th February, 2010 calling for participants. A copy of the advertisement with a link to the survey which was placed in the online magazine of University B is in Appendix H. In addition to this advertisement, emails were sent to the Heads of School at this institution, asking them to forward the link to the online survey on to academic staff from their respective schools and departments. This was done in an effort to increase the chances of more academic staff becoming aware of the survey and to reach more of the sample population which might not have read the advertisement to participate in the survey in the two occasions that it was advertised in the online magazine. A copy of the letter sent to the Heads of School at University B is in Appendix I. The perceived advantage of using these two methods of dissemination of the survey for University B was that as much of the sample population as possible could be reached. As with University A, the methods of dissemination used for University B meant that the total number of staff who received the survey remained unclear. What is known is that at the time the survey was administered there were approximately 770 academic staff (full-time, part-time and casual) at University B's metropolitan campuses.

For universities C and D, respondents were invited to participate in the online survey using the online service *QuestionPro.com*. Academic staff were sent an invitation to their work email address. The names and email addresses of academic staff from these two institutions were obtained through the staff lists which were publicly available from the universities' websites. At the time the survey was administered, University C had 463 full time academic staff, 114 part-time academics and 805 sessional and casual/contract academics (Pers. comm. Linda Barton, July, 7, 2011); however only 420 names were listed on the university's website. At the time the survey was administered, University D had 750 full-time academics (from "teaching and research" and "teaching only" categories), 123 part-time academics and approximately 298 sessional/casual academic staff (Pers. comm. Luke Minchin, July 4, 2011), but only 913 names were listed on the university's website. The online survey was therefore administered only to those academic staff whose names were found on the university's website which is accessible to the public. Thus a total of 420 academic staff from

University C and 913 academic staff from University D were personally invited via their work emails to participate in the online survey.

Before these email invitations could be sent to academic staff from Universities C and D, clearance from *QuestionPro.com* had to be obtained to enable the online survey to be disseminated using the service. This was obtained via a telephone call to an employee at the head office of *QuestionPro.com* in the US. A copy of the email invitation sent via *QuestionPro.com* is in Appendix J.

In addition, as a prerequisite to administer the survey to academic staff at Universities C and D, the Ethics offices at these universities requested that written permission to administer the survey be obtained from the Heads of Faculties, Schools and Departments at these two institutions. This information that approval had been obtained from the Heads of Faculties, Schools and Departments was included in the email invitation sent to all academic staff from these two institutions via the online service *QuestionPro.com*. A copy of the email letter to the Heads of the Faculties, Schools and Departments at these two institutions can be found in Appendix K.

The method of dissemination utilised for Universities C and D proved lengthy and more time consuming than the methods used for Universities A and B as participants needed to be emailed individually and ethics approvals and clearances needed to be obtained from the institutions. However, the advantage of using this method of dissemination meant the actual number of academic staff from Universities C and D who were invited to participate in the online survey was known.

The final online survey was administered to the respondents from November 2010 to June 2011 when the survey was closed. The timing of the survey was such that it was hoped that most academic staff would have completed the teaching and marking commitments yet still be able to reflect on the year with incidences of student plagiarism, if any, still fresh in their minds. On the other hand, some academic staff had commenced their holidays at the time the survey was first administered as evidenced by the number of out-of-office responses to the email invitation sent to Universities C and D. Due to this reason, the online survey remained open for six months and email reminders were sent to the participants to encourage them to complete the survey.

3.3.4 Interviews

Interviews are a means of understanding the world from a subject's point of view and an ideal method of obtaining rich, qualitative data (Kvale, 2007).

The justification for using interviews as a method of data collection in this current research is that they provide additional and rich information which might not otherwise be obtained from the survey alone. For example, the range and intensity of attitudes and perceptions of academic staff on the issue of student plagiarism and academic integrity policies might become clearer only after interviews were conducted. Another reason for using semi-structured interviews is that they are the best medium for discussing the sensitive topics of student plagiarism and academic integrity policies as academic staff could open up to the researcher without fear of discrimination or retribution by others (Kvale, 1996).

Interviews conducted in this study were semi-structured to enable analysis of responses to the same questions and to keep the interviewer and interviewees on topic. An opportunity was given at the end of the interview to add any further comments and this, together with the narratives given by respondents at the start of the interview, gave rich, detailed, qualitative data.

Interviewees were academic staff who had responded to the online survey and had indicated, in the last question of the survey, their willingness to participate in a follow-up interview. At the end of June 2011, when the online survey was closed, a total of 58 respondents had indicated their interest in an interview and all these were sent an email, to the email address they had provided, inviting them to participate in an interview. A copy of the email invitation sent to interview respondents is in Appendix L.

A total of 27 academic staff indicated that they were willing to be interviewed and, since one became ill, 26 academic staff were ultimately interviewed.

Venues, times and places that were suitable to the interview respondents were organised. Interviews took place over a three month period from August to November, 2011 and were held at the four public universities where the respondents worked. Twenty-four interviews conducted in the respondents' offices and two at cafes on campus. Prior to the start of each interview, the respondents were asked to sign a consent form. A copy of this form is in Appendix M.

Interviews were recorded by using a digital tape recorder as this was the easiest and less intrusive means of gathering data. As respondents might be used to being recorded or used to

recording their own lectures, it was believed that using the digital tape recording was not threatening or uncomfortable to them. No interview respondent objected to signing the consent form or having their interview recorded.

The interview was divided into two parts. In the first part, interviewees were asked to talk about an incident of student plagiarism that they had experienced that they had found frustrating or memorable. The reason why this open-ended question was asked first was to make the interview respondents feel comfortable about speaking about the issue of student plagiarism. In the second part of the interview, the interview respondents were given a sheet of paper with six statements on it and were asked to comment on these statements. The statements, which were obtained from the data from the survey instrument, were paired and acted as prompts to elicit responses in the event that interviewees could not respond to the first part of the interview. In addition, these statements were included to explore them further in an interview setting to elicit common themes, ideas or notions which may not have been elicited from other methods of data collection used in this research. A copy of the guided questions sheet given to interview respondents is in Appendix N.

The shortest interview time was 16 minutes and the longest was 45 minutes, with the average time being 25 minutes. The interview respondents were de-identified and numbered 1-26 in the order in which they were interviewed. Transcripts of all the interviews, with interview respondents being de-identified and being numbered 1-26, is in Appendix O.

Most of these interviews were transcribed using a professional transcription service due to limitations in time and personal circumstances which left the researcher unable to type for some time. These transcripts were then checked by the researcher against the original digital recordings and corrected where necessary to ensure they were accurate representations of the interviews that had taken place.

3.4 Methods of data analysis

The data obtained from the documents in this study were analysed by the researcher using document analysis based on the framework by Miles and Huberman (1994).

The data obtained from the remaining methods of collection were analysed with the help of computer assisted software packages. In particular, SPSS software was used for analysis of the quantitative data obtained from the survey instrument while NVIVO software assisted as a tool for analysing the qualitative data obtained from the focus groups and semi-structured interviews.

The data obtained from the focus groups and interviews were analysed using the grounded theory approach developed by Strauss and Corbin (1990) which involves finding common themes, ideas or notions in the hope of generating a theory or theories to help understand why academic staff view plagiarism by their students in the way they do and to help explain how they respond to issues of student plagiarism.

Some research suggests that using grounded theory does not sit perfectly with the use of computer assisted software like NVIVO. Kaczynski (2004) suggests that it may be the case that this software affects or alters data analysis. However, other writers extol the benefits in using NVIVO to help generate theory (Wickham & Woods, 2005; Bringer, Johnston & Brackenridge, 2004). For this research, the advantages of using NVIVO outweighed the disadvantages as it was found useful because the data are stored electronically, without the need for a paper trail, so reducing the chances of losing it, and also because it is an efficient means of carefully managing and reducing the data into comprehensible theories or observations and supporting the coding process (Wickham & Woods, 2005). After auto-coding took place using NVIVO, further manual coding of the qualitative data was also undertaken by the researcher to elicit as many themes as were reasonable and viable and in an effort to ensure that themes, concepts and notions were not omitted. However, what was found by the researcher was that manual coding actually helped with reducing the themes or concepts found when using NVIVO.

The methods of data analysis used in this study are elaborated in the sections which follow.

3.4.1 Document analysis of academic integrity policies and procedures and definitions of plagiarism

Definitions of plagiarism obtained from the documents relating to academic integrity of relating to academic integrity of the four institutions, together with the definitions provided by academic staff in response to Question 17 of the online survey instrument, were analysed

using document analysis based on the framework by Miles and Huberman (1994). Definitions were reduced into key elements and were compared with each other in an endeavour to find a comprehensive definition of student plagiarism.

In the same way, the responses to plagiarism as set out in institutional documents and the responses provided by academic staff to the three vignettes found in the survey, were analysed and compared with each other and with responses expected by academic staff from their university. As institutions are not separate entities and thus requie the use of spokespersons, the responses to student plagiarism which were expected by the four institutions, as outlined in their academic integrity policies and procedures, were provided by their institutional representatives. These respresentatitves consisted of academic staff from the Teaching and Learning Office of each of the four institutions who could be considered experts in the field of academic integrity.

Thus, document analysis was essentially used to provide information in an effort to address some of the research questions. In particular what were the definitions of plagiarism found in the academic integrity documents of the four public institutions and what were the definitions of student plagiarism provided by the academic staff respondents in the online survey. The responses would help address the first two research questions; namely, to explore firstly, whether there were any inconsistencies in the definition of student plagiarism provided by the universities and the definitions given by their academic staff, and, secondly, whether there were any inconsistencies between the responses to student plagiarism as set out in the institutional documents as interpreted by institutional representatives, and the responses suggested by their academic staff.

3.4.2 Analysis of focus groups data

The transcripts from the two focus groups were transcribed and analysed twice, both manually and with the help of NVIVO software, to ensure nothing was omitted and to maximise the concepts generated. The main purpose of the focus groups was to elicit common vocabulary, themes, concepts, ideas or phrases relating to academic integrity and to plagiarism to be used to develop the survey instrument, thus concepts remained general until they could be further reduced based on data obtained from the survey instrument and semi-structured interviews.

3.4.3 Analysis of survey data

Most of the data obtained from the online survey instrument were analysed using descriptive statistics with the aid of SPSS software. The remaining questions, where respondents were

asked for written responses or comments were counted and coded. Using the survey as a method of data collection proved useful in helping to answer all of the seven research questions.

3.4.4 Analysis of interview data

The data obtained from the interviews was analysed using a grounded theory approach. The software package, NVIVO, assisted the researcher in finding common themes or concepts from the 26 academic staff who were interviewed. The concepts generated from the analysis of interview data were reduced and compared with concepts generated from both the focus group data and survey data. Based on analysis of the data from all research methods a number of theories have been proposed to explain the findings of this study.

Figure 3.3 shows a flowchart which presents the methods of data collection and analysis used in this study. It can be seen that the methods of data collection involving the focus groups, online survey and semi-structured interviews ran consecutively as the focus groups informed the survey which then informed the interviews; whereas the method of data collection was performed first and then ran concurrently with the other three methods of data collection in case there were any changes to the academic integrity documents which occurred throughout the course of this research. As will be seen, there were changes to these documents but these were administrative in nature only and therefore did not affect the analysis process.

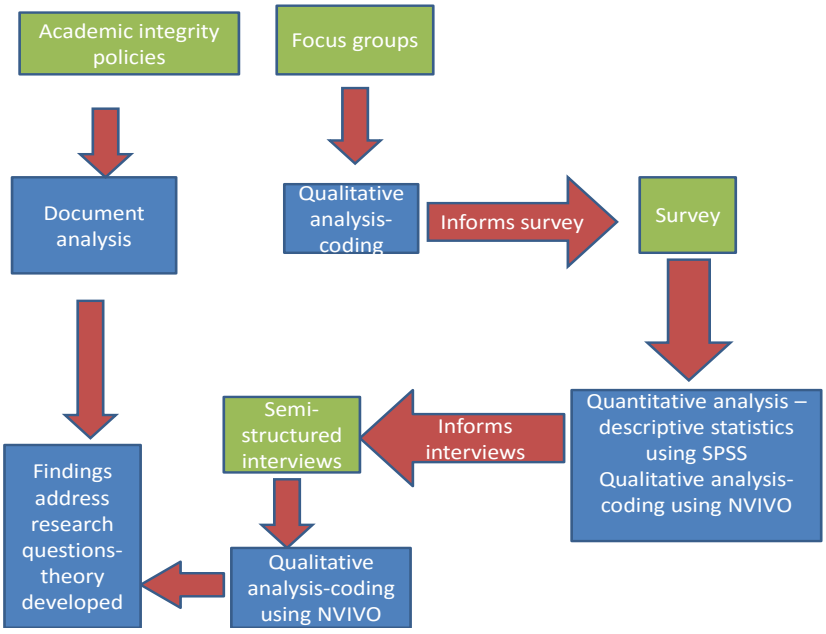


Figure 3.3: Flowchart of methods of data collection and analysis used in this study

Table 3.5 summarises the methods of data collection and analysis used to address the research questions in this study. Table 3.5 may be compared with Table 3.2 which links the overall methodology used with these questions to provide a more comprehensive outline of the methodology employed in this study.

Table 3.5: *Methods of data collection and analysis used to address the research questions*

Data collection	Data analysis	Research questions
Documents	Qualitative. Document analysis based on Miles and Huberman (1994) framework.	1,2,5,6
Focus groups	Qualitative. Coding based on grounded theory of Strauss and Corbin (1990). Aided by the use of NVIVO software.	1, 3,4,5
Survey	Quantitative. Descriptive statistics. Aided by the use of SPSS software. Qualitative. Coding based on grounded theory of Strauss and Corbin (1990). Aided by the use of NVIVO software.	1, 2.3,4,5,6,7
Interviews	Qualitative. Coding based on grounded theory of Strauss and Corbin (1990). Aided by the use of NVIVO software.	3,4,5,6,7

Research Question 1= How is the term 'student plagiarism' understood by academic staff at four Western Australian public universities?

Research Question 2= To what extent are academic staff understandings of the term 'student plagiarism' consistent with how the term is expressed in the academic integrity policy of their institution?

Research Question 3= What are the perceptions of academic staff of student plagiarism in their institution?

Research Question 4= What are the perceptions of academic staff of their institution's academic integrity policy and procedures?

Research Question 5= How do academic staff respond to incidences of student plagiarism in their institution?

Research Question 6= To what extent do the responses of academic staff to incidences of student plagiarism in their institution align with the academic integrity procedures of their institution?

Research Question 7= What are the reasons for lack of alignment, if any in academic staff responses to student plagiarism?

3.5 Issues related to validity in mixed method studies

As this current research involved the utilisation of quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection and analysis, it is important to consider a number of issues related to each of these methods. In particular, the issues related to quantitative methods include reliability and validity and the issues related to qualitative methods include authenticity and believability. However, in mixed methods research, these issues are hard to separate thus the issue of validity will be discussed using the strategies suggested by Cresswell and Plano-Clark (2011, p.239), namely that "validity in mixed-methods research [is defined as] employing strategies that address potential issues of data collection, data analysis, and the interpretations that might compromise the merging or connecting of the quantitative and qualitative strands of the studies and the conclusions drawn from the combination".

Table 3.6 outlines the strategies used in this study for increasing the validity of the data collection methods used. In particular, it can be seen from Table 3.6 that issues of validity area addressed by using the same sample population for each method of data collection to enable constant comparison of the data. In addition, the same research questions were addressed in both the different methods of data collection, namely, in the focus groups, online survey and semi-structured interviews. Refer to Table 3.2 for more information on how the research questions are linked to the methodology.

Table 3.6: *Strategies employed for increasing the validity of data collection methods (adapted from Cresswell & Plano-Clark, 2011)*

Possible issue relating to validity	Strategies employed to address issue
Selection of appropriate individuals	Qualitative and quantitative samples obtained from the same population to make data comparable.
Sample sizes	Use of individuals from the same population.
Separation of data collection	Qualitative and qualitative data collected separately and in order, beginning with institutional documents and followed by focus groups, online survey and finally semi-structured interviews.
Collection of data addresses same topics	The same research questions were addressed in both the quantitative and qualitative data collection. Most methods were able to address more than one research question. Collection of survey data through the use of the online service *QuestionPro.com* and collection of focus group and interview data through face-to-face meetings can be considered valid methods of data collection and can easily be replicated.

Table 3.7 outlines the strategies used in this study for increasing the validity of the methods of data analysis used. In particular, Table 3.7 shows that analysis of quantitative data took place using descriptive statistics aided by the use of SPSS software and analysis of most of the qualitative data using a grounded theory approach to elicit common themes took place with the use of NVIVO software. Both sets of data are initially displayed separately in the Findings chapter of this thesis and are then 'mixed' or compared together to answer the research questions.

Table 3.7: *Strategies employed for increasing the validity of data analysis methods (adapted from Cresswell & Plano-Clark, 2011)*

Possible issue relating to validity	Strategies employed to address issue
Approaches to converge/mix data	Quantitative and qualitative data results displayed both separately and jointly with the research questions in mind.
Tools for analysis	Analysis of data with the aid of software programmes such as SPSS and NVIVO means that steps taken in analysis are stored digitally and are evidence that could be replicated by others in future research. Analysis using these tools also supported by manual coding of qualitative data.
Comparison of data	Quotes and themes (qualitative data) obtained from focus groups and semi-structured interviews used to match statistics (quantitative data) obtained from survey. Further, definitions of plagiarism found in institutional documents were compared with definitions provided by academic staff participants.
Statistics to analyse quantifiable qualitative data	Using descriptive statistics to analyse both quantitative data and qualitative data which could be quantified or counted.

Table 3.8 outlines the strategies utilised in this study for increasing the validity of the methods used in the interpretation of data. In particular, Table 3.8 shows that both quantitative and qualitative data were considered equally important in helping to provide a deeper understanding of the research issue and to help address more completely the research questions. Document analysis as prescribed by Krippendorf (2004) and based on the framework by Miles and Huberman (1994) and grounded theory as enunciated by Strauss and Corbin (1990) are considered well established social science theories which fit in neatly with the mixed methodology and philosophical stance of pragmatism adopted in this research.

Table 3.8: *Strategies employed for increasing the validity of data interpretation methods (adapted from Cresswell & Plano-Clark, 2011.*

Possible issue relating to validity	Strategies employed to address issue
Discussion of mixed methods research questions	Each research question is addressed.
Weighting of data	Both sets of results from quantitative and qualitative data considered jointly and equally to provide a better understanding of the issue.
Use of social science theory	Data from focus groups, survey and interviews interpreted using a grounded theory based on Strauss and Corbin (1990). Data from institutional documents interpreted using document analysis based on Miles and Huberman (1994) framework.

The methods of data collection and analysis employed and the interpretation of results was rigorous and could be easily replicated in future studies, thus helping increase the validity of the methodology in this current research.

3.6 Ethical issues and bias

At all times the researcher was aware that there might be a conflict in their role as both researcher and sessional academic staff member at two of the four institutions in this study. Kvale (2007) suggests the need to over-identify with subjects so as not to lose perspective on the knowledge which could be gained. It is hoped that by utilising a mixed methods approach, together with different methods of data collection and analysis to constantly compare the data, that any researcher bias was minimised.

In terms of ethics approval, documentation was completed to ensure that this research encompassed the maximum amount of security and anonymity for the participants and institutions involved. Ethics approval was formally obtained at two of the four institutions, while written approval was obtained from the Heads of Faculties and Schools at the other two institutions as requested by the research and ethics officers at these universities. Copies of these emails are in Appendices I and K.

3.7 Limitations of this study

This study is limited in a number of ways in terms of its methodology. Although over 200 academic staff responded to the survey, the results obtained from this sample size cannot be generalised to represent the total population of academic staff at these four institutions nor more widely to other Australian public universities. In terms of the survey, more open-ended questions might have been included to elicit more specific details to help address the research questions but this would make the survey long and time-consuming. Limited knowledge of all the functions that could be utilised in SPSS and NVIVO software may also have affected the depth of analysis undertaken, hence the reasons for the additional use of manual coding to elicit common themes.

3.8 Summary of Chapter 3

This chapter has presented the methodology used in this research. A mixed methodology, as enunciated by Cresswell and Plano-Clark (2011) was employed as a means of collecting and analysing both quantitative and qualitative data obtained from documents, focus groups, an online survey and semi-structured interviews. The methodology allowed for a deeper and more comprehensive addressing of the seven research questions.

Mixed methods allows for various philosophical underpinnings, thus the paradigm of pragmatism was chosen as the best fit for this study and for the theoretical stance of the researcher. Document analysis using the framework of Miles and Huberman (1994), together with grounded theory by Strauss and Corbin (1990) were the two approaches used in the collection and analysis of the data.

The participants of this study were the academic staff employed in the four public institutions in Western Australia and the universities themselves. Data were collected over a three year period through institutional documents, focus groups, an online survey and semi-structured interviews. Ethics approval, other approvals requested by the four institutions and consent from all participants were obtained to conduct this research. Participants were de-identified and remain anonymous.

In conclusion, this study employed a mixed methodology to help address, as completely as possible, the research questions posited in the Introduction chapter of this thesis. Utilising mixed methodology requires expertise in the collection, analysis and interpretation of both quantitative and qualitative data which can prove challenging for novice researchers. By closely following the mixed methods approach enunciated by Cresswell and Plano-Clark (2011), by carefully selecting the participants following ethics procedures and by using the well established approaches of grounded theory and document analysis to interpret the results, it is hoped that this research adds to the literature on academic integrity despite the limitations it may have.

The chapter which follows presents the findings from the four methods of data collection utilised in this study.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

This chapter outlines the findings from the four methods of data collection. The findings are grouped according to the research questions of this study which means that they are not presented in the order of data collection, but rather the analysis of the quantitative and qualitative data obtained from institutional documents, focus groups, online survey and semi-structured interviews are 'mixed' to present a more complete picture. The chapter concludes with a summary of the findings which are relevant to the research questions explored.

The use of labelling and colour coding

As part of ethics approval for this research, it was important to protect the anonymity of the four public Australian universities and the academic staff which were the subjects of this study. Accordingly, all participants were de-identified in the collection and analysis of data from the different methods utilised.

Although it was not the intention of this study to compare institutions or the academic staff employed there, it was at times necessary to differentiate both the universities and the academic staff in each to enable some of the research questions to be addressed. For example, the findings from research questions 2 and 6 required analysis by separating the four institutions and their academic staff as the definitions of student plagiarism contained in the policies, together with the responses to student plagiarism contained in the procedures of each university differed.

Labelling of the institutions as "University A", "University B", "University C" and "University D" and assigning a colour code to each institution in some of the tables presented in this chapter has been used not only to de-identify the four universities, but also for better readability as seen in the example below:

University A
University B
University C
University D

4.1 Profile of academic staff

Before presenting the findings to address the seven research questions of this study, a profile of academic staff who participated in this research needs to be established. A profile of the academic staff who responded to the online survey was established from their answers to Questions 1-11 of the online survey. A profile of academic staff who participated in the semi-structured interviews was also able to be established as these interviewees were also the survey respondents.

Profile of survey respondents

The survey instrument was administered electronically using the online service *QuestionPro.com* for a six month period between December 2010 and May 2011 to academic staff from the four public West Australian universities. A total of 257 academic staff responded to the survey. Of these, 226 responses were found usable, with 28 respondents who did not answer any questions and three who did not specify their institution.

Table 4.1 presents a profile of the respondents to the online survey. It can be seen that there is an almost equal portion of males and females and most are between 40 and 50 years of age. The majority of survey respondents are employed fulltime in their institution with almost half being employed there for less than five years. Despite the relatively short number of years employed at their current institution, most survey respondents had a number of years of experience teaching in a tertiary environment, ranging from five to 20 years. Almost all survey respondents have been educated in Australia which may suggest that they are familiar with the Australian higher education sector and with Western notions of plagiarism.

There is an approximately equal distribution of disciplines, with the majority of survey respondents originating from the faculties of Humanities (26%), Health Sciences (23%) and Science (18%). Almost all respondents teach both undergraduate and postgraduate students, including NESB and ESB students.

Table 4.1: *Profile of survey respondents (n=226)*

Gender	Age	Where educated (tertiary)	University where employed	Employment status
Female (54%)	<29 (4%)	Australia (80%)	A (40%)	Full-time (74%)
Male (46%)	30-39 (20%)	USA (5%)	B (23%)	Part-time (11%)
	40-49 (31%)	UK (10%)	C (15%)	Sessional (11%)
	50-59 (33%)	Other (5%)	D (22%)	Other (4%)
	60+ (12%)			

Years teaching at current university	Total years of tertiary teaching experience	Discipline	Type of student taught	Proportion of NESB students taught
< 5 (40%)	< 5 (24%)	Humanities/ Education/Arts (26%)	First year undergraduate (24%)	Most (12%)
5-10 (27%)	5-10 (28%)	Medicine/ Nursing/Health Science (23%)	Other undergraduates (33%)	Quite a few (52%)
11-20 (21%)	11-20 (24%)	Science (18%)	Postgraduates (43%)	Few (36%)
> 20 (12%)	> 20 (24%)	Business (16%)		
		Engineering (7%)		
		Law (3%)		
		Other (7%)		

Profile of interviewees

A total of 52 academic staff who responded to the online survey indicated, in the last question of the survey, that they wished to be interviewed. They were all invited, through their work email addresses, to participate in a face-to-face interview at a time and place convenient to them. Of these academic staff respondents, a total of 26 accepted the invitation and were interviewed at their work spaces in their institutions over a four month period, from August to November, 2011. Interview times ranged from 16 minutes to 45 minutes and were digitally recorded.

All interview participants signed a consent form as found in Appendix M and were provided with a guide sheet as found in Appendix N. They were first asked to describe a situation of plagiarism they had experienced which they found interesting or frustrating to allow them to open up and feel comfortable with the interview. This was then followed by six statements, grouped into pairs, for which respondents were asked to give their opinion. These statements were obtained from analysis of the open ended comments given by academic staff respondents to the survey which the researcher believed required further exploration. Finally, interview participants were given time to provide further comments or opinions if they so required.

All interview data were transcribed and coded with the help of NVIVO software. To protect the anonymity of the interviewees, they were de-identified from their institution and are referred to in this thesis as “INT.1 INT.2, etc,”.

Table 4.2 presents a profile of the interview participants. It can be seen that a slightly higher proportion of females than males and a higher proportion of academic staff from University C participated in the semi-structured interviews. All other percentages remain similar to those found in the profile of the survey respondents in Table 4.1.

Table 4.2: *Profile of interview participants (n=26)*

Gender	Age	Where educated (tertiary)	University where employed	Employment status
Female (65%) Male (35%)	<29 (4%) 30-39 (20%) 40-49 (31%) 50-59 (33%) 60+ (12%)	Australia (80%) USA (12%) UK (4%) Other (4%)	A (39%) B (19%) C (30%) D (12%)	Full-time (80%) Part-time (8%) Sessional (12%) Other (0%)
	Total years of tertiary teaching experience	Discipline	Type of student taught	Proportion of NESB students taught
	< 5 (35%) 5-10 (12%) 11-20 (38%) > 20 (15%)	Humanities/ Education/Arts (31%) Medicine/ Nursing/Health Science (27%) Science (23%) Business (15%) Engineering (0%) Law (0%) Other (4%)	First year undergraduate (23%) Other undergraduates (54%) Postgraduates (23%)	Most (8%) Quite a few (42%) Few (50%)

4.2 Understandings of plagiarism –definitions from institutional documents and academic staff

This section presents the findings relating to understandings of plagiarism by academic staff and seeks to answer the first two research question of this study, namely:

1. *How is the term 'student plagiarism' understood by academic staff at four Western Australian public universities?*

2. *To what extent are academic staff understandings of the term 'student plagiarism' consistent with how the term is expressed in the academic integrity policy of their institution?*

The method of analysis used to answer these two research questions was document analysis. Key terms, hereinafter referred to as 'elements', used by both the institutions and their academic staff in their definitions of student plagiarism' were identified from institutional documents and academic staff respondents to the online survey. The first step taken was to analyse the definitions of plagiarism provided by the four universities as found in their

institutional documents relating to academic integrity. Internet searches of the websites of the four institutions revealed statutes, rules, regulations, policies and procedures which are legally binding on academic staff, and other documents such as guidelines and handbooks which are not necessarily binding but could be used as guidance by those academic staff. In this study, institutional definitions of plagiarism were found primarily in policy documents.

Definitions of student plagiarism were provided by academic staff in their responses to question 17 of the online survey which stated: "*How would you define 'student plagiarism'?"* The elements in the definitions of student plagiarism provided by academic staff were then compared with those found in institutional definitions to reveal any consistencies or inconsistencies.

4.2.1 Institutional definitions of plagiarism

University A's definition of plagiarism

University A's academic integrity policy relating to plagiarism is the *Plagiarism Policy and Procedures, 2011.* The policy was first drafted in 2005 and reviewed in February 2011, at the time the online survey instrument was being administered. Changes made were administrative in nature only and did not affect the definition of plagiarism provided by the university. In its policy, University A makes explicit that one of the objectives of its policy include the desire of the institution to commit itself to academic integrity and uphold the integrity of its award. For this institution, plagiarism is divided into three levels and Level 1 is not considered academic misconduct but a breach of academic integrity. Levels II and III are considered academic misconduct. Only one other university in this research, University D, makes explicit this distinction between what type of plagiarism is considered academic misconduct and what is not.

The definition of student plagiarism provided by University A in its policy is: "presenting the work or property of another person as if it were one's own without appropriate acknowledgement or referencing" (*Plagiarism Policy and Procedures, 2011*). It is followed by examples of what might constitute plagiarism, including:

> *word-for-word copying of sentences or paragraphs from one or more sources which are the work or data of another person (including but not limited to books, articles, themes, unpublished works, working papers, seminar and conference papers, internal reports, lecture notes, tapes or works of creative arts);*
> *closely paraphrasing sentences, paragraphs or themes;*

using another person's ideas, work or research data without due acknowledgment; submitting work which has been produced by someone else on the student's behalf as if it were the work of the student;
submitting one's own previously assessed or published work for assessment or publication elsewhere, without appropriate acknowledgment;
copying or submitting computer files in whole or in part without indicating their origin; and in the case of collaborative projects, falsely representing the individual contributions of the collaborating students where individual contributions are to be identified (Plagiarism Policy and Procedures, 2011).

When analysed, the definition of student plagiarism provided by University A appears to contain six main elements which when taken together provide the institutional definition of plagiarism. These elements are (1) As one's own, (2) presenting, (3) work or property, (4) of, (5) another person, (6) without appropriate acknowledgment or referencing.

University B's definition of plagiarism

University B has no separate academic integrity policy, but rather the issue of student plagiarism is governed by its *Academic Misconduct Rules, 2007*. This is a higher order document than a policy but, like a policy document, is legally binding on academic staff. The rules came into effect in March 2007 and were reviewed in May 2012, a year after the survey in this study was administered. Again, the changes made were administrative in nature and did not affect the definition of plagiarism as found in the document.

The definition of student plagiarism provided by University B is: "*to knowingly or unknowingly present as one's own work the ideas or writings of another without appropriate acknowledgment or referencing*" (*Academic Misconduct Rules, 2007*).

Similar to University A, examples of what might constitute student plagiarism are provided by University B to include:

(a) paraphrasing or copying text without acknowledgment of the sources; and/or
(b) copying, whether identically or in essence, the text of another student's assignment or other students' assignments; and/or
(c) copying, whether identically or in essence, of visual representations (for example cartoons, line drawings, photos, paintings and computer programs) (Academic Misconduct Rules, 2007).

When analysed, the definition provided by University B appears to contain an additional element not seen in the definition provided by University A. Use of the words "knowingly or unknowingly" suggests an element of intent and in the case of University B, a student would be seen to have plagiarised whether or not they intended to. The seven elements which form the definition of student plagiarism for University B are: (1) as one's own, (2) present, (3) ideas or writings, (4) of, (5) another, (6) without appropriate acknowledgment or referencing, (7) knowingly or unknowingly.

University C's definition of plagiarism

University C's definition of student plagiarism is found in its *Assessment Policy, 2011*. This policy was first formulated in 2003 and reviewed in January 2011 at the time the online survey instrument was being administered. Again, the changes made were administrative in nature only and did not affect the definition of plagiarism provided by the university. Unlike definitions provided by the other universities in this study, University C groups together plagiarism and collusion and defines both as including five types of behaviour and gives examples of the types of work to which this definition applies. The definitions of plagiarism and collusion provided by University C's are:

> *1 Inappropriate/inadequate acknowledgement Material copied word for word which is acknowledged as paraphrased but should have been in quotation marks, or material paraphrased without appropriate acknowledgement of its source.*
> *2 Collusion Material produced in concert, collectively or in collaboration with others and giving the false impression that the work is the sole output of the student submitting it for assessment.*
> *3 Verbatim copying Material copied word for word or exactly duplicated without any acknowledgement of the source.*
> *4 Ghost writing Assignment written by third party and represented by student as her or his own work.*
> *5 Purloining Material copied from another student's assignment or work without that person's knowledge. (Assessment Policy, 2011).*

By combining plagiarism and collusion the task of extracting this institution's definition of plagiarism is made more difficult. For the purposes of analysis, the second type of behaviour outlined was omitted as it appears to apply to collusion only. When taking the four other types of behaviour into account, it appears that University C's definition of plagiarism contains an additional element not found in the definitions provided by the other institutions.

The use of the words ‘giving the false impression’ in the definition suggests that ‘deceit’ by a student is necessary for plagiarism to have occurred. Similar to the element of ‘intent’ found in University B’s definition of student plagiarism, the element of deceit may be difficult for academic staff to determine.

Analysis of University C’s definitions was further complicated, not only by the combination of plagiarism and collusion under one definition but also because of the wordiness of the definition. An effort was made to condense the words used without affecting the meaning. It appears that University C’s definition of plagiarism contains seven main elements, namely; (1) his or her own, (2) copied word for word or paraphrased, represented or duplicated (3) material, assignment or work, (4) from (5) third party, another student, the source, (6) inappropriate or inadequate acknowledgement, (7) giving the false impression.

University D’s definition of student plagiarism

University D appears to have no definition of plagiarism in the policy document which deals with the issue, the *University Policy on Academic Conduct: Ethical Scholarship, Academic Literacy and Academic Misconduct, 2011.* This policy was approved in June 2004 and reviewed in October 2011, after the survey was administered but before the semi-structured interviews were conducted. Since the policy document does not contain an explicit definition of plagiarism the change does not affect the results obtained in this study.

A search of the institution’s official website on teaching and learning provides suggests a working definition of plagiarism which can be adopted by faculties within the university. Student plagiarism is defined as: “*the unattributed use of someone else’s words, creations, ideas or arguments as one’s own*” (*Plagiarism, 2012*).

While the *University Policy on Academic Conduct: Ethical Scholarship, Academic Literacy and Academic Misconduct, 2011,* does not specifically provide a definition of student plagiarism, it gives comprehensive details of the types and levels of plagiarism. It defines plagiarism as minor, moderate or major. Minor plagiarism is defined as “*inadequate or inconsistent referencing, paraphrasing too close to the original*” (*University Policy on: Academic Conduct: Ethical Scholarship, Academic Literacy and Academic Misconduct, 2011*).
Moderate plagiarism under the policy document is defined as:

> *recycling an item of assessment from one unit and re-submitting it in complete or substantial form for another assessment; …fabricating or falsifying data,*

> *experimental results or sources of information in an assessment item other than a thesis or dissertation;…[and] colluding with another student about assessable work and representing that as individual work when such collusion has not been specified as acceptable within unit outlines or other assessment requirements (University Policy on: Academic Conduct: Ethical Scholarship, Academic Literacy and Academic Misconduct, 2011).*

Major plagiarism is defined as "…fabricating or falsifying data, experimental results or sources of information in a thesis or dissertation" (*University Policy on: Academic Conduct: Ethical Scholarship, Academic Literacy and Academic Misconduct, 2011*).

In addition to these detailed examples of plagiarism, the policy further describes the three types of plagiarism outlined according to levels and percentages to assist academic staff in determining the extent of plagiarism. Minor plagiarism is classified as Level 1 and less than 10% of the work plagiarised, moderate plagiarism is classified as Level 2 and 10%-25% of the work plagiarised, while major plagiarism is Level 3 with more than 25% of the work plagiarised (*University Policy on: Academic Conduct: Ethical Scholarship, Academic Literacy and Academic Misconduct, 2011).*

When this definition, as found on the university's teaching and learning website, is analysed, it appears to contain six elements, namely; (1) as one's own, (2) use, (3) words, creations, ideas and arguments (4) of, (5) someone else's, (6) unattributed.

Similar to Universities A and C, University D does not consider plagiarism to be academic misconduct when it is minor and when a student in their first semester of study at the university is concerned. University B's position on this point is not made clear in its institutional documents.

From analysis of institutional definitions of student plagiarism, it appears that the four public Australian institutions define plagiarism using similar elements. What is different in each institution is where the definition is found. For Universities A and C the definition is clearly placed in its policy documents, for University B the definition of student plagiarism is found in its rules and for University D it appears that a definition is lacking from a specific institutional document but a working definition of student plagiarism is found on the institution's teaching and learning website. All institutions, except University B, make it explicit in their documents that plagiarism should not be viewed as academic misconduct in certain situations, for example, the student is in their first year of their first semester at

university. This suggests that an educative, rather than a punitive, approach to responding to plagiarism is used when the student involved is in their first year at the university.

Elements in institutional definitions of student plagiarism

By combining the definitions of plagiarism provided by the institutions, a total of eight elements can be found. These elements may be interpreted as follows:

1. Actor (e.g. student)
2. Action (e.g. presenting)
3. Work
4. Possession (i.e. belonging to)
5. Another
6. Acknowledgment
7. Intention
8. Deception

The first six elements can be found in the definitions of student plagiarism provided by all the universities. Where institutions differ is in whether or not they have included in their definitions the last two elements of intention and deception. No one university contains all eight elements which, if included, would result in a more comprehensive definition of student plagiarism.

Table 4.3 summarises the elements used in the definitions of plagiarism provided by the four public Australian universities which form part of this study. Table 4.3 has been colour coded for better readability.

Table 4.3: *Elements in the institutional definitions of plagiarism of Universities A-D*

Elements	University A	University B	University C	University D
1.Actor	as one's own	as one's own	his or her own	as one's own
2. Action	presenting	present	copied/copied word for word/paraphrased/represented/ duplicated/	use
3. Work	work or property	ideas /writing	material/assignment/ work	Words/creations/ ideas/arguments
4. Possession	of	of	from	of
5. Another	another person	another	third party/another/the source	someone else's
6. Acknowledgment	without appropriate acknowledgment or referencing	without appropriate acknowledgment or referencing	Inappropriate or inadequate acknowledgment	unattributed
7. Intention	-	knowingly or unknowingly	-	-
8. Deception	-	-	Giving the false impression	-

4.2.2 Summary of institutional definitions of plagiarism

It can be seen that the four public institutions, the subject of this study, define plagiarism in similar terms, incorporating similar elements. What is different in each institution is where the definition is found and the number of elements they contain. For Universities A,B and C the definition is clearly placed in its policy documents whereas a definition of plagiarism for University D is found on its teaching and learning website, rather than in its policy.

The definitions provided by these universities vary in length and the amount of detail they include. Despite this common elements appear. These elements are (1) actor, (2) action, (3) work, (4) possession, (5) another (6) acknowledgment, (7) intention and (8) deception. None of the institutions included all eight elements in their definition of plagiarism. Rather, the definitions of student plagiarism provided by Universities A to D contained six, seven, seven and six elements, respectively.

All institutions, except University B, make it explicit in their documents that plagiarism should not be viewed as academic misconduct in certain situations; for example when the student is in their first semester of their first year of their course at university. This suggests that for these particular cases, the approach of the institutions appears to be educative rather than punitive.

4.2.3 Definitions of plagiarism by academic staff

This section presents the findings on how academic staff define student plagiarism based on their responses to question 17 of the online survey; namely, *"How would you define student plagiarism?"*

Survey respondents' understandings of student plagiarism

Without intending to compare institutions or those that work there, the definitions of plagiarism provided by the survey respondents have been arranged according to the institution in which they are employed to explore whether or not the terms used in the definitions from both academic staff and those provided by their institution's academic integrity policy are consistent. The definitions provided by the academic staff who responded to the online survey will be compared with definitions of student plagiarism provided by their institutions as found in their academic integrity policies and procedures documents.

Of the 226 academic staff who responded to the survey, 218 provided definitions of student plagiarism. Of these, 208 were found usable as ten survey respondents either did not respond or provided answers which could not be analysed.

University A's academic staff definitions of plagiarism

Eighty-five survey respondents from University A provided usable definitions of student plagiarism. The definitions varied in length with some respondents providing long definitions together with examples, while others gave briefer definitions. It appears that the majority of respondents from University A saw a distinction between plagiarism and collusion with only four suggesting that a definition of plagiarism included collusion. Table 4.4 presents the most commonly used terms given by academic staff in their definitions of student plagiarism and compares them with the terms used in the definition of student plagiarism found in University A's *Plagiarism Policy and Procedures, 2011*. Terms used which are matching for both the academic staff and University A are in **bold**.

Table 4.4: *Comparison of some commonly used terms in the definitions of student plagiarism provided by University A and its academic staff (n=85)*

Elements	Terms used in University A's definition of plagiarism	First three commonly used terms used by academic staff in their definitions of plagiarism	# of academic staff who used these terms in their definitions of plagiarism
Actor	as one's own	student/s	22
Action	presenting	using/use of/attempt to use	33
Work	the work/property	**work**	60
Possession	of	**of**	27
Another	another person	others	22
Acknowledgment	without appropriate acknowledgment or referencing	without acknowledgment	23 9
Intention	-	knowingly	4
Deception	-	-	-
Gain	-	for assessment	5

*Terms in **bold** indicate a match between terms provided by both institutions and academic staff respondents

From Table 4.4 it can be seen that some of the terms used by the academic staff from University A are similar to the terms found in the definition of plagiarism provided by their institution. For example, academic staff and the university used the words "works", "of" another person" and "knowingly". While all academic staff from University A appear to have incorporated all the elements found in their institution's definition into their own definitions of plagiarism, it appears that some have included the additional element of 'intention', an element not found in the definition of plagiarism provided by University A. Also, some academic staff respondents included a term not found in their institutional definition of plagiarism, namely; the element of 'gain'. This element suggest that students who plagiarise need to have an unfair advantage over other students who do not. This element suggests that students need to have submitted their work for gain or for assessment or marks before they

could be found to have plagiarised. Suprisingly the participants did not include the element of 'deception' in their definitions of plagiarism, even though this element is present in the institutional definition of plagiarism.

University B's academic staff definitions of plagiarism

Of the 50 academic staff from University B who responded to the online survey, 46 provided definitions of plagiarism which could be analysed. Only two of these respondents from University B defined plagiarism as including collusion. The terms used in these individual definitions from academic staff from University B were compared with the terms in the definition of plagiarism provided by this institution in its *Academic Misconduct Rules, 2007*. Table 4.5 presents the most commonly used terms given by academic staff in their definitions of student plagiarism and compares them with the terms used in the definition of student plagiarism found in University B's policy document. Terms used which are matching for both the academic staff and University B are in **bold**.

Table 4.5: *Comparison of some commonly used terms in the definitions of student plagiarism provided by University B and its academic staff (n=46)*

Elements	Terms used in University B's definition of plagiarism	First three commonly used terms used by academic staff in their definitions of plagiarism	# of academic staff who used these terms in their definitions of plagiarism
Actor	as one's own work	student/s	10
Action	present	using/uses/use of	20
Work	ideas or writings	work	33
Possession	of	**of**	20
Another	another	**another**	15
Acknowledgment	without appropriate acknowledgment or referencing	without acknowledging	17
Intention	to knowingly or unknowingly	deliberately	3
Deception	-	-	-
Gain	-	for assessment	3

From Table 4.5, it appears that respondents from University B use terms that are different from their institutions when they define plagiarism. For example, instead of the phrases "present" and "ideas of writing" which are used in the institutional definition of plagiarism, most respondents used the words "use" and "work" respectively. Similarly to the academic staff from University A, University B's academic staff also include the additional element of 'gain' in their personal definitions of plagiarism.

University C's academic staff definitions of plagiarism

From a total of 35 academic staff from University C who responded to Question 17 of the survey, 32 definitions of plagiarism were found useful. The terms used by the academic staff respondents from University C in their definitions of plagiarism were compared with terms used in the definition of plagiarism provided by their institution as shown in Table 4.6. Terms used which are matching for both the academic staff and University Care in **bold**.

Table 4.6: *Comparison of some commonly used terms in the definitions of student plagiarism provided by University C and its academic staff (n=32)*

Elements	Terms used in University C's definition of plagiarism	First three commonly used terms used by academic staff in their definitions of plagiarism	# of academic staff who used these terms in their definitions of plagiarism
Actor	his or her own	as their own	13
Action	copied word for word/paraphrased/ exactly duplicated/ represented	**copied**	9
Work	material/assignment/ work	**work**	23
Possession	from	of	14
Another	third party/another student/the source	others	15
Acknowledgment	Inappropriate or inadequate acknowledgment	without acknowledging	13
Intention	-	-	-
Deception	giving the false impression	deliberate	3
Gain	-	for the purposes of assessment	2

*Terms in **bold** indicate a match between terms provided by both institutions and academic staff respondents

Table 4.6 shows that both University C and its academic staff do not include the element of 'intention' in their definitions of plagiarism. It also shows that most of the terms used by the respondents do not always match those given by their institution. For example, the institution uses the term 'inappropriate or inadequate acknowledgment whereas the majority of respondents used 'without acknowledgment' and this change in semiotics may suggest different interpretations of the term. The latter may suggest that for the student to have plagiarised, none of their work is acknowledged, whereas the term used by University C would include those students who have acknowledged some portion of another's work but have done so inappropriately or inadequately. Another point of difference is that academic

staff include the element of 'gain' in their definitions of student plagiarism, a term missing from the institution's definition.

University D's academic staff definitions of plagiarism

A total of 50 academic staff from University D provided a definition of student plagiarism in their responses to the online survey and of these, 45 definitions were found usable. Table 4.7 presents the terms used by the academic staff from University D in their definitions of plagiarism and the terms used in the definition of plagiarism provided by their institution in found in the university's teaching and learning website. Terms used which are identical for both the academic staff and University D are in **bold**.

As this institution's *University Policy on Academic Conduct: Ethical Scholarship, Academic Literacy and Academic Misconduct, 2011* contains no clear or concise definition of student plagiarism, the definition used in analysis was then obtained from one provided on the institution's teaching and learning website. This is an interesting fact as University D was one of the 39 universities examined by Bretag and her colleagues (Bretag et al., 2011) whose academic integrity policies and procedures were found to be exemplary. This is despite the fact that their policy does not include a definition of student plagiarism.

Table 4.7: *Comparison of some commonly used terms in the definitions of student plagiarism provided by University D and its academic staff (n=45)*

Elements	Terms used in University D's definition of plagiarism	First three commonly used terms used by academic staff in their definitions of plagiarism	# of academic staff who used these terms in their definitions of plagiarism
Actor	as one's own	student/s	10
Action	use	copies	13
Work	words, creations, ideas and arguments	work	31
Possession	of	**of**	14
Another	Someone else's	other	14
Acknowledgment	unattributed	without acknowledgment	16
Intention	-	deliberate	1
Deception	-	-	-
Gain	-	for assessment	1

*Terms in **bold** indicate a match between terms provided by both institutions and academic staff respondents

From Table 4.7, it appears that the definitions of plagiarism provided by academic staff from University D contain more elements than the definition provided by their institution. In particular, academic from University D include the three additional elements of 'intention',

'deception' and 'gain'. The only term used by both the academic staff and University D which directly matched was found in the element of 'possession'.

In addition to the analysis of the definitions of plagiarism provided by academic staff who completed the online survey, the understandings of student plagiarism provided by the focus group participants were also analysed. The reason for doing so is to although academic staff who responded to the online survey provided more comprehensive definitions of plagiarism, the key element in definitions provided by both respondents and focus group participants appeared to be that of 'copying and pasting'. This suggests that 'copying' is a key, essential element that is always found in definitions of student plagiarism.

Focus group participants' understandings of student plagiarism

It appears that most focus group participants believe they understand what plagiarism means. Most of them defined student plagiarism in terms of copying and pasting with no referencing. Examples provided include the following:

> *"I think where my red flags go up is where I see a cut and paste"* (Focus group participant).
>
> *"...you can tell if it's come from a third party source like Wikipedia or something as opposed to copying from another student and if it's copying from another student it's usually because you've identified the similarities"* (Focus group participant).
>
> *"It's really about did you copy these words verbatim or paraphrased them and stuck the in-text reference after the paragraph to show that"* (Focus group participant)

4.2.4 Summary of academic staff understandings of student plagiarism

The section above presented the definitions of plagiarism provided by the four public Australian universities, as found in their academic integrity policies which deal with student plagiarism. A combination of institutional definitions has shown that up to eight elements have been included in the definition of plagiarism. These elements are (1) actor, (2) action, (3) work, (4) possession, (5) another, (6) acknowledgment, (7) deception and (8) intention.

In comparison, an analysis of all definitions of student plagiarism provided by academic staff respondents to the online survey suggests that up to nine elements could be included in a comprehensive definition of plagiarism. The element given by some academic staff, but not found in institutional definitions, is that of 'gain' or, in other words, 'personal gain'. The

inclusion of this additional element suggests that the definitions of student plagiarism by some academic staff are more comprehensive than the definition provided to them by their university as found in institutional documents.

In terms of overall consistency of the understandings of academic staff respondents of student plagiarism with how the term is expressed in their institution's academic integrity policy, it appears that like their university, most academic staff would include the first six elements of (1)actor, (2) action, (3) work, (4) possession, (5) another, and (6) acknowledgment; fewer respondents would include the additional elements of (7) intention, (8) deception and (9) personal gain as found in their institutional definitions of the term.

An understanding of how academic staff view plagiarism is important as it may influence their responses to incidences of student plagiarism. For example, if their understandings of plagiarism are not consistent with the definitions of plagiarism provided by their institution, then their responses may not align with those expected by their university. For example, if academic staff consider 'gain' a necessary element in a definition of student plagiarism, then they might not respond to incidences of plagiarism that contained all other elements but lacked this one. However, their institution would expect a response from them. Thus, the definitions of student plagiarism provided by academic staff go further than those provided by their universities and suggest that quite a number of elements must be present before they would respond to an incident of student plagiarism.

A possible limitation in the definitions of student plagiarism provided by both the institutions and academic staff is that neither include the element of 'self-plagiarism', that is where students recycle their own work for use in other units or assessments. It is suggested by the researcher that the reasosn for such exclsion might be that academic staff and institutions consider 'self-plagiarism'to be a different type of academic misconduct, perhaps a form of self-collusion. As such, the element of 'self-plagiarism' is not included in the comprehensive definition of plagiarism discussed in Chapter 5.

Before responses of academic staff to incidences of student plagiarism are explored, the next section will present findings relating to not only the perceptions of academic staff of student plagiarism in their institutions, but also their perceptions of their university's academic integrity policy and procedures relating to student plagiarism.

4.3 Academic staff perceptions of student plagiarism in four Western Australian public universities

This section presents the findings of this study which relate to the perceptions of academic staff of student plagiarism and seeks to answer the third research question; namely:

3. What are the perceptions of academic staff of student plagiarism in their institution?

Respondents' answers to the some of the statements contained in Question 26 of the online survey helped address this question and additional information obtained from the focus groups and semi-structured interviews is presented to support these findings.

4.3.1 Survey respondents' perceptions of student plagiarism

Before presenting the findings from Question 26 of the online survey, the responses of academic staff to earlier questions are important as they reveal their experiences with student plagiarism in their institution. This experience may influence their perceptions of plagiarism and ultimately their responses to incidences of student plagiarism. Table 4.8 outlines the responses of academic staff to Questions 18-25 of the online survey instrument. The findings in Table 4.8 reveal that the majority of survey respondents had encountered plagiarism in the past year and almost all of these responded to over half of these incidences of plagiarism. In terms of the type of plagiarism encountered by the academic staff respondents, it appears that the level or seriousness of the plagiarism is moderate or medium level plagiarism. The students who were seen to have plagiarised were mostly undergraduates and there appears to be no clear distinction in the language background of the students who plagiarised with roughly an equal amount of Non English speaking background (NESB) and English speaking background (ESB) students. The use of online services to assist academic staff in detecting student plagiarism is not seen as a significant factor in this study as approximately half of the survey respondents use any such service. The most used service was Turnitin.

Table 4.8: *Survey respondents' answers to questions 18-25 (n=226)*

Survey questions	Responses	%
In the past year, have you encountered student plagiarism in your university?	Yes	74
	No	26
In the past year, what was the overall level/seriousness of student plagiarism in assignments you assessed?	Low	41
	Moderate	41
	High	18
In the past year, have you encountered student plagiarism in your university?	Yes	92
	No	8
What was the educational background of students involved in the incidences of plagiarism you encountered?	First year undergraduate	31
	Second/third year undergraduate	44
	Postgraduate by coursework	18
	Postgraduate by research	3
	Other	4
What was the language background of students involved in the incidences of plagiarism you encountered?	Mainly NESB	28
	Mainly ESB	40
	An equal amount of NESB and ESB	32
In the past year, what proportion of incidences of student plagiarism did you act on?	Less than 10%	22
	10-50%	14
	More than 50%	64
What was the overall level/seriousness of the incidences of student plagiarism you acted on?	Low	27
	Moderate	49
	High	24
Do you use any software or online services to help you detect plagiarism?	Yes	52
	No	48

The perceptions of the survey respondents of student plagiarism in their institutions may affect how they eventually respond to incidences of student plagiarism. Table 4.9 presents the responses to the statements in Question 26 that sought information on the perceptions of academic staff to student plagiarism.

Table 4.9 shows that all survey respondents believed they understood what plagiarism entailed. Almost all of the survey respondents stated that they took plagiarism seriously, while the majority viewed plagiarism as a problem in their institution. When the survey respondents were asked if they found student plagiarism difficult to identify, the majority believed the opposite, saying that plagiarism was easy to identify in the work of their students. There was a variety of responses to the statement *"Acting on student plagiarism takes up too much of my time and resources"* with more than half of the respondents believing that acting on student plagiarism took up too much of their time and resources. This finding may be relevant in that it may be one of the factors that affects the responses of academic staff to incidences of student plagiarism and one of the reasons why academic staff choose not to respond or to ignore incidences of plagiarism.

Table 4.9: *Responses by survey respondents to statements on their perceptions of student plagiarism (n=226)*

Statement	Strongly agree (%)	Agree (%)	Disagree (%)	Strongly disagree (%)	Unable to judge (%)	Total # of responses
I understand what constitutes student plagiarism	52	48	0	0	0	214
I take student plagiarism seriously	61	38	1	0	0	215
Student plagiarism is a problem in my university	19	51	15	1	13	214
Identifying student plagiarism is difficult for me	3	23	51	20	3	215
Acting on student plagiarism takes up too much of my time and resources	17	36	30	6	11	215

4.3.2 Survey respondents' perceptions of other academic staff

Although not directly related to the research questions in this study, the findings from the responses of academic staff to some statements in Question 26 of the online survey may be useful in providing an insight into how academic staff perceive other academic staff in their institutions in relation to perceptions and responses to student plagiarism. The findings may prove useful in supporting other findings from this study. If a majority of respondents to the online survey believe that other academic staff in their institution understand student plagiarism and respond to it in a similar way, this might suggest that there is consistency in their understandings of student plagiarism and alignment in their responses to the issue. That is, if academic staff perceive that other academics understand plagiarism the same way as they do, then the understandings might be similar. However, what the findings will show is that although some understandings of student plagiarism may be the same, not all academic staff respond to student plagiarism in similar ways, suggesting that there is non-alignment in responses. The findings also provide some insight into the values and belief system of the respondents themselves which are useful in developing the "Three-view" model, discussed in Chapter 5, to explain academic staff responses to student plagiarism.

Table 4.10 presents the results from statements in Question 26 of the online survey which relate to the perceptions of survey respondents to other academic staff in their institution.

Table 4.10 shows that the majority of survey respondents (79%) believe that, like themselves, other academic staff in their institutions take the issue of student plagiarism seriously. The results from Table 4.10 also suggest that 62% of respondents felt other academic staff in their institution understood the term 'student plagiarism' in the same way as they did. This suggests that definitions of plagiarism provided by academic staff could be consistent with each other. This idea is supported by findings from this study on the definitions of student plagiarism discussed later in this chapter.

The findings in Table 4.10 suggest that although the majority of survey respondents believe that other academic staff take student plagiarism seriously and understood the term in consistent ways, fewer respondents (44%) believed that other academic staff respond to student plagiarism in the same way as they do. This belief that others do not respond in similar ways to incidences of student plagiarism is noteworthy as it indicates that perhaps plagiarism is not spoken of in formal settings (e.g. PD sessions, meetings) but rather is more corridor or tearoom talk. Some studies appear to support this notion that there may not be a shared understanding of student plagiarism (Sutherland-Smith, 2008; Sierup-Pincus & Schmelkin, 2003).

Table 4.10: *Responses by survey respondents to statements on their perceptions of other academic staff (n=226)*

Statement	Strongly agree (%)	Agree (%)	Disagree (%)	Strongly disagree (%)	Unable to judge (%)	Total # of responses
Academic staff in my department take student plagiarism seriously	28	51	10	3	8	214
Academic staff in my department understand student plagiarism in the same way as I do	16	46	14	4	20	216
Academic staff in my department act on student plagiarism in the same way as I do	10	34	24	5	27	214

4.3.3 Focus group participants' perceptions of student plagiarism

The type of plagiarism that focus group participants believed they most encountered was predominantly copying and pasting from the internet. Some spoke of incidences of copying from others' assignments which some considered a more serious form of plagiarism, followed by collusion where students worked together on an assignment.

For the focus group participants, the type of students who plagiarise was influenced by their academic level and not whether they were ESB or NESB students. Also, the focus group participants perceived the reasons as to why first year university students plagiarised were because they did not understand what plagiarism meant, or did not know how to employ the appropriate academic writing and referencing conventions to avoid it.

> *"… 95% of our students are plagiarising by mistake…they don't know what plagiarism is even though we actually teach them in our classes until they get picked up for making the mistake"* (Focus group participant).

A few focus group participants suggested that if students had plagiarised before, then they were more likely to do it again.

> *"… you [could] make the same assumption that if they plagiarised [an assignment worth] 5% they would have plagiarised a 40%..."* (Focus group participant).

4.3.4 Interview respondents' perceptions of student plagiarism

Although the interview participants were not specifically asked for their perceptions of student plagiarism, a few of them provided some comments at the end of their interviews when they were asked if they had anything further to add. These comments support the findings from the online survey in that they suggest that plagiarism is a serious and ever increasing issue which can no longer be ignored by academic staff and institutions. Examples of this are:

> *"I would say [plagiarism] is something that's treated seriously here"* (Interviewee 9).

> *"I think plagiarism is just one of the things you've just got to front up to…You can't sweep it under the carpet. You can't pretend it doesn't exist. It's not going to get less, it's only going to get more"* (Interviewee 22).

A few interview participants perceived plagiarism as something which students had difficulty understanding. In particular, they felt that international, NESB or students from a culturally diverse background had the most difficulties when they said:

> *"A lot of students have got no concept of what plagiarism is and they've got no concept that what they're doing is wrong"* (Interviewee 2).

> *"I think it's a really big problem, and I think the cultural question raised earlier is that it's important that we should perhaps be more aware of the fact that students,*

international students, do come with a different understanding…of how one uses evidence" (Interviewee 3).

"…one of the questions I've had is "please put in your own words what you think plagiarism is" and the number of students who've said "No idea"…And particularly those who come from different cultures where plagiarism isn't seen in such a negative light" (Interviewee 15).

Similar to their focus group counterpart, one interviewee perceived plagiarism in a more philosophical way in saying:

"I've thought about plagiarism a lot and philosophically plagiarism is the absence of a student in the work" (Interviewee 26).

4.3.5 Summary of academic staff perceptions of student plagiarism in four Western Australian public universities

In summary, it appears from the findings from the focus groups, online survey and semi-structured interviews, that almost all academic staff view student plagiarism as a problem in their institutions and that they take the issue seriously. Most academic staff claim they had no problem identifying student plagiarism when it occurs, but over half of them find that acting on it takes up too much of their time and resources. Also, while the majority of academic staff surveyed had encountered low to moderate plagiarism in their institution, it appears that not all of them acted on these incidences. The findings suggest that just over half of these incidences of plagiarism were responded to by academic staff and almost half of these incidences involved a moderate, rather than a low, level of plagiarism.

4.4 Academic staff perceptions of academic integrity policy and procedures in four Western Australian public universities

This section presents the findings relating to the perceptions of academic staff of their institution's academic integrity policy and procedures and seeks to answer the fourth research question; namely:

4. *What are the perceptions of academic staff of their institution's academic integrity policy and procedures?*

The results from the online survey helped to address this research question; however findings from the focus groups and semi-structured interviews also provided additional information in support of these findings.

4.4.1 Survey respondents' perceptions of academic integrity policy and procedures

Table 4.11 outlines the responses of academic staff to Questions 12-16 of the online survey. The purpose of these questions was to explore academic staff perceptions of their institution's academic integrity policy and procedures. The survey respondents' answers reveal their knowledge of their university's academic integrity policy and procedures, whether they have accessed this policy and whether they are aware of any changes made to this policy.

Table 4.11: *Survey respondents' answers to questions 12-16 (n=226)*

Survey Questions	Responses	%
Are you aware of your university's policy on student plagiarism?	Yes	96
	No	4
How did you first learn about this policy?	Uni website	24
	Staff handbook	22
	Other academic staff	16
	PD/staff training	13
	Email/letter	10
	Supervisor/unit coordinator	10
	Other	5
Have you accessed/had to use this policy?	Yes	85
	No	15
Why did you access/need to use this policy?	Seek information on how to deal with specific incidence of plagiarism	53
	Training/work requirements	15
	General interest	15
	Review	7
	Request by supervisor/unit coordinator	5
	Other	5
Have any amendments/changes been made to this policy?	Don't know	56
	Yes	39
	No	5

It appears from Table 4.11 that almost all survey respondents are aware of their institution's academic integrity policy and almost all have accessed their university's policy through various media. Just over half of the survey respondents first accessed their university's policy to seek information on how to deal with a specific incidence of plagiarism that they had encountered, with only a few accessing the policy out of general interest. Although almost all the survey respondents were aware of their university's academic integrity policy, it appears that less than half of them were aware of any changes that were made to it. This lack of awareness may be problematic when it comes to how academic staff respond to incidences of student plagiarism and whether these responses align to their most current institution's policy and procedures.

The responses to Question 26 of the online survey illustrate three points: the perceptions and attitudes of academic staff to their institution's academic integrity policy and procedures, their perceptions of student plagiarism in general, and their perceptions of how other academic staff might view the issue. The question contained 15 statements to which respondents could respond in five possible ways- strongly agree, agree, strongly disagree, disagree or unable to judge. Responses were analysed using SPSS software to extract descriptive statistics and were not separated out into the four universities so as to protect the anonymity of the survey respondents and to avoid comparisons being made among the four public institutions. Table 4.12 presents the responses to statements in Question 26 of the online survey which relate to academic staff perceptions of their institution's academic integrity policy and procedures.

Table 4.12: *Responses by survey respondents to statements on their perceptions of academic integrity policy and procedures (n=226)*

Statement	Strongly agree (%)	Agree (%)	Disagree (%)	Strongly disagree (%)	Unable to judge (%)	Total # of responses
My university's policy on student plagiarism is fair	38	51	3	1	7	215
My university's policy on student plagiarism is easy to understand	22	59	12	2	5	214
My university's procedures are easy to follow	20	47	22	4	7	215
My university's procedures are practical to implement	17	36	30	6	11	215

The findings presented in Table 4.12 suggest that almost all survey respondents perceive their university's policy to be fair and easy to understand. However, fewer respondents found that their university's procedures were easy to follow and practical to implement. In support of these findings, additional comments made by some respondents to the online survey suggest that procedures are time consuming, long winded and unwieldy. Examples of such comments are:

"My institution's plagiarism policy is unwieldly to follow; it requires far too much time to deal with low level plagiarism issues" (Survey respondent).

"...prosecuting suspected plagiarism is a long winded process. Time for academics is in very short supply. It's a lose-lose situation" (Survey respondent).

*"New procedures take far too long" (*Survey respondent).

4.4.2 Focus group participants' perceptions of academic integrity policy and procedures

The main reason for using focus groups was to gain a better understanding of issues relating to student plagiarism which were viewed as important by academic staff and also to use this information to inform the online survey instrument. However, focus group participants provided useful information on their perceptions of institutional academic integrity policies in their answers to the first three questions in the guide sheet, found at Appendix C. These answers which include perceptions of access and adequacy of their institution's academic integrity policy and procedures are elaborated under the headings of access and adequacy of these institutional documents.

Access to academic integrity policy and procedures

Most focus group participants indicated that they were made aware of their institution's academic integrity policy and procedures through inductions or training sessions for new staff or as a link in their contracts of employment. Others recalled finding the policy as a link in their unit or course outlines, documents provided to their students at the beginning of their studies. A few focus group participants stated that they found their institution's academic integrity policy and procedures in staff handbooks or manuals. However, the majority of focus group participants indicated that they only searched for the relevant academic integrity policy and procedures of their institution when faced with a specific case of plagiarism.

Some indicated that there were numerous documents where information about policies and procedures could be found suggesting that they have been overwhelmed with the amount of information available to them.

"I've found that there seem to be a lot of documents on plagiarism, you know there's one policy document and then there's a separate flowchart and then there's a separate proforma that you're supposed to fill out you know there's maybe 4 or 5 or 6 documents" (Focus group participant).

> *"You don't get given a book, you get a whole mass of information. Just to get about reading it would take up the whole probation period"* (Focus group participant).

When it came to communication of any changes to academic integrity policies or procedures, all focus group participants indicated that amendments were announced through emails. Most participants suggested that this was not an effective mode of communicating changes and that sometimes academic staff are overwhelmed with the amount of information provided to them via their work emails, that they may become confused or ignore information on changes to policy and procedures.

> *"We'd probably get an email, but the problem as an academic you don't waste your time on them...it's pretty ineffective"* (Focus group participant).

> *"Plus they all come at the same time"* (Focus group participant).

> *"I don't pay a lot of attention to the emails that come round"* (Focus group participant).

> *"I don't think that's an effective way...because when I come to the office every day the first chore I have is to go to clear and delete, delete, delete..."* (Focus group participant).

The findings from the focus groups on the ineffectiveness of communicating changes via emails are supported by the findings from the online survey. As outlined in Table 4.9, although almost all academic staff who responded to the online survey were aware of their institution's academic integrity policy, just over half of them did not know if any changes had been made to this policy. Five survey respondents indicated that no changes had been made to their institution's policy, whereas document analysis undertaken in this study reveals that changes had been made to almost all academic integrity policies in all the four Western Australian public universities. Even though, as stated earlier in this chapter, these changes did not affect the definition of plagiarism provided by these institutions, it may have affected other aspects of academic integrity such as action to be taken by academic staff in responding to plagiarism. These changes, if any, are considered later in this chapter when the responses of academic staff to incidences of plagiarism are discussed.

Adequacy of academic integrity policy and procedures

Focus group participants had mixed responses on the adequacy of their institution's academic integrity policy and procedures in their institutions. Most agreed that their institution's

academic integrity policy was adequate in the majority of cases where student plagiarism was suspected. Where they saw gaps was in the comprehensiveness and implementation of the policy. For example, some focus group participants suggested that their institution's policy did not outline how to respond to plagiarism in group assessments or in cases of collusion by students, while a lack of instructions on how students were made aware of plagiarism caused concern for others as seen in the following quotes:

> *"...there's no clear policy on dealing with the student whose work has been copied...and that student...is not covered by the plagiarism policy...so that's one thing I wish that the policy...made clear that it's not acceptable to give a finished assignment to a colleague..."* (Focus group participant).

> *"The formal policies are adequate but I think our implementation is wrong...we have done a poor job of ...saying to students at an appropriate time what might constitute plagiarism..."* (Focus group participant).

The issue of the adequacy of academic integrity policy and procedures was raised in Question 26 of the online survey instrument where academic staff were asked about their perceptions of their institution's academic integrity policy and procedures on student plagiarism as seen in Table 4.10. In substitution for the word 'adequacy', the terms 'fair', 'easy to understand', 'easy to follow' and 'practical to implement' were used to gain a deeper understanding of the perceptions of academic staff towards their institution's academic integrity policy and procedures. The findings from the online survey on academic staff perceptions of their institution's academic integrity policy and procedures were discussed in section 4.3.1.

4.4.3 Interview respondents' perceptions of academic integrity policy and procedures

The findings from the survey instrument in relation to academic staff perceptions of their institution's policy and procedures relating to student plagiarism suggest that although most academic staff view their university's academic integrity policy to be fair, fewer perceive their institutional procedures for responding to student plagiarism to be practical or easy to implement. This discrepancy was further explored in the semi-structured interviews where interviewees were provided with a guided question sheet and asked for their responses to sets of statements. The guided question sheet is in Appendix N.

Examples of some of the responses given by the interviewees to the set of statements on their institution's academic integrity policy and procedures suggest that implementation of the procedures for responding to student plagiarism is time-consuming, difficult to follow and at times frustrating. Examples are as follows:

"…the implementation has been patchy…there's been no training or no discussion about it at school meetings…and the workload is just ridiculous" (Interviewee 2)

"I would say that the implementation of…procedures…it's obscure to us. We don't know what's going on…I would say that it's frustrating" (Interviewee 6)

"Implementation…is a bit all over the place. I think it's inconsistent" (Interviewee 10).

"…so if they [staff] pick it up, then they've got to fill in forms, then they've got to get all the evidence and staff with big units, I've heard them say it's just not worth it..it can take two or three months easily and so if you're talking about …the end of semester, you haven't got a grade for that student because you don't know the outcome of the case…and so…there's been a number of occasions where staff have said to me 'I'm just not going to do it, it's too hard, it's not worth it and it takes too long" (Interviewee 16)

4.4.4 Summary of academic staff perceptions of academic integrity policies and procedures in four Western Australian public universities

To summarise, findings from the online survey, focus groups and semi-structured interviews suggest that the majority of academic staff perceive their university's academic integrity policy to be fair and easy to follow. On the contrary, just over half of the academic staff in this study found their institution's procedures for responding to student plagiarism difficult to implement due to a number of reasons; namely, that they were time-consuming even for what would be viewed as minor incidences of plagiarism, that documenting every incidence of plagiarism was unwieldy, that there were inconsistencies in the responses of other academic staff and that an inappropriately long time may have passed between when the incident of student plagiarism was first identified and when the penalty imposed by the university was finally determined.

4.5 Academic staff responses to student plagiarism in four Western Australian public universities

This section presents the findings relating to the responses of academic staff to student plagiarism in their institution and addresses the fifth research question; namely:

5. *How do academic staff respond to incidences of student plagiarism in their institution?*

The results from the online survey helped to address this research question; however findings from the focus groups and semi-structured interviews also provided additional information in support of these findings.

4.5.1 Survey respondents' responses to student plagiarism

One of the aims of using the online survey was to elicit information on academic staff responses to student plagiarism in their institution. Table 4.13 presents the results from academic staff responses to statements in Question 26 of the online survey which relate to their perceptions of how they respond to student plagiarism in their institutions.

Table 4.13 shows that the majority of survey respondents believed they followed their university's procedures when responding to student plagiarism with only a small percentage stating that they did not. On the issue of using discretion in their responses to student plagiarism, almost three quarters of respondents believed they were able to use their discretion when both encountering and responding to student plagiarism in their institutions.

Table 4.13: *Responses by survey respondents to statements on how they responded to student plagiarism (n=226)*

Statement	Strongly agree (%)	Agree (%)	Disagree (%)	Strongly disagree (%)	Unable to judge (%)	Total # of responses
I follow my university's procedures when responding to student plagiarism	41	43	5	0	11	216
I feel I am able to use my discretion when encountering student plagiarism	19	54	16	4	7	214
I feel I am able to use my discretion when responding to student plagiarism	16	47	25	6	6	213

The findings presented in Table 4.13 suggest that the majority of survey respondents felt that they were following their university's policy and procedures when responding to student plagiarism and that their institution, through these institutional documents, gave them the flexibility to exercise their discretion when encountering and responding to student plagiarism. However, findings from other questions in the survey instrument will appear to suggest that respondents do not always follow their university's procedures when responding to student plagiarism. This non-alignment between the responses of academic staff to incidences of student plagiarism and the responses expected of them by their institution is examined further in the next section, which explores the responses of academic staff to the three vignettes contained in the online survey.

4.5.2 Academic staff responses to the three vignettes

Questions 28, 30 and 32 of the survey consisted of three vignettes to which academic staff were asked to respond. It is believed that these vignettes represent real incidences of student plagiarism that academic staff may face. The vignettes, developed from incidences described by the respondents in the focus groups and from examples provided in the literature, were reduced from twelve as found in the pre-pilot and pilot surveys after feedback from the academic staff who responded to these preliminary surveys. Although it is not the intention of this study to compare institutions, it was necessary to present the responses to the vignettes under each of the four respective universities as procedures for responding to plagiarism differ among the four institutions.

Rationale for the three vignettes

The rationale for using these three vignettes is that they contain a variety of factors which, based on the research presented in section 2.9.2 of this thesis, the researcher believed might elicit different responses from academic staff members to each one. Each vignette considered different types of students, differing degrees of the amount and type of plagiarism involved, and different values placed on the assignment that was plagiarised. In particular, vignette 1 involves a first year undergraduate student who has plagiarised, for the first time, a significant amount of their assignment which is worth only a small percentage of the total mark for the unit. Vignette 2 involves a second year undergraduate who has plagiarised before, however for this particular incident, the amount of plagiarism found is minor and the value of the assignment is also small. Vignette 3 involves a postgraduate student who has not plagiarised before but whose thesis contains quite a substantial amount of copied material.

Ascertaining the expected responses of the institutions through institutional representatives

This section presents the responses of academic staff to the three vignettes found in the online survey, together with the responses expected from each institution. As the universities cannot speak for themselves, institutional responses were ascertained by asking an academic staff member from each university's Office of Teaching and Learning either through email or a face-to-face meeting to provide their responses to the three vignettes found in Questions 28, 30 and 32 of the survey.

These academic staff, or "institutional representatives", were considered experts in the field of academic integrity and plagiarism due to either their experience in the field, their having played a part in formulating their institution's policies and procedures, or a combination of both. They were also considered representatives of their respective institutions for being able to indicate how their university might expect their academic staff to respond to the specific incidences of student plagiarism outlined in the three vignettes. Their feedback taken together with analysis of institutional documents, indicate the probable response from each institution.

Vignette 1

Question 28 of the survey contained Vignette 1 which read as follows:

You are the assessor. A first year undergraduate student has plagiarised most (more than 50%) of their assignment you are marking. The assignment was worth about one-third of the total mark awarded for the unit. The plagiarism consisted mainly of poor paraphrasing and referencing. This is the first time the student has been found to have plagiarised. What action would you take?

Tables 4.14- 4.17 present the responses to vignette 1 provided by academic staff from Universities A, B, C and D, respectively.

University A

Of the 91 academic staff respondents from University A, a total of 72 written responses to Question 28 were found usable. Eight respondents did not provide an answer while the other 11 provided answers which did not contain enough information to enable them to be analysed. Table 4.14 outlines the responses to vignette 1 of academic staff from University A.

Table 4.14: *Responses to vignette 1 of academic staff from University A (n=72)*

Academic staff responses	Number of responses
Counsel/warn student and allow resubmission	21
Do a number of things for student including report to those higher in authority	15
Report to those higher in authority (e.g. unit coordinator or Head of School)	13
Counsel/warn student and reduce marks on assignment or fail assignment	7
Counsel/warn student	8
Counsel/warn student and refer them to further assistance	6
Fail assignment or reduce marks on assignment	1
Unable to respond due to insufficient evidence	1
Ignore/take no action	-

University B

Of the 49 academic staff respondents from University A, a total of 44 written responses to Question 28 were found usable as five respondents did not provide an answer. Table 4.15 outlines the responses to vignette 1 of academic staff from University B.

Table 4.15: *Responses to vignette 1 of academic staff from University B (n=44)*

Academic staff responses	Number of responses
Counsel/warn student and allow resubmission	15
Do a number of things for student including report to those higher in authority	13
Report to those higher in authority (e.g. unit coordinator or Head of School)	4
Counsel/warn student and reduce marks on assignment or fail assignment	1
Counsel/warn student	4
Counsel/warn student and refer them to further assistance	5
Fail assignment or reduce marks on assignment	1
Unable to respond due to insufficient evidence	1
Ignore/take no action	-

University C

Of the 35 academic staff from University C who responded to Question 28, only one respondent did not provide an answer with one respondent providing an answer which could not be analysed. Table 4.16 outlines the responses to vignette 1 of academic staff from University C.

Table 4.16: *Responses to vignette 1 of academic staff from University C (n=33)*

Academic staff responses	Number of responses
Counsel/warn student and allow resubmission	9
Do a number of things for student including report to those higher in authority	7
Report to those higher in authority (e.g. unit coordinator or Head of School)	7
Counsel/warn student and reduce marks on assignment or fail assignment	2
Counsel/warn student	6
Counsel/warn student and refer them to further assistance	1
Fail assignment or reduce marks on assignment	1
Unable to respond due to insufficient evidence	-
Ignore/take no action	-

University D

Of the 50 academic staff respondents from University D, 42 answers to Question 28 of the survey were usable, with six respondents not answering the question., one stating they did not know the answer and one response that could not be analysed. Table 4.17 outlines the responses to vignette 1 of academic staff from University D.

Table 4.17: *Responses to vignette 1 of academic staff from University D (n=42)*

Academic staff responses	Number of responses
Counsel/warn student and allow resubmission	13
Do a number of things for student including report to those higher in authority	9
Report to those higher in authority (e.g. unit coordinator or Head of School)	4
Counsel/warn student and reduce marks on assignment or fail assignment	7
Counsel/warn student	6
Counsel/warn student and refer them to further assistance	-
Fail assignment or reduce marks on assignment	3
Unable to respond due to insufficient evidence	-
Ignore/take no action	-

The findings presented in Tables 4.14-4.17 suggest that for vignette 1 where the student is a first year undergraduate who has plagiarised, for the first time, half of their assignment which is only worth about a third of the total marks for this unit, there appear to be two common responses. Most academic staff would either counsel the student and allow resubmission of their assignment, or report the matter to someone higher in authority. It will be seen later in this thesis that the response expected from institutions is to report the matter to a higher authority.

From analysis of the written responses of academic staff from the four institutions to the first vignette, it appears that most academic staff respond similarly by counselling the first year undergraduate and allowing resubmission of the assignment. The terminology used by most respondents to vignette 1 does not appear to be legalistic or punitive in nature, but rather remedial and educative, as illustrated by the following comments:

> *"…I would discuss the matter face-to-face with the student, listen to their story…refer [them] to online resources…and recommend that the student attend workshops…"* (Survey respondent).

> *"I would talk to the student informally…I would try to find out why [they] had plagiarised and offer help"* (Survey respondent).

"I would bring the student into my office…and speak face to face to ascertain that the student understood what plagiarism actually was…" (Survey respondent).

"Invite the student in to discuss the assignment…[and] let them off with a warning this time" (Survey respondent).

"Counselling, education. Give one chance for the student to resubmit the assignment" (Survey respondent).

Vignette 2

Question 30 of the survey contained vignette 2 which read as follows:

You are the assessor. A third year undergraduate student has plagiarised some (about 10%) of their assignment you are marking. The assignment was worth about one-tenth of the total mark awarded for the unit. The plagiarism consisted mainly of cutting and pasting information from websites. This is the third time the student has been found to have plagiarised. What action would you take?

Tables 4.18 - 4.21 present the responses to vignette 2 provided by academic staff from Universities A, B, C and D, respectively.

University A

Of the 91 academic staff respondents from University A, a total of 71 written responses to Question 30 were found usable, with eight respondents not providing an answer to the question and twelve respondents providing answers which did not contain enough information to enable them to be analysed. Table 4.18 outlines the responses to vignette 2 of academic staff from University A.

Table 4.18: *Responses to vignette 2 of academic staff from University A (n=71)*

Academic staff responses	Number of responses
Counsel/warn student and allow resubmission	2
Do a number of things for student including report to those higher in authority	14
Report to those higher in authority (e.g. unit coordinator or Head of School)	43
Counsel/warn student and reduce marks on assignment or fail assignment	5
Counsel/warn student	2
Counsel/warn student and refer them to further assistance	-
Fail assignment or reduce marks on assignment	3
Unable to respond due to insufficient evidence	1
Ignore /take no action	1

University B

Of the 49 academic staff respondents from University B, a total of 38 written responses to Question 30 were found usable. Five respondents did not provide an answer while six others provided answers which did not contain enough information to enable them to be analysed. Table 4.19 outlines the responses to vignette 2 of academic staff from University B.

Table 4.19: *Responses to vignette 2 of academic staff from University B (n=38)*

Academic staff responses	Number of responses
Counsel/warn student and allow resubmission	-
Do a number of things for student including report to those higher in authority	10
Report to those higher in authority (e.g. unit coordinator or Head of School)	17
Counsel/warn student and reduce marks on assignment or fail assignment	2
Counsel/warn student	1
Counsel/warn student and refer them to further assistance	-
Fail assignment or reduce marks on assignment	8
Unable to respond due to insufficient evidence	-
Ignore/take no action	-

University C

Of the 35 academic staff respondents from University C, 29 responses to Question 32 of the survey were found usable. One did not respond and five provided answers which could not be analysed as they did not contain sufficient information. Table 4.20 outlines the responses to vignette 2 of academic staff from University C.

Table 4.20: *Responses to vignette 2 of academic staff from University C (n=29)*

Academic staff responses	Number of responses
Counsel/warn student and allow resubmission	1
Do a number of things for student including report to those higher in authority	6
Report to those higher in authority (e.g. unit coordinator or Head of School)	16
Counsel/warn student and reduce marks on assignment or fail assignment	2
Counsel/warn student	-
Counsel/warn student and refer them to further assistance	-
Fail assignment or reduce marks on assignment	4
Unable to respond due to insufficient evidence	-
Ignore/take no action	-

University D

A total of 38 of 50 responses from academic staff from University D to Question 30 were found usable, with seven respondents not providing an answer and five giving nswers which did not contain enough information to allow analysis. Table 4.21 outlines the responses to vignette 2 of academic staff from University D.

Table 4.21: *Responses to vignette 2 of academic staff from University D (n=38)*

Academic staff responses	Number of responses
Counsel/warn student and allow resubmission	-
Do a number of things for student including report to those higher in authority	12
Report to those higher in authority (e.g. unit coordinator or Head of School)	7
Counsel/warn student and reduce marks on assignment or fail assignment	8
Counsel/warn student	2
Counsel/warn student and refer them to further assistance	-
Fail assignment or reduce marks on assignment	9
Unable to respond due to insufficient evidence	-
Ignore/take no action	1

The findings presented in Tables 4.17 - 4.21 suggest that for vignette 2 where the student is a third year undergraduate who has plagiarised only a small percentage of their assignment which is only worth a small percentage of the total marks for this unit, but who has plagiarised before, the most common response from the majority of academic staff from all four institutions is to report the student to someone higher in authority. It will be seen later in this thesis that this is the response expected from them by their institutions.

From analysis of the written responses of academic staff from the four institutions to the second vignette, it appears that most academic staff respond to this particular incident in a similar way, that is most would report the incident of plagiarism involving a third year undergraduate. The terminology used by most respondents to vignette 2 appears legalistic in nature, suggesting that they are taking the matter seriously and instigate university procedures in response. The following comments illustrate this point:

> *"…I would invoke the full penalty for plagiarism"* (Survey respondent).
>
> *"A third offence immediately makes this a high level offence for me"* (Survey respondent).
>
> *"This constitutes a serious breach of university policy and requires a formal response"* (Survey respondent).
>
> *"As a third offence, our policy would require this case to be escalated to a full investigation"* (Survey respondent).
>
> *"This is a serious offence…"* (Survey respondent).

Vignette 3

Question 32 of the survey contained vignette 3 which read as follows:

You are the supervisor. A postgraduate student has plagiarised parts of their research project dissertation which constitutes a major component of their course of study. The plagiarism consisted mainly of ambiguous/limited referencing of other people's research findings so that some of the findings appeared to belong to the student. This is the first time the student has been found to have plagiarised. What action would you take?

Tables 4.22 -4.25 present the responses to vignette 3 provided by academic staff from Universities A, B, C and D, respectively.

University A

Of the 91 academic staff respondents from University A, 70 written responses to Question 32 were found usable, with ten respondents not providing an answer to the question and eleven respondents providing answers which did not contain enough information to allow analysis. Table 4.22 outlines the responses to vignette 3 of academic staff from University A.

Table 4.22: *Responses to vignette 3 of academic staff from University A (n=70)*

Academic staff responses	Number of responses
Counsel/warn student and allow resubmission	25
Do a number of things for student including report to those higher in authority	9
Report to those higher in authority (e.g. unit coordinator or Head of School)	20
Counsel/warn student and reduce marks on assignment or fail assignment	1
Counsel/warn student	10
Counsel/warn student and refer them to further assistance	1
Fail assignment or reduce marks on assignment	2
Unable to respond due to insufficient evidence	2
Ignore /take no action	-

University B

Of the 49 academic staff respondents from University B, 35 written responses to Question 32 were found usable. Six respondents did not provide an answer while eight respondents provided answers which did not contain enough information to enable them to be analysed. Table 4.23 outlines the responses to vignette 3 of academic staff from University B.

Table 4.23: *Responses to vignette 3 of academic staff from University B (n=35)*

Academic staff responses	Number of responses
Counsel/warn student and allow resubmission	11
Do a number of things for student including report to those higher in authority	9
Report to those higher in authority (e.g. unit coordinator or Head of School)	4
Counsel/warn student and reduce marks on assignment or fail assignment	1
Counsel/warn student	9
Counsel/warn student and refer them to further assistance	1
Fail assignment or reduce marks on assignment	-
Unable to respond due to insufficient evidence	1
Ignore/take no action	-

University C

Of the 35 academic staff respondents from University C, 32 responses to Question 32 were found usable. One respondent did not answer the question while two respondents provided answers which could not be analysed due to insufficient information. Table 4.24 outlines the responses to vignette 3 of academic staff from University C.

Table 4.24: *Responses to vignette 3 of academic staff from University C (n=32)*

Academic staff responses	Number of responses
Counsel/warn student and allow resubmission	13
Do a number of things for student including report to those higher in authority	3
Report to those higher in authority (e.g. unit coordinator or Head of School)	5
Counsel/warn student and reduce marks on assignment or fail assignment	-
Counsel/warn student	8
Counsel/warn student and refer them to further assistance	1
Fail assignment or reduce marks on assignment	-
Unable to respond due to insufficient evidence	2
Ignore/take no action	-

University D

Of the 50 academic staff respondents from University D, a total of 39 written responses to Question 32 were found usable. Seven respondents did not provide an answer while four provided answers which did not contain sufficient information to enable them to be analysed. Table 4.25 outlines the responses to vignette 3 of academic staff from University D.

Table 4.25: *Responses to vignette 3 of academic staff from University D (n=39)*

Academic staff responses	Number of responses
Counsel/warn student and allow resubmission	20
Do a number of things for student including report to those higher in authority	4
Report to those higher in authority (e.g. unit coordinator or Head of School)	4
Counsel/warn student and reduce marks on assignment or fail assignment	1
Counsel/warn student	6
Counsel/warn student and refer them to further assistance	1
Fail assignment or reduce marks on assignment	2
Unable to respond due to insufficient evidence	1
Ignore/take no action	-

The findings presented in Tables 4.22 – 4.25 appear to indicate that academic staff would respond to the incident of plagiarism in vignette 3 in a number of ways. The most common response was for supervisors to counsel or warn the student and allow the student to resubmit their project. Not all academic staff would report this incident of plagiarism which would be the expected response expected by their institutions.

Vignette 3 presented problems for some survey respondents in that they were unsure if the post-graduate student was a research or coursework student and were unsure of which stage of their research project they were at. This might explain why some responses were not found usable and suggests that the wording of Question 32 required some amendments to make it clearer.

From analysis of the written responses of academic staff from the four institutions to the third vignette, it appears that most academic staff respond to this particular incident using strong terminology. Comments made by the majority of academic staff respondents suggest that they would take the matter very seriously while some do not accept that this specific situation would arise. Some of these comments appear to suggest that the supervisors themselves would feel that they were personally affected by this particular incident of plagiarism to the point that they would withdraw as supervisor, as the following comments illustrate:

> *"Serious, serious. Report of course but this is likely to be taken very seriously and lead to the student having a big black mark against their name"* (Survey respondent).
>
> *"Strong counselling and resubmission…"* (Survey respondent).
>
> *"A strict warning about the standards expected at this level…"* (Survey respondent).
>
> *"I can't see how this situation could arise if you have been supervising the student from the inception of the research"* (Survey respondent).

"If the student was caught plagiarising, [it] would represent poor supervising on my part…" (Survey respondent).

"At postgraduate level, plagiarism is not acceptable in any form. The student should know better! Failure by the supervisor to recognise or remediate plagiarism at this level could be considered as collusion. I would not wish my name or reputation to be associated with anything of this nature" (Survey respondent).

"…I would withdraw as supervisor of that student" (Survey respondent).

4.5.3 Focus group participants' responses to student plagiarism

Although the purpose of the focus groups was to obtain information which would help inform the survey instrument, some comments made by the focus group participants are useful in showing how academic staff might respond to student plagiarism. The focus group participants were presented with two examples of student plagiarism in Question 4 of the guide sheet found in Appendix C and were asked how they would respond to each. The first example was that of a first year NESB undergraduate and the second example involved a third year ESB undergraduate. From their discussions it appears that the focus group participants, like the survey respondents, had varied responses to student plagiarism depending on the educational level of the student involved. It appears that for the example of the first year undergraduate student, most focus group participants would consult with the student and allow resubmission of the assignment. Only three of the nine focus group participants would report the incident to someone higher in authority. In comparison, for the third year undergraduate student, it appears that almost all the focus group participants would report the incident. The following comments illustrate this difference in responses:

"I think there is a difference between a first year and a third year response to plagiarism. You'd expect by third year that the student would be familiar with the notion…where a third year submits a plagiarised piece of work, I would certainly go to the Head of School saying we need a more formal process because at third year I think they should know" (Focus group participant).

"…for first years, whether it's an NESB or ESB, I would do exactly as […] said, I would talk to them…where I would say let's resubmit…" (Focus group participant).

"in the first one…I didn't report them. I took it as OK it was just a referencing issue… If it had been a third year, I probably would have gone to the unit co-ordinator" (Focus group participant).

4.5.4 Interviewees' responses to student plagiarism

The first question in the guide sheet given to the interview participants asked them to describe an incident of student plagiarism which they found either memorable or frustrating. A copy of the guide sheet is in Appendix N. Although the intention of asking this question was to make the interviewees feel comfortable before asking them for their opinions to pairs of statements presented later, their responses to this first question were found useful to this study. In particular, the results suggest that the interviewees respond to diverse incidences of student plagiarism in diverse ways. Table 4.26 presents the responses of each of the 26 interviewees in this study to the incidence of student plagiarism they described in their interviews as either memorable or frustrating.

Table 4.26: *Responses of interview participants from the four Western Australian public universities to incidences of student plagiarism they described in semi-structured interviews (n=26)*

INTERVIEWEE	UNIVERSITY	STUDENT involved in incident of plagiarism	RESPONSE of interviewee
INT 1	A	1st year UG	Consult, report, allow resubmission
INT 2	A	1st year NESB UG	Consult, report
INT 3	C	NESB PG	Consult, allow resubmission
INT 4	B	3rd year NESB UG	Consult, report
INT 5	D	5th year NESB UG	Report
INT 6	A	NESB PG	Consult higher authority and report
INT 7	A	3rd year NESB UG	Report
INT 8	B	1st year NESB UG	Consult
INT 9	C	4th year UG	Consult
INT 10	B	PG	No action because student withdrew
INT 11	C	1st year UG	Consult, allow resubmission
INT 12	B	3rd year UG	Report
INT 13	B	3rd year NESB UG	Consult, reduce marks on assignment
INT 14	D	NESB PG	Consult, allow resubmission
INT 15	C	NESB PG	Allow resubmission
INT 16	A	4th year NESB UG	Consult, report
INT 17	A	1st year NESB UG	Consult, allow resubmission
INT 18	A	2nd year UG	Consult, report
INT 19	A	3rd year NESB UG	Consult, report
INT 20	A	3rd year UG	Report, allow resubmission
INT 21	C	1st year UG	Consult, allow resubmission
INT 22	D	2nd year UG	Consult, report
INT 23	C	-	-
INT 24	C	3rd year UG	Consult, reduce marks on assignment
INT 25	A	3rd year NESB UG	Consult, report
INT 26	C	PG	Consult, allow resubmission

KEY: UG=undergraduate, PG=postgraduate, NESB=non English speaking background.

The findings presented in Table 4.26 suggest that the most common response to incidences of student plagiarism is to consult with the student, and 19 of the interviewees say that they have done so. This is particularly the case where the student involved is a first year undergraduate but in some cases the student involved is in their later years of university education and occasionally is a postgraduate student. The second most common response given by the interviewees to incidences of student plagiarism is to report the incident with almost half of all interviewees saying that they have done so. A smaller number of interviewees stated that they have allowed resubmission of an assignment in incidences of student plagiarism they had experienced.

4.5.5 Summary of academic staff responses to incidences of student plagiarism in four Western Australian public universities

To summarise, findings from this study, particularly findings from the online survey instruments, suggest that academic staff respond in diverse ways to different incidences of student plagiarism. When presented with the three vignettes, survey respondents appear to respond in various ways. For vignette 1 which involved a first year undergraduate student, the most common response was to consult with the student and allow resubmission of their assignment. For vignette 2 which involved a third year undergraduate student, the most common response was to report the incident to someone higher in authority. Interestingly, for vignette 3 which involved a postgraduate student, the responses were similar to those given for vignette 1, namely that the student would be counselled and allowed to resubmit their work.

In the section which follows, these responses by academic staff will be compared with the responses expected of them by their institution to see if there is any lack of alignment between the two.

4.6 Institutional responses to student plagiarism in four Western Australian public universities

This section presents the findings relating to the institutional responses to student plagiarism in the four Western Australian public universities to help address the sixth research question; namely:

6. *To what extent do the responses of academic staff to incidences of student plagiarism in their institution align with the academic integrity procedures of their institution?*

To enable this question to be fully addressed, it was important to understand how institutions expect their academic staff to respond to student plagiarism; in other words, how the academic integrity procedures for responding to student plagiarism in these universities are to be interpreted. Analysis of documents relating to how the four institutions respond to plagiarism was undertaken but this alone was insufficient to understand the expected responses of the four institutions to student plagiarism. Therefore, the responses expected by the four universities were ascertained by asking an academic staff member from the Office of Teaching and Learning in each institution how they would respond to the three vignettes in the online survey.

These academic staff, or "institutional representatives" were considered experts in the field of academic integrity and plagiarism due to either their experience in the field or their having played a part in formulating their institution's policies and procedures, or a combination of both. They were also considered representatives of their respective institutions for being able to indicate how their university might expect their academic staff to respond to plagiarism incidences. The responses from these institutional representatives to the three vignettes were obtained through email or by meeting with them face-to-face. Their feedback, when compared with analysis of institutional documents, indicate what the expected response of each institution might be to the incidences of student plagiarism outlined in the three vignettes.

The responses from the institutional representatives are presented in the following section. They are then compared with the responses provided by the academic staff responses to the online survey to show if there is any alignment with academic integrity procedures. The findings from comparing institutional and academic staff responses to the three vignettes, which are outlined below, help address the sixth research question in this study.

4.6.1 Institutional representatives' responses to the three vignettes

The following section presents the responses provided by institutional representatives for each of the four institutions to the three vignettes.

Vignette 1

Vignette 1 read as follows:

You are the assessor. A first year undergraduate student has plagiarised most (more than 50%) of their assignment you are marking. The assignment was worth about one-third of the total mark awarded for the unit. The plagiarism consisted mainly of poor paraphrasing and referencing. This is the first time the student has been found to have plagiarised. What action would you take?

University A's response to vignette 1

University A's procedures for responding to student plagiarism are found in the institution's *Plagiarism Policy and Procedures, 2011* which refers in many instances to *Statute No.10-Academic Misconduct Rules, 2009.* The latter document contains a number of Schedules which contains tables, forms and flowcharts to assist the academic staff member in determining the level of plagiarism that has occurred and in showing the appropriate steps to be taken.

University A's response to vignette 1, as ascertained through its institutional representative, would be to view the incident of student plagiarism as a Level 1, which is not considered academic misconduct. The institution would require the academic staff, or assessor in this case, to report the incident to someone higher in authority, usually the unit co-oordinator. The student involved in the incident would then be provided with "educational guidance or remediation" (clause 5.3, *Plagiarism Policy and Procedures, 2011*) and be allowed to resubmit their work. There would be no penalty imposed.

University B's response to vignette 1

University B's procedures for responding to student plagiarism are found in its *Academic Misconduct Rules, 2007*, which indicate that even at an early stage of a student's educational experience, plagiarism would still considered academic misconduct.

University B's response to vignette 1, as ascertained through its institutional representative, would require the academic staff member, or assessor in this case, to do a number of things themselves, including the collection of evidence, meeting with the student, checking to see if

the student has any previous history of plagiarism. The assessor would then have to decide if the plagiarism was low, medium or high as this would determine the penalty imposed by the university. In vignette 1 the plagiarism would be considered low level, so the academic staff member would not need to report the incident or keep a record of it.

University C's response to vignette 1

University C's procedures for responding to student plagiarism are found in its *Assessment Policy, 2011,* at the time that this study took place, in its *Student Discipline Regulations, 2009*. At the time of writing this thesis, the *Student Discipline Procedure, 2012,* was introduced by the university. This new document clarifies the roles and responsibilities of staff and students in implementing the *Student Discipline Regulations 2009,* but does not affect the procedures or processes of the institution for responding to student plagiarism.

University C's response to vignette 1, as ascertained through its institutional representative, would require the academic staff member, or assessor in this instance, to report the matter to the unit coordinator and then meet with the unit coordinator and the student involved. The unit coordinator would then decide the level of plagiarism and might then ask the student to attend educational workshops, complete an online academic integrity unit. The unit coordinator has the discretion to ask the student to resubmit the assignment or can have marks deducted from their work. Therefore, the unit coordinator, not the academic staff member, plays an important role in following procedures for responding to student plagiarism in this institution.

University D's response to vignette 1

University D's procedures for responding to student plagiarism are found in its *University Policy on Academic Conduct: Ethical Scholarship, Academic Literacy and Academic Misconduct, 2011*.

University D's response to vignette 1, as ascertained through its institutional representative, would require the academic staff member, or assessor in this case, to report the matter to their unit coordinator who, if necessary, would refer the matter to the Head of School or Faculty Academic Conduct Advisor. There would be no penalty imposed by the university in this case as the student is in their first year of undergraduate studies.

Vignette 2

Vignette 2 read as follows:

You are the assessor. A third year undergraduate student has plagiarised some (about 10%) of an assignment you are marking. The assignment was worth about one-tenth of the total marks awarded for the unit. The plagiarism consisted mainly of cutting and pasting information from websites. This is the third time this student has been found to have plagiarised. What action would you take?

University A's response to vignette 2

University A's procedures for responding to student plagiarism are found in its *Plagiarism Policy and Procedures, 2011.* University A's response to vignette 2, as ascertained through its institutional representative, is for the academic staff member, or assessor in this case, to report the matter to the unit co-ordinator who would then refer it to an "Authorised Officer" which in most cases is the Head of School as appointed under *Statute No.10- Academic Misconduct Rules, 2009*. In this case, the plagiarism would be viewed by the institution as serious. Thus, for this institution, the only response required from academic staff is to report the matter to someone higher in authority who will then deal with the issue.

University B's response to vignette 2

University B's procedures for responding to student plagiarism are found in its *Academic Misconduct Rules, 2007.* University B's response to vignette 2, as ascertained through its institutional representative, is for the academic staff or assessor to do a number of things including collecting evidence, meeting with the student, and checking for any previous history of plagiarising by the student. In the case of a third year postgraduate student who has plagiarised before, the academic staff would view this incidence of plagiarism is being of a medium or moderate level. As such, the incident woud be reported to the Head of School who would take the next steps.

University C's response to vignette 2

University C's procedures for responding to student plagiarism are found in its *Student Discipline Regulations, 2009,* which are referred to in its *Assessment Policy, 2011*. University C's response to vignette 2, as ascertained through its institutional representative, is for the academic staff member, or assessor in this case, to report the incident to their unit co-ordinator who would then refer the matter on to the Investigator in the school who would then

determine the penalty to be imposed. The academic staff member need only report the matter to someone higher in authority and is not concerned with the subsequent investigation or penalties.

University D's response to vignette 2

University D's procedures for responding to student plagiarism are found in its *University Policy on Academic Conduct: Ethical Scholarship, Academic Literacy and Academic Misconduct, 2011*. University D's response to vignette 2, as ascertained through its institutional representative, is for the academic staff or assessor to report the matter to the Head of School or Associate Dean who would then consider the plagiarism to be moderate and determine what action should be taken.

Vignette 3

Vignette 3 read as follows:

You are the supervisor. A postgraduate student has plagiarised parts of their research project dissertation which constitutes a major component of their course of study. The plagiarism consisted mainly of ambiguous/limited referencing of other people's research findings so that some of the findings appeared to belong to the student. This is the first time the student has been found to have plagiarised. What action would you take?

This vignette posed some issues for the institutional representatives who questioned whether this postgraduate student involved was completing their studies as research only or coursework as this would determine which policy would apply. At the time of this study, cases of research misconduct by students in Australian insitutions were covered by the *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research, 2007*, while cases of academic misconduct fell under the ambit of each instituion's academic integrity policy. The institutional representatives were informed that for the purposes of this study, the student in vignette 3 was a postgraduate completing their study by coursework. This meant that this particular incident of plagiarism would be governed by the academic integrity policies and procedures of the instituions.

University A's response to vignette 3

University A's procedures for responding to student plagiarism are found in its *Plagiarism Policy and Procedures, 2011.* University A's response to vignette 3, as ascertained through its institutional representative, is for the academic staff member, or supervisor in this case, to

consult with the Chair of the Thesis Committee to decide jointly if plagiarism had occurred and if so, its level of seriousness. If the plagiarism was considered minor, the academic staff would inform the student, provide them with educational advice and allow resubmission of their work.

If the academic staff believed the plagiarism to not be minor, then they would report the matter to an authorised officer which is usually the Head of School. Thus for academic staff from University A who supervise postgraduate students, it appears that they have the ability to decide the level of plagiarism which has occurred, unlike other instances where the level of plagiarism, and subsequent penalties, are determined by those higher in authority.

University B's response to vignette 3

University B's procedures for responding to student plagiarism are found in its *Academic Misconduct Rules, 2007.* However, in the case of vignette 3, University B's response to vignette 3, as ascertained through its institutional representative, would be to follow the procedures outlined in the *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research, 2007*, rather than in the *Academic Misconduct Rules, 2007* as the plagiarism in vignette 3 consisted of serious research misconduct. In this case, the supervisor would need to refer the matter to the Head of School to take the next steps.

University C's response to vignette 3

University C's procedures for responding to student plagiarism are found in its *Student Discipline Regulations, 2009,* which are referred to in its *Assessment Policy, 2011*. University C's response to vignette 3, as ascertained through its institutional representative, is for the academic staff member, or supervisor in this case, to report the matter to the Executive Dean or Chair of the Thesis Committee who would determine if that matter should be escalated and also the type of penalty to be imposed. Thus, for University C, the supervisor is only required to report the incident of plagiarism to those higher in authority.

University D's response to vignette 3

University D's procedures for responding to student plagiarism are found in its *University Policy on Academic Conduct: Ethical Scholarship, Academic Literacy and Academic Misconduct, 2011*. University D's response to vignette 3, as ascertained through its institutional representative, is for the academic staff or supervisor to refer the student to

counselling, if they believe that the plagiarism was really a case of poor academic referencing on the part of the student.

The institutional representative for University D suggested that vignette 3 was not a commonly found situation in their institution. They hoped that the plagiarism would have been noticed by the supervisor long before the student submitted their work for assessment.

Responses of all universities to the three vignettes as determined by institutional representatives

Table 4.27 summarises the responses of institutional representatives from each of the four universities to the three vignettes, as found in the online survey.

Table 4.27: *Responses of institutional representatives from Universities A-D to the three vignettes (n=4)*

Vignette #	University A institutional representative's responses	University B institutional representative's responses	University C institutional representative's responses	University D institutional representative's responses
1	Report to someone higher in authority, i.e. Unit co-ordinator	Take a number of steps including collecting evidence and meeting student then dismiss case	Report to someone higher in authority, i.e. Unit co-ordinator	Report to someone higher in authority, i.e. Unit co-ordinator
2	Report to someone higher in authority, i.e. Unit co-ordinator	Take a number of steps including collecting evidence and meeting with student and then report matter to Head of School	Report to someone higher in authority, i.e. Unit co-ordinator	Report to someone higher in authority, i.e. Head of School or Academic Dean
3	Consult with Chair of Thesis Committee. If low level plagiarism, allow resubmission of assignment. If more serious level, report to someone higher in authority, i.e. Head of School	Report to someone higher in authority, i.e. Head of School	Report to someone higher in authority, i.e. Chair of Thesis Committee or Head of School	Refer student to counselling

4.6.2 Summary of institutional responses to incidences of student plagiarism in four Western Australian public universities

From the findings in Table 4.27, it appears that the responses of institutions to incidences of student plagiarism are quite similar. With few exceptions, it appears that in all instances of student plagiarism, the academic staff must respond by reporting the matter to someone higher in authority. The exceptions are firstly, for University B, where the student is a first

year undergraduate and where the level of plagiarism is seen to be minor. In this case, the academic staff member has the power to dismiss the case and need not report it. Secondly, if the student is a postgraduate, for University D, they would be referred to counselling by the academic staff if the plagiarism was seen as poor academic referencing; for University A the student would be allowed to resubmit their work if the level of plagiarism was considered low-level or minor. Even in this last exception, the academic staff member is not responding alone, but rather in consultation with another academic staff member, the Chair of the Thesis Committee.

The next section will compare the responses given by academic staff and those given by their universities, as ascertained from the responses provided by institutional representatives.

4.7 Alignment of academic staff and institutional responses to incidences of student plagiarism in four Western Australian public universities

Based on the findings presented in sections 4.5 and 4.6 of this thesis, it is now possible to compare the responses to incidences of student plagiarism provided by academic staff who responded to the online survey and the responses expected of them by their university as ascertained by institutional representatives. That is, this section presents the findings on what academic staff say they **would** do in response to the three vignettes in the online survey, compared with what institutional representatives say they **should** do in response to these incidences of student plagiarism.

4.7.1 Comparing the responses of academic staff with institutional representatives' responses to the three vignettes

Tables 4.28 - 4.30 present the most common and least common responses given by academic staff to vignettes 1, 2, and 3, the percentage of academic staff who responded as such, and the response expected from them by their university as ascertained from the responses of institutional representatives.

The responses of academic staff from each of the four institutions to the three vignettes are found in Tables 4.14 - 4.25 presented earlier in this chapter.

The number of respondents, *n*, in each table is the sum of academic staff from all four institutions who gave a response to that particular vignette together with the four institutional representatives. Rows in the tables, relating to each of the four universities, have been colour-coded for easier readability.

Table 4.28: *Responses of academic staff and institutional representatives from Universities A-D to vignette 1 (n=191)*

University	Institutional representatives' response	% of academic staff who aligned with institutional representatives' response	Most common response given by academic staff	% of academic staff who gave most common response	Least common response given by academic staff
A	Report to higher authority (Unit co-ordinator who takes next step	39%	Do a number of things and report to higher authority	39%	Fail/reduce marks on assignment
B	Do a number of things before dismissing case as minor plagiarism	30%	Do a number of things and report to higher authority	38%	Fail/reduce marks on assignment
C	Report to higher authority (Unit co-ordinator) who takes next step	42%	Do a number of things and report to higher authority	42%	Fail/reduce marks on assignment
D	Report to higher authority (Unit co-ordinator) who takes next step	31%	Do a number of things and report to higher authority Counsel student and allow resubmission	31% 31%	Fail/reduce marks on assignment

Table 4.28 compares the responses given by academic staff to vignette 1 with those given by institutional representatives from the four universities. As can be seen, the responses from each group do not appear to completely align. The findings from Table 4.28 suggest that less than half of the responses of academic staff completely aligned with the responses given by institutional representatives and so with their institution's academic integrity policy and procedures. It appears that in responding to vignette 1, academic staff do more than is required of them by their institution. In most cases, academic staff appear to do a number of things before reporting the incidence of plagiarism to those higher in authority, suggesting that academic staff go out of their way to assist first year undergraduate students who have plagiarised for the first time. One exception is the academic staff from University B who appear to repond to the incident by reporting it to someone higher in authority rather than rather than dismiss it as minor plagiarism, as would be expected of them by the institution.

Table 4.29: *Responses of academic staff and institutional representatives from Universities A-D to vignette 2 (n=180)*

University	Institutional representatives' response	% of academic staff who aligned with institutional representatives' response	Most common response given by academic staff	% of academic staff who gave most common response	Least common response given by academic staff
A	Report to higher authority (Unit co-ordinator) who takes next step	80%	Do a number of things and report to higher authority	80%	Ignore/take no action
B	Do a number of things before reporting case to higher authority (Head of School) who takes next step	71%	Do a number of things and report to higher authority	71%	Counsel/warn student
C	Report to higher authority (Unit co-ordinator) who takes next step	76%	Do a number of things and report to higher authority	76%	Counsel/warn student and fail/reduce marks on assignment
D	Report to higher authority (Head or School/Associate Dean) who takes next step	50%	Do a number of things and report to higher authority	50%	Ignore/take no action

The findings presented in Table 4.29 suggest that in the case of vignette 2 involving a third year undergraduate student, that the responses given by academic staff and the responses expected of them by their university appear aligned.

Table 4.30: *Responses of academic staff and institutional representatives from Universities A-D to vignette 3 (n=180)*

University	Institutional representatives' response	% of academic staff who aligned with institutional representatives' response	Most common response given by academic staff	% of academic staff who gave most common response	Least common response given by academic staff
A	Consult with Chair of Thesis Committee. If plagiarism minor, allow resubmission. OR If more serious, report to higher authority (Head of School)	41%	Do a number of things and report to higher authority	41%	Counsel/warn student and refer them to further assistance Fail/reduce marks on assignment
B	Report to higher authority (Head of School) who takes next step	37%	Do a number of things and report to higher authority	37%	Counsel/warn student and refer them to further assistance Fail/ reduce marks on assignment
C	Report to higher authority (Head of School/Chair of Thesis Committee) who takes next step	25%	Counsel/warn student and allow resubmission	41%	Counsel/warn student and refer them to further assistance
D	Refer student to counselling	3%	Counsel student and allow resubmission	51%	Counsel/warn student and refer them to further assistance Fail/reduce marks on assignment

The findings from Table 4.30 suggest that the responses to vignette 3 from academic staff from Universities A and B are most aligned to the responses expected from them by their institutions. The responses of academic staff from University D do not appear to align with the response their university expects from them. This could be explained by the fact that the response given by the institutional representative from University D may be incomplete and it may be the case that not only would the postgraduate student in vignette 3 be sent for counselling or further assistance, but that they would also be allowed to resubmit their assignment. If this is the case, then the responses from academic staff at University D and the expected response from their institution would align.

4.7.2 Summary of responses of academic staff as compared with institutional representatives to the three vignettes

To summarise, findings from this study, particularly findings from the online survey and from the responses of the institutional representatives, suggest that academic staff sometimes, but not always, align with the responses expected of them by their institutions. This is evident in the responses given by both survey respondents and institutional representatives to the three vignettes. For vignette 1 which involved a first year undergraduate student, the most common response of academic staff was to consult with the student and allow resubmission of their assignment. In contrast, the response expected from them by their institution varied depending on which university they were from. Academic staff from Universities A, C and D were expected to report the incidence of plagiarism to someone higher in authority. On average, 35% of academic staff aligned with the responses expected of them by their institution.

For vignette 2 which involved a third year undergraduate student, the most common response given by academic staff was to report the incident to someone higher in authority. On average, 70% of academic staff aligned with the responses expected of them by their institution which was to report the incidence of plagiarism to someone higher in authority.

For vignette 3 which involved a postgraduate student, the most common response given by academic staff from all the four universities was to consult with the student and allow resubmission of their work. On average, 26% of academic staff aligned with the responses expected of them by their institution. In the case of vignette 3, responses expected by each of the four universities varied. Universities B and C expected their academic staff to report the incidence of plagiarism whilst Universities A and D allowed for more resubmission of the work and counselling of the student, respectively.

The findings presented in this section might suggest that academic staff from certain universities are more aligned to their institution's academic integrity policy and procedures as their responses and the responses expected of them by their institution. However, the findings should not be viewed in this way as it was never the intention of this study to compare the effectiveness of the policies and procedures of the four Western Australian public universities based on such alignment. This is because each of the four institutions in this study have their own specific, and slightly different procedures, for responding to incidences of student plagiarism.

4.7.3 Comparing the responses of interview participants with institutional representatives' responses to incidences of student plagiarism

Semi-structured interviews took place with 26 academic staff who had responded to the online survey and indicated their willingness to participate in follow-up interviews. These interview participants were asked, at the start of their interviews, to describe an incident of plagiarism they had experienced that they found memorable or frustrating. The purpose of asking this question was to make the interviewees feel comfortable and make them more receptive to the subsequent questions in the interview. These questions consisted of pairs of statements obtained from respondents to the online survey and sought to elicit the responses from the interviewees which would add to the data obtained from the focus groups and online survey. A copy of the guide sheet given to the interviewees is in Appendix N. Transcripts of all interviews are in Appendix O.

In answering the first question on the guide sheet, the interviewees did not appear to show any hesitation in describing an incident of student plagiarism and that they seemed to have a clear recollection of the actual event, even if it had occurred years beforehand. It appears from the transcripts of the interviews that most interviewee participants use the word 'frustrating', rather than 'interesting', to describe their particular incident of student plagiarism. It is suggested that this use of terminology indicates that the interviewees are attaching intense emotional feelings to the incident they describe. Incidents ranged from plagiarism by first year undergraduate students to those in their final undergraduate years and mostly involved the students cutting and pasting information for their major assignments. The responses provided by the interviewees to these incidences ranged from counselling the student and allowing resubmission through to reporting the incident to someone higher in authority.

Although the main aim of asking this initial question was to encourage the interview respondents to open up and feel comfortable about speaking on the issue of student plagiarism, the responses to this question add rich data to this study and help address the fifth and sixth research questions in this study, namely;

5. *How do academic staff respond to incidences of student plagiarism in their institution?*

6. *To what extent do the responses of academic staff to incidences of student plagiarism in their institution align with the academic integrity procedures of their institution?*

Table 4.31 presents the types of incidents of student plagiarism described by the interviewees and their responses to them. As it was not the intention of this study to compare and contrast the four Western Australian public universities or the academic staff employed there, the interviewees were de-identified from their institution and numbered INT 1, INT 2, INT 3, etc., in the order in which they were interviewed. In addition to describing the incidences and responses, Table 4.31 compares the responses given by the interviewees to their incident of plagiarism with the responses expected of them by their institution. These expected responses would be those given by the institutional representatives at each of the four institutions. As it would have been impractical to ask the institutional representatives to outline responses to all the 26 incidences of student plagiarism described by the interviewees, the expected responses from institutional representatives were extrapolated by using the responses they had given to the three vignettes found in the online survey and establishing possible, expected responses from these.

In Table 4.31 a tick (√) indicates there is alignment in both the responses of the interviewee and the expected response from their institution as established through institutional representatives, a cross (x) means that the responses of the interviewee and the institutional representative do not align and half (½) indicates that the responses of the interviewee and institutional representative partially aligned.

Table 4.31: *Alignment of interviewees' responses to student plagiarism with expected responses of the four Western Australian public universities' institutional representatives (n=26)*

INTERVIEWEE	STUDENT	RESPONSE of interviewee	Possible RESPONSE of Institution	ALIGNMENT (√ or x or ½)
INT 1	1st year UG	Consult, report, allow resubmission	Report	½
INT 2	1st year NESB UG	Consult, report	Report	½
INT 3	NESB PG	Consult, allow resubmission	Report	x
INT 4	3rd year NESB UG	Consult, report	Consult, report	√
INT 5	5th year NESB UG	Report	Report	√
INT 6	NESB PG	Report	Report	√
INT 7	3rd year NESB UG	Report	Report	√
INT 8	1st year NESB UG	Consult	Consult, dismiss	½
INT 9	4th year UG	Consult	Report	x
INT 10	PG	No action	Report	x
INT 11	1st year UG	Consult, allow resubmission	Report	x
INT 12	3rd year UG	Report	Consult, report	½
INT 13	3rd year NESB UG	Consult, reduce marks on assignment	Consult, report	½
INT 14	NESB PG	Consult, allow resubmission	Consult	½
INT 15	NESB PG	Allow resubmission	Report	x
INT 16	4th year NESB UG	Consult, report	Report	½
INT 17	1st year NESB UG	Consult, allow resubmission	Report	x
INT 18	2nd year UG	Consult, report	Report	½
INT 19	3rd year NESB UG	Consult, report	Report	½
INT 20	3rd year UG	Report, allow resubmission	Report	½
INT 21	1st year UG	Consult, allow resubmission	Report	x
INT 22	2nd year UG	Consult, report	Report	½
INT 23	-	-	-	-
INT 24	3rd year UG	Consult, reduce marks on assignment	Report	x
INT 25	3rd year NESB UG	Consult, report	Report	½
INT 26	PG	Consult, allow resubmission	Report	x

KEY: UG=undergraduate, PG=postgraduate, NESB=non English speaking background.

From Table 4.31, it can be seen that the responses given by interview participants to the incident of plagiarism they described in semi-structured interviews do not always align with the responses expected of them by their institution and as extrapolated from responses provided by institutional representatives to the three vignettes from the online survey. Of the 26 interviewees, only four aligned completely, almost half aligned to some extent, while nine did not align at all with the responses expected of them by their institution. These results mirror the findings from the online survey instrument.

In terms of alignment of the interviewees' responses to student plagiarism with the responses expected of them by their institution, the results in Table 4.31 suggest that most interviewees' responses do not align or only partially align with the expected institutional responses when the student was a first year undergraduate or a postgraduate student, although in a few cases the student was a second, third or fourth undergraduate.

Thus the correlation between a student's educational level and academic staff responses to student plagiarism remains tenuous. There must be other factors or reasons that could help explain this lack of alignment with institutional responses to student plagiarism and these are outlined in the next section.

4.8 Factors influencing the responses of academic staff to student plagiarism

This section presents the findings relating to the reasons why academic staff respond to incidences of student plagiarism in their institution in the way they do. It addresses the last research question; namely:

7. *What are the reasons for lack of alignment, if any, in academic staff responses to student plagiarism?*

While the final research question seeks the reasons for any lack of alignment between the responses of academic staff and those expected of them by their institutions, questions in the survey sought to elicit the factors that academic staff considered important when responding to incidences of student plagiarism. It is believed that factors which influence the responses of academic staff to student plagiarism need to be considered before the reasons which they may give for responding in the way they do.

The results from the online survey helped to address this final research question in that they assisted in exploring some of the factors that influence academic staff responses to student plagiarism. The results from the focus groups and semi-structured interviews provided information which assisted in exploring some of the reasons academic staff give for their responses to student plagiarism. By considering both factors and reasons, a comprehensive picture of academic staff responses to student plagiarism is developed which in turn helped the researcher develop a model for explaining these responses.

4.8.1 Factors considered important by survey respondents when responding to the three vignettes

Questions 29, 31 and 33 of the online survey instrument asked respondents to select the two most important factors that played a part in their response to the three vignettes outlined in

questions 28, 30 and 32 of the survey. The purpose of asking these questions was to explore whether different factors were considered important in diverse incidences of student plagiarism as this might influence the responses of academic staff to each of the three vignettes. The six factors were selected from analysis of the focus group data and from a review of the literature discussed in Chapter 2 of this thesis. These factors were as follows:

(1) the educational experience of the student;

(2) the number of times the student had plagiarised previously;

(3) the value or worth of the assignment which was plagiarised;

(4) the type of plagiarism detected;

(5) the amount of plagiarism involved; and

(6) whether the plagiarism was intentional or unintentional.

Tables 4.32-4.35 present the six factors that may have affected the responses of academic staff to each of the three vignettes and the percentage of academic staff who considered each of the factors important.

Without intending to compare the four institutions, it was found necessary to separate the responses of academic staff from each of these universities as some institutions outline certain factors which may be considered by their academic staff in responding to incidences of plagiarism and this may or may not have influenced the factors they considered important. For example, University A provide its academic staff with a flowchart to assist them in determining the level of plagiarism, while University B has a table which includes a number of factors that staff may consider in determining the level of plagiarism that has occurred and one of the factors in this table is the intention to deceive. Universities C and D provide their academic staff with examples of what the level of plagiarism might be and University D's institutional documents specifically state that the amount of plagiarism is an important factor to consider when responding to incidences of plagiarism.

It may be that these guidelines from the institutions have influenced the factors that academic staff considered important when responding to the vignettes. However, what will be seen from Tables 4.32-4.35 is that the factors academic staff from all four institutions consider important appear to be similar, despite what might be dictated to them by their universities.

The numbers under each factor represent the percentage of academic staff who considered this factor important.

Table 4.32: *Importance of Factors 1-6 for academic staff from University A in their responses to vignettes 1, 2 and 3 (n=91)*

Vignettes	Factor 1: Educational experience of the student	Factor 2: Number of times the student has previously plagiarised	Factor 3: Value/worth of the assignment	Factor 4: Type of plagiarism detected	Factor 5: Amount of plagiarism involved	Factor 6: Whether the plagiarism was intentional or unintentional
1	58%	24%	4%	45%	24%	42%
2	51%	59%	8%	40%	17%	24%
3	60%	21%	10%	46%	17%	32%

The results presented in Table 4.32 suggest that for academic staff from University A who responded to the online survey, the most important factor they consider when responding to vignette 1 was the educational experience of the student, followed by the type of plagiarism detected; for vignette 2 the most important factor was the number of times the student has previously plagiarised, followed by the educational experience of the student; and for vignette 3 the most important factor they considered was the educational experience of the student, followed by the type of plagiarism detected.

Thus for the respondents from University A, the educational experience of the student appears to be a factor that is most likely to be considered when responding to the different incidences of plagiarism presented in the three vignettes.

Table 4.33: *Importance of Factors 1-6 for academic staff from University B in their responses to vignettes 1, 2 and 3 (n=50)*

Vignettes	Factor 1: Educational experience of the student	Factor 2: Number of times the student has previously plagiarised	Factor 3: Value/worth of the assignment	Factor 4: Type of plagiarism detected	Factor 5: Amount of plagiarism involved	Factor 6: Whether the plagiarism was intentional or unintentional
1	58%	46%	2%	30%	16%	46%
2	48%	70%	6%	34%	8%	24%
3	46%	26%	16%	50%	8%	38%

The results presented in Table 4.33 suggest that for academic staff from University B who responded to the online survey, the most important factor they are likely to consider when responding to vignette 1 was the educational experience of the student, followed by both the

type of plagiarism detected and whether the plagiarism was intentional or unintentional. This might reflect the fact that academic staff from University B are encouraged, through their university documents, to consider the issue of intent in cases of student plagiarism.

For vignette 2 the most important factor likely to be considered was the number of times the student has previously plagiarised, followed by the educational experience of the student. For vignette 3 the most important factor likely to be considered was the type of plagiarism detected followed by the educational experience of the student. This finding is the opposite of what academic staff from University A would most likely consider as important factors for vignette 3.

Thus, like their counterparts from University A, the respondents from University B are most likely to view the educational experience of the student as being of primary importance, at least where the student is a first year undergraduate, as was the case in vignette 1.

Table 4.34: *Importance of Factors 1-6 for academic staff from University C in their responses to vignettes 1, 2 and 3 (n=35)*

Vignettes	Factor 1: Educational experience of the student	Factor 2: Number of times the student has previously plagiarised	Factor 3: Value/worth of the assignment	Factor 4: Type of plagiarism detected	Factor 5: Amount of plagiarism involved	Factor 6: Whether the plagiarism was intentional or unintentional
1	66%	34%	3%	37%	26%	37%
2	54%	74%	3%	20%	17%	34%
3	57%	31%	20%	40%	17%	43%

The results presented in Table 4.34 suggest that for academic staff from University C who responded to the online survey, the most important factor they are likely to consider when responding to vignette 1 was the educational experience of the student, followed by both the type of plagiarism detected and whether the plagiarism was intentional or unintentional. These are the same factors as those most likely to be considered by academic staff from University B when responding to vignette 1.

For vignette 2 the most important factor likely to be considered was the number of times the student has previously plagiarised, followed by the educational experience of the student. For vignette 3 the most important factor likely to be considered by academic staff when responding to student plagiarism was also the educational experience of the student, followed by the type of plagiarism detected.

Thus, like their counterparts from Universities A and B, the respondents from University C are most likely to view the educational experience of the student as of primary importance for both vignette 1 (where the student is a first year undergraduate) and vignette 3 (where the student is a postgraduate).

Table 4.35: *Importance of Factors 1-6 for academic staff from University D in their responses to vignettes 1, 2 and 3 (n=50)*

Vignettes	Factor 1: Educational experience of the student	Factor 2: Number of times the student has previously plagiarised	Factor 3: Value/worth of the assignment	Factor 4: Type of plagiarism detected	Factor 5: Amount of plagiarism involved	Factor 6: Whether the plagiarism was intentional or unintentional
1	58%	28%	2%	46%	38%	30%
2	50%	62%	8%	26%	30%	18%
3	48%	16%	18%	52%	22%	40%

The results presented in Table 4.35 suggest that for academic staff from University D, the educational experience of the student was the most important factor they were likely to consider when responding to vignette 1, followed by the type of plagiarism detected. These are the same factors that are also most likely to be considered by academic staff from University A when responding to the same vignette.

For vignette 2 the most important factor the academic staff from University D are likely to consider was the number of times the student has previously plagiarised, followed by the educational experience of the student. These are the same factors most likely to be considered by academic staff from the other three universities. The most important factor likely to be considered by academic staff from University D for vignette 3 was the type of plagiarism detected, followed by the educational experience of the student.

4.8.2 Summary of factors considered important by survey respondents when responding to the three vignettes

The findings presented in Tables 4.32-4.35 appear to suggest that the predominant factor most likely to be considered by academic staff when responding to student plagiarism is the educational level of the student. For academic staff from all four institutions, this factor appears to be of primary importance where the student is a first year undergraduate who has plagiarised for the first time, as described in vignette 1. However, where the student is not a first year undergraduate, the importance of this factor appears to be lessened.

In vignette 2, where the student was a third year undergraduate who had plagiarised before, it appears that the number of times the student has plagiarised is a factor most likely to be considered by academic staff over the educational level of the student. This is an interesting finding as in most cases it appears that academic staff in the four universities are usually not aware of previous incidences of plagiarism. However, if they were aware of the student's past history, the findings suggest that they would be most likely to consider this factor important. This may explain why academic staff responded to the second vignette in a way which was most aligned with the expected response of their institution, as in the case of vignette 2, academic staff were not most likely to consider educational level of their students as important as they would in their responses to vignette 1. Thus, it appears that where academic staff are more likely to view the educational level of the student as important, their responses to incidences of plagiarism are not aligned with the responses expected of them by their institution.

The factor most likely to be considered most important by academic staff in responding to the incidence of plagiarism described in vignette 3 varied. Academic staff from Universities A and C appear to indicate that they are most likely to consider the educational experience of the student as most important, while academic staff from Universities B and D appear to indicated that they are most likely to considere the type of plagiarism detected as most important. The responses of academic staff from the four universities to vignette 3 also suggest the most variation, as compared to their responses to vignettes 1 and 2. From the findings, it appears that academic staff from Universities B and C are more likely to report plagiarism by a postgraduate student to a higher authority, while academic staff from Universities A and D would hesitate to do so, preferring to counsel the student and allow resubmission of their work. This reponse appears to be similar to the way they would respond if the student were a first year undergraduate.

There appears to be no clear correlation between the factors academic staff are most likely to consider important when responding to vignette 3 and their actual responses to the incident of student plagiarism. This might suggest that there may be another factor that is most likely to be considered and it is suggested by the researcher that this factor might be the academic staff member themselves. This factor was not included in the six factors listed in the online survey; however, through the analysis of the findings from this study using the grounded theory approach, the researcher has viewed it as being of some importance in explaining why the responses by academic staff from the four institutions to vignette 3 varied. This factor of the academic more likely to consider themselves rather than the postgraduate studens is further

discussed in Chapter 5 where a model for explaining the diverse responses of academic staff to different incidences of student plagiarism is presented.

The next section examines the findings from the focus groups and semi-structured interviews that might help explore the reasons why academic staff respond to student plagiarism in the ways that they do. These findings, together with the above findings on the factors most likely to be considered important by academic staff when responding to student plagiarism, helped address the seventh and final research question of this study. All findings provided information for developing the 'Three- view' model to help understand more clearly academic staff responses to student plagiarism. This model is discussed in detail in Chapter 5.

4.9 Reasons for the responses of academic staff to student plagiarism-eliciting themes from the findings

Questions 27 and 34 of the online survey allowed respondents to make additional comments on the issue of student plagiarism. These written responses, together with the results from the semi-structured interviews with 26 academic staff, were coded to elicit themes. Although participants in this study were not specifically asked for the reasons behind their responses to incidences of student plagiarism that they described, analysis of the results from the online survey, focus groups and semi-structured interviews reveal some recurrent themes which may help provide a deeper understanding of the reasons behind academic staff responses to student plagiarism. This section will explore these common themes which have been coded and which include the topics of discretion, lack of support, feelings of inadequacy, inconsistency among academics and stress. These themes have been placed under the overarching themes of academic, institution and student, such major themes becoming useful when generating a theory to help explain why academic staff respond to student plagiarism in the ways they do and why these responses may not always align with the responses expected of them by their institution.

4.9.1 Academic staff prioritise students when responding to plagiarism

The first key theme or notion elicited from the findings relates to the student. From the responses of academic staff to the online survey and to a smaller extent, the responses from participants to the focus groups, it appears that the student weighs foremost in the minds of most academic staff when responding to incidences of student plagiarism. In particular, the educational level of the student may be a reason why academic staff responses to student plagiarism vary. For example, the findings from the responses of academic staff to the three vignettes suggest that if the student is a first year undergraduate, that academic staff will not follow institutional processes but rather deal with the student in an informal way by not reporting the matter to those higher in authority, as required by academic integrity policy and procedures. In addition, academic staff, and especially those higher up in authority in an institution, may consider other facets of a student when deciding whether or not to follow procedures for responding to plagiarism. For example, academic staff may consider whether a student is fee-paying or not, or whether they are a local student or one with an NESB background, as the following comments made by the focus group participants, survey respondents and interviewees in this study suggest:

> *"I guess with the first year, I would take into account the cultural background…I'm sensitive to different cultures and different learning patterns, so perhaps they are not*

engaged with the Western learning pattern and this could be their first engagement with is, so they really are naïve about issues of plagiarism and originality of thought…" (Focus group participant).

"…There is a slight tendency to give undue allowance to a student's non-Australian background that emerges only if the student is full-fee paying" (Survey respondent).

"… I do think sometimes, you know, if they're new students…or if there is a language difficulty. I think just going straight down the 'we do A, B, C' doesn't always work for everybody" (Interviewee 12).

In addition, the following comments made by respondents to the online survey in this study suggest that there is a need to educate students at an early stage in their university life rather than punish them through reporting as is required by the institution's academic integrity policy and procedures:

"The move to mandatory reporting often inhibits local-level education on correct citation" (Survey respondent).

"There is a move at my university to report every single transgression to a computer system, no matter how slight or accidental. I disagree with this idea as it may discourage students from coming to their teacher early on for advice" (Survey respondent)

"… plagiarism usually indicates that the student is having difficulties – I would prefer a less punitive approach to dealing with plagiarism, even if it is very serious" (Survey respondent).

The comments which follow also indicate that some academic staff are considering the student first as they believe following institutional procedures for responding to plagiarism takes a long time, causing delays for the students.

"Recent changes requiring the referral of anything more than level 1 plagiarism to staff in other units has led to a long delay in resolution for the student" (Survey respondent).

"What I find in this school is that at level two or above, mostly level two, the procedure becomes very slow. And I think that's because it's under-resourced more than anything. And so we get these situations where a case can't be resolved until

long after the Board of Examiners has met, and so the student is left in limbo. And I think that's quite a difficult position to put students in…it would have been at least nine months" (Interviewee 18).

This **"student-first"** view when it comes to first year undergraduates as compared with other undergraduates is further supported by the following comments where academic staff clearly state that their responses to plagiarism by a first year and a third year student would be different:

"It's really different dealing with first year students because…they don't know in the first six months what the expectations are…with third years…I'm going to apply the policies fairly strictly" (Focus group participant).

"…in the [first year] …I didn't report him, I took it just as a referencing issue…if it had been a third year, I probably would've gone to the unit coordinator" (Focus group participant).

Thus, it appears that academic staff who consider the student first, rather than themselves or their institution, may be less likely to follow institutional processes for responding to student plagiarism. These academic staff will consider such factors that impact on the student such as their educational, social and economic background, the length of time taken to resolve issues of student plagiarism and whether there is a less punitive way of responding.

4.9.2 Academic staff prioritise themselves and their role in the modern university when responding to plagiarism

Another theme elicited from the findings of this study relates to the academic staff themselves and how they view their role as an academic or their place in the institution. This theme covers academics' notions related to discretion, overwork, stress and frustration and academics' perceptions of other academics. How academics view themselves and their place in their institution may influence their responses to student plagiarism.

It is suggested that if the academic think of themselves first, they may respond to student plagiarism in ways that do not always align with the response expected of them by their institution. A theme which appeared often from the findings of this study was that of the use of discretion by academic staff when responding to incidences of student plagiarism. This theme is followed by other themes elicited from the findings which are listed in order of how frequently they appeared.

Use of discretion

The perception of whether or not one has discretion in responding to student plagiarism may be a possible reason as to why academic staff might respond in ways which are inconsistent with other academics and which are not always aligned to the responses expected from them by their institution.

The term 'discretion' is problematic as it may have meant different things to the academic staff who participated in this study. However, the survey findings suggest that the majority of academic staff believe that their institutional policy and procedures allowed them to use their discretion when encountering and responding to student plagiarism. In particular, their responses to Question 26 of the online survey show that 73% feel they can use their discretion when encountering student plagiarism, while 63% believe they can use their discretion when responding to student plagiarism.

This finding appears to be supported by the interviewees who in the guide sheet for the semi-structured interviews were asked, among other things, to comment on the following statement: *'I use my discretion when responding to incidences of student plagiarism'***.** The majority of the 26 interviewees stated that they have a certain degree of discretion as seen by the following examples:

> *"I use my discretion by judging whether or not it's deliberate or whether it's a question of misunderstanding. And academic staff are encouraged to use their discretion. That's the first line of attack, if you like"* (Interviewee 3).

> *"I tend to use my discretion if I see students with very minor levels of plagiarism… so rather than know about it and have to follow through.. follow the rules, if I can catch it and make them fix it before I'm even confident what there is…yes, I have been guilty of doing that"* (Interviewee 6).

However, what the last quote suggested is that perhaps institutional policy and procedures have reduced or even eliminated the discretion of academic staff. This perception is supported by the following comments from the survey respondents and interviewees which suggest that they believe that either they no longer have any discretion or that if they exercise any discretion, it feels as if they are going against their institution's policy and procedures for responding to student plagiarism.

"Well, I used to [use my discretion] but of course the policy now has in a sense taken that out of one's hands" (Interviewee 17).

In addition, the written comments made by a few respondents to the online survey support the view that most academic staff feel they no longer have any discretion, as the following examples suggest:

"My understanding is that we have no discretion" (Survey respondent).

".. the [..] policy is quite clear on who has discretion in particular circumstances- it is often out of my hands" (Survey respondent).

"I feel that I should not be solely using my discretion" (Survey respondent).

"Discretion, while sounding fine, can lead to students being treated differently by different staff" (Survey respondent).

In summary, the quantitative findings from the online survey suggest that almost all academic staff believe they can still exercise their discretion when encountering incidences of student plagiarism and that just over half of them believe they still have discretion when responding to student plagiarism, the qualitative findings as seen in comments made by academic staff in the online survey, focus groups and semi-structured interviews paint a contrasting picture in that most perceive that academic integrity policies and procedures appear to have put limits on how their discretion is exercised. It may be the case that whether or not academic staff believe they still have discretion when responding to student plagiarism depends on how they interpret their institution's academic integrity policy and procedures. It may also depend on how they view their role and autonomy as an academic in today's institutions of higher learning.

Time-consuming

The findings from this study suggest that most academic staff participants believed that responding to student plagiarism was time-consuming, a reason often referred to in the literature (Coalter, Lim & Wanorie, 2007; Nadelson, 2007; Pickard, 2006; Flint, Clegg & Macdonald, 2006; Sutherland-Smith, 2005; Brimble & Stevenson-Clarke, 2005; Barrett & Cox 2005; Kelley & Bonner, 2005; Simon et al., 2003; Keith-Speigel et al., 1998; Whitley, 1998; Burke, 1997; Ritter, 1993). The following comments suggest that the time taken may be an issue which might explain why academic staff ignore student plagiarism or respond to

it in a way which is not aligned to their institution's academic integrity policy and procedures.

> *"My institution's plagiarism policy is unwieldy to follow; it requires too much time to deal with low level plagiarism issues"* (Survey respondent).
>
> *"The current process is too cumbersome and time consuming"* (Survey respondent).
>
> *"Plagiarism is not difficult to detect as such, but it is very time consuming"* (Survey respondent).
>
> *"New procedures take far too long to reach a decision: 6-8 weeks. This places students in a very difficult position in terms of determining whether to pursue their studies in a unit"* (Survey respondent).
>
> *"In the interests of fairness, prosecuting suspected plagiarism is a long-winded process. Time for academics is in very short supply. It's a lose-lose situation. Most of my colleagues put up with it [plagiarism] and rely on exams to sort things out"* (Survey respondent).
>
> *"I have heard time and time again of academics saying that they will not report plagiarism as it is too time-consuming and they are not paid enough to do this"* (Survey respondent).
>
> *"Essentially I ignore the policy now as it takes a lot out of my time for no outcome and I am undermined anyway by under the table resubmissions anyway. It's basically in my own best interest to let most cases slide when asking the student to review or fix their work"* (Survey respondent).
>
> *"It takes a lot of time and the policy requires a lot of paperwork to be completed by me and then signed by the head of school. I think that some of my colleagues take the easy road, as I am continually at the top of the list for lecturers who have found, reported and dealt with plagiarism"* (Survey respondent).
>
> *"I'm a little frustrated by the fact that the handling of anything above level one is basically taken away from us. Not that I want the work, I'm already over the hundred percent workload so I'm happy with what I've got ... But it does sort of slow everything down and ... I'm not sure it teaches the students anything that's useful to them…because of the delays involved, I think it may actually create resentment rather*

than guilt among the students…It would be much better if it could be handled very quickly so that the offence and the consequences were much more closely linked" (Interviewee 7).

"I think sometimes it can be such a long and tedious process" (Interviewee 10).

"…it involves a lot of work on the academic's part…and this is work that is not calculated into our workloads" (Interviewee 17).

"...the University's policy is this very large complicated flow chart and there's like…blah, blah, blah and first instance and second instance. And it's a substantial amount of work on my end to move that up" (Interviewee 24).

Stress and overwork

Another theme which emerged from the findings of this study was that of stress and overwork faced by academic staff in modern institutions of higher learning. Having to work long hours may have led some participants to ignore incidences of plagiarism or respond to them in an informal way by not following institutional policy and procedures. This may be particularly true for those academic staff that coordinate or teach a large number of students, as suggested by the following comments:

"… if I was teaching the volume of undergraduates and international students that some of my colleagues are, I would be tempted not to 'see' plagiarism, especially amongst the weaker students who are only getting 'pass' or 'credit' grades, anyway…" (Survey respondent).

"One of the main things that determine how I respond to cases is where we are in semester, and how much workload I am under" (Survey respondent).

"There is a sense that given the already overworked schedules of teaching/research staff, following through with plagiarism issues is a burden rather than an accepted part of the job" (Survey respondent).

"I guess what I'm thinking about right now in terms of that, you know, is this too hard? How big of a deal is this? I just had a bunch of…students who are in their first semester, they're mid-year entry students…where there's some very poor paraphrasing going on, but there's references in there…I've really sat on those and

thought…do I put them through as a level one and I've chosen not to in that case" (Interviewee 16).

Being ignored by those higher in authority

Another theme that emerged from the findings of this study was the academic's sense of being ignored by those higher in authority when they tried to respond to student plagiarism by following institutional policy and procedures. These comments suggest that academic staff may feel ignored despite their good intentions and efforts.

"While plagiarism is detected and reported as part of a policy, rarely do the people at higher levels act on the advice" (Survey respondent).

"My experience was that …the university tended to side with the student rather than the academic. Leaving academics wondering what the point was of enforcing standards" (Survey respondent).

"..a plagiarism case found by another staff member was overturned by the head of faculty. As a result, the staff member has decided not to spend a huge amount of time & resources in pursuing cases, if their advice is ignored higher up" (Survey respondent).

"My experience was that the policy was hard to implement and when cases were taken to the highest level, the university tended to side with the student rather than the academic. Leaving academics wondering what the point was of enforcing standards" (Survey respondent).

"…policy and procedures can be easily overruled…by supervisors further up the chain of command" (Survey respondent).

"What I wanted to do was follow the policy to the letter of the law, but it actually, in the end went right up to the faculty level where they decided that, no, all these students would be given a second chance, because there was a worry about offending and alienating the affiliate partner rather than it being about the rules.. In the end, being a sessional and needing the work, I elected not to jump up and down about it" (Interviewee 15).

"So the undergraduate coordinator had a meeting with me and her boss and the unit coordinator. And we sat down and they basically said to me 'because they are

international students, we need to, you know, just be a little bit…' flexible wasn't the word they used but that was my impression" (Interviewee 19).

Lack of trust or sceptical about institutional processes

Closely connected to the above theme of being ignored by those higher in authority is that of the academic's lack of trust in institutional processes or the academic feeling sceptical about institutional processes due to their experience. The following comments illustrate this theme:

"I am left very cynical about academic integrity" (Survey respondent).

"Academic staff should be trusted to deal with this problem… Failure to trust academic staff to behave correctly in dealing with plagiarism is professional insulting" (Survey respondent).

"It is completely stupid to disempower people from a decision-making process by enforcing strict procedures for dealing with plagiarism…And insulting" (Survey respondent).

"The main problem I have come across in dealing with plagiarism is that the higher-ranked staff plagiarism is reported to tend to play down the level of seriousness to save them from the hassles of higher level plagiarism" (Survey respondent).

Feelings of helplessness

Another theme which emerged from the findings of this study relates to feelings of helplessness. Some academic staff participants indicated that, despite wanting to follow institutional policy and procedures for responding to student plagiarism, they felt helpless and that the whole exercise would be futile due to the complexity of the issue. Some comments that show this feeling of helplessness or futility are as follows:

"As soon as one has to involve a third party in dealing with plagiarism, it becomes impractical to deal with" (Survey respondent).

"We are all swimming upstream on this one. We are living in a cut and paste culture" (Survey respondent).

"You cannot wipe out plagiarism. In the era of Google and PubMed, it's far too easy to cut and paste" (Survey respondent).

"This is an enormous problem. I am constantly shocked by the extent of plagiarism" (Survey respondent).

Lack of support

A few academic staff from the online survey and semi-structured interviews made comments about the lack of support they experienced when responding to particular instances of student plagiarism they had encountered. This finding appears in line with the literature which suggests that lack of support may be one of the reasons that academic staff ignore plagiarism or respond to it in a way which does not align with their university's expectations, policy and procedures . The following comments illustrate the perceptions of academic staff of a lack of support when responding to incidences of student plagiarism:

"As a sessional staff, I had no support" (Survey respondent).

"General lack of support from senior staff in handling plagiarism issues" (Survey respondent).

"Enforcement of plagiarism policy needs to be supported administratively as it can be a large task to manage-this may then see many academics being more willing to report and process such cases" (Survey respondent).

Thinking of themselves and their reputation

Finally, a few academic staff might be thinking about their position and reputation within the university. Unlike some of the themes previously outlined, the theme of reputation is not found in the literature on academic integrity. Comments include the following:

"I'm in a vulnerable position. I don't have tenure. I don't want to put my own job in any sort of jeopardy by getting on the wrong side of anybody. So I suppose I play it in a way both ends meet the middle. I'm sympathetic to the student but I'm also sympathetic towards my own survivability" (Interviewee 11).

"I did not want a young female Asian student accusing me of being sexist or racist or something like that…" (Interviewee 17).

"…I don't allow these things to upset me…I don't want to waste my time with reprimands and go through the system …I'm here to teach them how to write and how

to think… I'm not here to do appeal processes and when you ask me about Turnitin I'll be very strong-minded about that" (Interviewee 26).

Thus, it appears that academic staff who consider themselves first, rather than the student or their institution, may not always follow institutional processes for responding to student plagiarism. These academic staff will consider such factors that impact on themselves such as their workload, whether or not they believe they have discretion or not, the amount of stress they feel, their perceptions of the lack of support from their institution, their own personal feelings of helplessness or distrust of institutional processes and their reputation before deciding whether or not they will respond to incidences of student plagiarism that they encounter. This is the **'academic-first'** view where the the academic takes priority over the student and the institution.

4.9.3 Academic staff prioritise the institution when responding to plagiarism

Another key theme elicited from the findings relates to the institution. From some of the responses of academic staff to the online survey, focus groups and semi-structured interviews, it appears that a number of academic staff think about the academic integrity policy and procedures of their institution when responding to incidences of student plagiarism. In fact, it appears from the responses to Question 26 of the online survey, that most academic staff believe they are following institutional procedures when responding to student plagiarism.

The following comments support the **'institution-first'** view where the institution's academic integrity policy and procedures for responding to student plagiarism take priority over the student and the academic themselves. The sparcity of comments here appear to suggest that putting the institution first when responding to incidences of student plagiarism may not be a commonly held view by academic staff.

> *"We know that when we identify plagiarism, it's not for us to decide what the penalty is….There's a university policy to follow, so we follow the policy"* (Interviewee 4).

> *"I report gross cases, you know, cases where they're copying and pasting, cutting and pasting and deliberately … that's manipulation"* (Interviewee 26).

However, while academic staff who responded to the online survey believe that they are following their institution's academic integrity policy and procedures, findings from the focus groups and semi-structured interviews paint a different picture. These inconsistencies are explored further in section 4.9.4.

4.9.4 Academic staff inconsistencies when responding to plagiarism

The final point which emerged from the findings of this study was that of inconsistency in the responses of the different types of academic staff to student plagiarism. These inconsistencies appear to exist not only among and between academic staff within the same discipline, but also between academic staff and other academics higher in authority, such as Deans of departments or Heads of Schools within the institution. Whether such inconsistencies exist between full-time, part-time or sessional academic staff members within the same school or discipline cannot be determined due to the small sample sizes in this study. Further research would be required in this area.

The notion of inconsistencies among and between academic staff is made because it may another factor that influences academic staff responses to incidences of student plagiarism. That is, if academic staff perceive that incidences of student plagiarism are responded to differently by other academic staff, this may affect their responses to the issue.

The following comments obtained from the participants of this study appear to suggest that following policy and procedures may not always be an effective response because past experience suggests that the responses of academics are overturned by those higher in authority in the institution or because of their perceptions of what other academics might be doing. Other comments show that academic staff believe they are following their institution's procedures for responding to student plagiarism, but feel that other academics and even the university themselves are not.

These comments are supported from the quantitative findings from the online survey which suggest that academic staff appear to view their responses to incidences of student plagiarism as consistent with responses given by other academic staff and consistent with the responses expected of them by their university. However, the findings from this study suggest the opposite. The responses given by academic staff to the three incidences of student plagiarism described in the online survey were not always consistent and did not always align with the responses expected of them by their institution as outlined by institutional representatives.

Despite the fact that most interviewees answered in the negative to two statements in the guide sheet, namely, *'Implementation of policies and procedures on student plagiarism is a joke'* and *'My responses to student plagiarism are overturned by those higher in authority'*, the comments provided by the survey respondents and interviewees appear to show the belief held by some academic staff that there is not always consistency in responses to student plagiarism. In particular, they suggest that even when academic staff follow the academic

integrity policy and procedures of their university, their responses are, in some cases, overturned or ignored by those higher in authority. For one participant, their comment called into doubt the authenticity of their institution's academic integrity policy and procedures for responding to student plagiarism, when they stated:

> *"I feel the university has a process which is aimed at projecting an image of dealing with plagiarism but that the university does not wish to really do anything at all about it…I was initially heartened that the university was attempting to do something about plagiarism but am now extremely disheartened about the whole thing"* (Survey respondent).

The following comments provide examples of inconsistencies in responses to student plagiarism among academic staff experienced by some of the participants in this study:

> *"I think some of them [academic staff] are not as vigilant about plagiarism as I've been"* (Focus group participant).

> *"Most lecturers in my department do not pick up plagiarism and do not check for plagiarism in any shape or form"* (Survey respondent).

> *"I find it peculiar that I locate blatant instances of plagiarism in the assessments for my units by the same students that are awarded a D and HD for other units"* (Survey respondent).

> *"I know that there are lecturers within my school who do not bother checking for plagiarism. And there are others who do"* (Interviewee 7).

> *"So some of them [academic staff] are tough as nails and won't let anything through….And others are just like, oh well, you know, wouldn't even occur to them that some things have been plagiarised"* (Interviewee 10).

> *"…you go off into your little silo and nobody knows what anybody else is doing. And then pretty soon you're back to where you've got this disparity between schools as to what is actually happening"* (Interviewee 21).

Similar to the comments made by academic staff under the theme of feeling ignored by those higher in authority, the following comments provide examples of inconsistencies between academics and their institution as perceived by the participants of this study.

"I approached the course coordinator who simply referred the matter to the Head of School whose essential first response was oh my God, don't do anything…seemed to be a strong preference for not taking any action…" (Focus group participant).

"…policy and procedures can be easily overruled…by supervisors further up the chain of command" (Survey respondent).

"Reporting plagiarism is one thing, how it is handled by those to whom it is reported is another" (Survey respondent).

"…I saw two examples of … plagiarism when teaching two years ago. I would have liked to respond to it according to university policy but my superior at the time asked me to follow a slightly more lenient approach, so I complied" (Survey respondent).

"…Too many students are let off the hook by an administrator unfamiliar with the nature of the task they have cheated on and with only a superficial understanding of what went on. Often they have not even looked at the paperwork prior to interviewing the student. Given the amount of time the academic staff member has to spend producing the paperwork, the situation is rather disappointing" (Survey respondent).

"It would appear that plagiarism is ignored by senior staff when students are full fee paying. A recent case of this involved a Master's student whose dissertation was heavily plagiarised, but who was granted a pass as a fail 'would not look good'" (Survey respondent).

"While plagiarism is detected and reported as part of a policy, rarely do the people at higher levels act on the advice" (Survey respondent).

"I feel that […] University is not interested in dealing with plagiarism. The only interest seems to be in protecting an image of dealing with plagiarism…" (Survey respondent).

4.9.5 Summary of themes elicited from the findings

This section presented themes from the findings of this study to help understand the reasons behind academic staff responses to student plagiarism. The themes frequently discussed by academic staff in the focus groups, online survey and semi-structured interviews appear to be related to the use of discretion, the time, stress and resources required to respond to incidences of student plagiarism and issues of inconsistencies in responses by the institution and other academics.

The key themes or notions elicited from the findings were grouped under three areas where academic prioritise when responding to incidences of student plagiarism; namely, on the student, on the institution or on the academic themselves. From these themes, a model was generated to enable understanding of why academic staff respond to student plagiarism in the way they do, and how, at times, these responses do not align to the responses expected of academics, as outlined in the academic integrity policy and procedures of their institution.

This ‘Three-view’ model, developed from the findings of this mixed methods study, is discussed in Chapter 5.

4.10 Summary of Chapter 4

This chapter has sought to present the findings from the focus groups, online survey and semi-structured interviews used in this mixed methods study to address seven research questions on the perceptions of academic staff of their institution's academic integrity policy and procedures and their responses to student plagiarism. A summary of the findings for each of the research questions is presented below:

> ***Research Question 1****: How is the term 'student plagiarism' understood by academic staff at four Western Australian public universities?*

Academic staff from each of the four institutions appear to define 'student plagiarism' in similar ways. For most academic staff, plagiarism by their students is essentially cutting and pasting information without acknowledgment of the original source. For others, plagiarism is more complex and this is reflected in the longer definitions of student plagiarism they provided in their answer to question 17 of the online survey instrument. When all definitions provided by academic staff are combined, a comprehensive definition of student plagiarism containing nine elements is the result. These nine elements are: (1) actor, (2) action, (3) work, (4) possession, (5) another, (6) acknowledgment, (7) intention, (8) deception and (9) gain.

Thus, based on the definitions provided by academic staff, student plagiarism may be defined as: ***"A student uses work taken from a source as their own, without acknowledgment and whether or not they intended to deceive, for assessment or personal gain".***

> ***Research Question 2:*** *To what extent are academic staff understandings of the term 'student plagiarism' consistent with how the term is expressed in the academic integrity policy of their institution?*

While definitions of student plagiarism provided by academic staff may be found in the answers to question 17 of the online survey, definitions of the term provided by their institution may be found in a variety of documents. While universities A-C placed their definitions in their academic integrity policies, University D's definition was not found in any of its institutional documents, but rather on their website. Not all institutional definitions contained all nine elements suggested by combining the definitions provided by academic staff. Two of the four institutions' definitions of plagiarism contained seven elements while

the other two institutions' definitions of the term contained only six elements. This finding suggests that a combination of definitions of student plagiarism provided by academic staff provides a more comprehensive definition of the term than those definitions provided by their institutions. In particular, academic staff consider the elements of "intent" (whether the plagiarism was done intentionally or unintentionally) and "personal gain" (whether the work done by the student was for assessment or marks) as part of their more comprehensive definition of plagiarism.

Research Question 3: *What are the perceptions of academic staff of student plagiarism in their institution?*

The findings from the online survey, focus groups and semi-structured interviews appear to support the notion that the majority of academic staff from the four Western Australian public universities view plagiarism as a serious and increasing problem in their institution. This finding is in line with previous literature supporting the view that student plagiarism is a serious issue which needs to be addressed.

Research Question 4: *What are the perceptions of academic staff of their institution's academic integrity policy and procedures?*

The perceptions of academic staff of their university's academic integrity policy and procedures can be inferred primarily from the findings from the online survey. In particular, Question 26 of the online survey sought to explore the perceptions of academic staff to their university's academic integrity policy and procedures for responding to student plagiarism. The findings suggest that although the majority of academic staff view their institution's policy as fair, only just over half of academic staff respondents perceive the procedures for responding to student plagiarism as easy to follow. In fact, findings from the semi-structured interviews suggest the contrary; namely, that academic staff find the procedures time-consuming, complex and difficult to follow.

Research Question 5: *How do academic staff respond to incidences of student plagiarism in their institution?*

The findings from the focus groups, online survey and semi-structured interviews used in this study suggest that academic staff respond to student plagiarism in their institution in various ways, depending on a number of factors. The three vignettes which presented three diverse incidences of student plagiarism were used to illustrate this point. For vignette 1, which involved a first year undergraduate student, the most common response by academic staff was to counsel the student and allow resubmission of their work. In contrast, when the student had spent more time at university, as was the case with the third year undergraduate in vignette 2, the most common response by academic staff is to report the student. Yet, for vignette 3, which involved a postgraduate student, the most common response was similar to the response given by academic staff to vignette 1; namely, to counsel the student and allow resubmission of their thesis.

Research Question 6: *To what extent do the responses of academic staff to incidences of student plagiarism in their institution align with the academic integrity procedures of their institution?*

When the responses of academic staff to the three vignettes outlined in the online survey were compared with the responses of their institution as determined by institutional representatives, alignment appears be an issue. The findings suggest that academic staff responses align most for vignette 2 where academic staff would report the third year undergraduate student as would be expected by their university and as outlined in the academic integrity procedures.

In comparison, academic staff responses appear not to align with the responses expected of them by their institution where the student is a first year undergraduate as set out in vignette 1. In this case, most academic staff do not report the incidence of plagiarism but prefer to counsel the student and allow them to resubmit their work. This lack of alignment may be problematic for institutions as it suggests that plagiarism by first year undergraduates may be underreported with students slipping through undetected until they plagiarise again in later years.

Research Question 7: *What are the reasons for lack of alignment, if any in academic staff responses to student plagiarism?*

The reasons for lack of alignment in the responses of academic staff to student plagiarism were elicited from the focus group data, survey results and semi-structured interviews. The responses to the three vignettes in the survey show that, although the responses of academic staff appear to be consistent with others, they are not always aligned to the responses expected of them by their institutions. In particular, lack of alignment between academic staff and their university appears mostly when the student involved is a first year undergraduate.

From the survey findings, the reasons suggested by academic staff were found through investigating the factors they considered important when responding to student plagiarism. The factors considered important vary depending on different incidences of plagiarism but the overwhelming factor that most academic staff consider important is the academic level of the student. In all three vignettes in the survey, it appears that this factor may be one of the reasons academic staff respond to student plagiarism the way they do.

Other reasons why academic staff responses to student plagiarism do not always align with the responses expected of them by their institution may be found through eliciting common themes from analysis of results from the focus groups, online survey and interview findings.

From the online survey, it appears that although most academic staff are aware of their university's policy and procedures relating to student plagiarism, and have accessed these institutional documents to respond to particular incidences of student plagiarism, fewer academic staff are aware of any changes that may have been made to these institutional documents. It appears customary for institutions to review their policies and procedures on a regular basis. Knowing, from analysis of these institutional documents, that academic integrity policy and procedures for each of the four public universities were amended during the course of this study, it appears that not all academic staff are aware of these changes. In particular, results from question 16 of the online survey *"Have any amendments/changes been made to this policy?"* found in Table 4.11, show that only just over half of academic staff respondents believed that changes had been made to their institution's academic integrity policy.

Academic staff in this study appear to respond in consistent ways to diverse incidences of student plagiarism, which suggests that they may have take into account similar reasons when responding. The themes elicited from the findings include academic staff perceptions of discretion, overwork, stress, time and resources and a support from their institution may influence how they respond to incidences of student plagiarism. This qualitative analysis of findings reveals a lot more about academic staff, their perceptions of their themselves, their students and their institutions than quantitative analysis of the findings have and together, have led to the development of a 'Three-view' model to help explain why academic staff respond to student plagiarism in the way they do. This model, including the refinements that led to its development, is discussed in more detail in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

5.1 Background to this study

Plagiarism by students, or 'student plagiarism' is an area of concern for institutions of higher learning in Australia. Despite attempts by some researchers to explain the notion and suggest elements which it might include, it remains a difficult concept to define (Sutherland-Smith, 2010; Fishman, 2009; Pecorari, 2001).

A review of the literature presented in Chapter 2 indicates there have been many studies conducted in Australia and overseas which have examined academic misconduct, cheating and plagiarism by students in institutions of higher learning. Most researchers from the US and UK have examined students and their understandings of what constitutes plagiarism in an effort to understand why students plagiarise, with some researchers seeking to present a profile of the cheating student (McCabe, Butterfield & Trevino, 2001a; Whitley, 1998; McCabe & Trevino, 1997; Ashworth, Bannister & Thorne, 1997; Newstead, Franklin-Stokes & Armstead, 1996; Franklin-Stokes & Newstead, 1995; Drake, 1941).

Studies from both Australia and overseas have examined educational and assessment practices which may be of use in reducing or avoiding, but not completely eliminating, student plagiarism in universities and colleges (Caldwell, 2009; Carroll, 2007; Devlin, 2006; Brimble & Stevenson-Clarke, 2005; Breen & Massen, 2005; Barrett & Cox, 2005; Green, Williams & Kessel, 2005; Lathrop & Foss, 2005; Park, 2003; McGowan, 2003; Harris, 2001).

In this century, there have been some studies which have explored the perceptions of academic staff of academic misconduct by their students (de Jaeger & Brown, 2010; Coalter, Lim & Wanorie, 2007; Henderson, 2007; Nadelson, 2007; Flint, Clegg & Macdonald, 2006; Coren, 2006; Sutherland-Smith, 2005; Liddell & Fong, 2005; Sierup-Pincus & Schmelkin, 2003; Kidwell, Wozniak & Laurel, 2003; Burke, 1997; McCabe, 1993; Ritter, 1993). They suggest that academic staff tend to ignore academic misconduct by their students due to such reasons as a lack of time and resources, fear of retribution and a lack of institutional support (Keith-Speigel, Tabachnick, Whitley & Washburn, 1998; Whitley, 1998). However, these studies on lecturers' perceptions have been conducted predominantly by US researchers with studies by Donald McCabe and his colleagues spanning over a decade since 1993.

In Australasia, there have been far fewer studies on the perceptions of academic staff of student plagiarism. Instead, most studies from this region have examined the perceptions of

both lecturers and university students (Wilkinson, 2009; Sutherland-Smith, 2008; Brimble & Stevenson-Clarke, 2005) rather than academic staff alone.

In the area of perceptions of academic staff of their institutional policies and procedures for responding to student plagiarism, there appear to be fewer studies. This may be because academic integrity policies and procedures, in their current forms, are fairly recent introductions in Australian universities. The few Australian researchers that have examined academic integrity policies appear to have limited their work to the wording of documents to explore the elements that constitute an exemplary policy (Bretag, Mahmud, Wallace, Walker, James, Green, East, McGowan & Partridge, 2011; Grigg, 2009; Bretag, 2005; Phillips, 2005). An extensive review of the literature has revealed one study which explored academic staff perceptions of academic integrity policies and procedures; however this was a small scale study where only 39 respondents from one institution were surveyed (Crisp, 2007).

At the same time, the issue of academic integrity cannot be studied without a deeper understanding of academics, their views and perceptions, and their roles and responsibilities in modern universities. Studies in this broader area suggest that there are diverse constructs or discourses that academics have of their identities and roles (Feather, 2010; Sabri, 2010; Churchman, 2006). These differences in perceptions may affect academic staff responses to incidences of student plagiarism.

This study aims to add to the literature in this area and make a contribution to the field of academic integrity in higher education by exploring the relationship between academic staff and academic integrity policy and procedures in institutions of higher learning in Australia.

As institutions of higher learning in Australia go through significant changes due to globalisation, internationalisation and the casualisation of the academic workforce, it is timely to examine the current situation with respect to academic integrity in institutions of higher learning. It is also important to examine the academics who are responsible following institutional procedjres for responding to student plagiarism. The main objective of this study is to present findings on the perceptions of academic staff of their university's academic integrity policy and procedures and their responses to student plagiarism in the light of these institutional documents. At the same time, this study seeks to add to the existing literature by defining the notion of 'student plagiarism' in a comprehensive way and by developing a 'Three-view' model which helps explain academic staff responses to student plagiarism.

The aims of this study were twofold. Firstly, it sought to explore the perceptions of academic staff to academic integrity policies and procedures in four Western Australian public universities. It also sought to investigate how academic staff respond to incidences of plagiarism by their students and to offer some possible reasons as to why they respond in the way they do by investigating the factors they consider important in relation to three vignettes describing three diverse incidences of plagiarism.

Seven research questions were posited which helped fulfil these aims, namely;

1. *How is the term 'student plagiarism' understood by academic staff at four Western Australian public universities?*
2. *To what extent are academic staff understandings of the term 'student plagiarism' consistent with how the term is expressed in the academic integrity policy of their institution?*
3. *What are the perceptions of academic staff of student plagiarism in their institution?*
4. *What are the perceptions of academic staff of their institution's academic integrity policy and procedures?*
5. *How do academic staff respond to incidences of student plagiarism in their institution?*
6. *To what extent do the responses of academic staff to incidences of student plagiarism in their institution align with the academic integrity procedures of their institution?*
7. *What are the reasons for lack of alignment, if any, in academic staff responses to student plagiarism?*

Mixed-methods research, as enunciated by Cresswell and Plano-Clarke (2011) was viewed as being a suitable methodology to use to answer these research questions. Both quantitative and qualitative data was collected from the main participants of this study, the academic staff, using a variety of methods; namely, focus groups, an online survey and semi-structured interviews. In addition, data collected from documents relating to academic integrity policies and procedures from the universities helped to present a more complete picture of the understandings and responses of academic staff to the issue of student plagiarism.

Accepting that there may be multiple ways of viewing the world, the paradigm of "pragmatism" was the underlying philosophical assumption of this current research where both objective (the rules of the institution) and subjective (the personal views of academic staff) world views might come into play. The paradigm of pragmatism appeared to be the best fit for the methods of data collection and analysis used in the current mixed method study.

In support of the paradigm of pragmatism, two approaches were utilised: a grounded theory approach based on the work of Strauss and Corbin (1990) and a document analysis approach based on the framework of Miles and Huberman (1994), in an attempt to elicit themes or concepts which might be relevant to this research.

In order to assist in the analysis of the data obtained from the various methods, two software tools were utilised. NVIVO software assisted in the initial analysis of the qualitative data obtained from the focus groups and the semi-structured interviews, followed by manual coding and recoding to help elicit themes and concepts. SPSS software was used to analyse the quantitative data obtained from the online survey instrument administered using the online service *QuestionPro.com*.

Through content analysis of institutional documents and definitions of student plagiarism provided by academic staff in an online survey, a comprehensive definition of student plagiarism, containing nine elements, is proposed. Through the coding and recoding of data from the focus groups, online survey and semi-structured interviews used in this study, and utilising a grounded theory approach, a ‘Three-view’ model has been developed by the researcher to help explain the findings obtained in this study. These two outcomes are elaborated further in sections 5.3-5.5.

5.3 Key findings from this study

There were a number of findings from this mixed-methods study on academic staff perceptions of institutional documents relating to academic integrity and their responses to student plagiarism in four Western Australian public universities. All have been explored in Chapter 4 and have helped answer the seven research questions posited. The findings which are considered significant and worthy of further investigation are as follows:

1. Definitions of 'student plagiarism' provided by the four public institutions of higher learning in Perth, Western Australia are found in their academic integrity policy and procedures, and contain, at most, six elements.

2. Definitions of 'student plagiarism' provided by academic staff at the four Western Australian public universities appear consistent with the definitions of 'student plagiarism' provided by their institutions.However, when all definitions of student plagiarism provided by academic staff are taken into account a comprehensive definition contains nine elements. This 'nine-element' definition of student plagiarism is one of the outcomes of this study and is explained in section 5.4.

3. Academic staff in the four Western Australian public universities perceive the academic integrity policy of their institution as being fair, but the procedures for responding to student plagiarism as impractical to follow.

4. These academic staff do not always respond to student plagiarism in ways which align with the responses expected of them by their institutions. This finding is supported by the literature (Coalter, Lim & Wanorie, 2007; Nadelson, 2007; Pickard, 2006; Flint, Clegg & Macdonald, 2006; Sutherland-Smith, 2005; Brimble & Stevenson-Clarke, 2005; Barrett & Cox 2005; Kelley & Bonner, 2005; Simon, Carr, McCullough, Morgan, Oleson & Ressel, 2003; Keith-Speigel,. Tabachnick, Whitley & Washburn, 1998; Whitley, 1998; Burke, 1997; Ritter, 1993).

5. Responses to student plagiarism by academic staff do not always align with responses expected of them by their institution where the student involved is a first year undergraduate and postgraduate. This finding is supported by the literature which suggests that some academic staff will respond in ways which do

not follow institutional procedures (Coalter, Lim & Wanorie, 2007; Nadelson, 2007; Pickard, 2006; Flint, Clegg & Macdonald, 2006; Sutherland-Smith, 2005; Brimble & Stevenson-Clarke, 2005; Barrett & Cox 2005; Kelley & Bonner, 2005; Simon, et al., 2003; Keith-Speigel et al., 1998; Whitley, 1998; Burke, 1997; Ritter, 1993).

6. This lack of alignment is particularly evident where the student involved in the incident of plagiarism is a first year undergraduate or a postgraduate student. In contrast, the responses of academic staff to student plagiarism appear to most align with responses expected of them by their institution where the student is a second, third or fourth year undergraduate.

7. The most common factor affecting the responses of the academic staff to student plagiarism is the educational level of the student.

8. Reasons given by these academic staff for why they respond to student plagiarism the way they do are varied.

9. The responses of these academic staff to incidences of student plagiarism, and any lack of alignment, may be affected by their perceptions of their students. In particular, if the student is a first year undergraduate, or new to the institution, or from an international or NESB background, it appears that academic staff will respond ways that do not align with the responses expected of them by their university. This finding is supported to some extent by the literature which suggests that academic staff will tend ot respond to incidences of plagiarism which are serious and where there was intent on the student's part ot plagiarism (Sutherland-Smith, 2005; Kelley & Bonner, 2005). This seriousness and intention may not be evident when first year undergraduates are involved.

10. Academic staff responses to incidences of student plagiarism, and any lack of alignment, may be affected by their perceptions of their institution and institutional procedures. In particular, if they find procedures time-consuming, stressful or impractical to follow, they will tend to respond in ways that do not align with the responses expected of them by their university. This finding is supported by the literature (Coalter, Lim & Wanorie, 2007; Nadelson, 2007;

Pickard, 2006; Flint, Clegg & Macdonald, 2006; Sutherland-Smith, 2005; Brimble & Stevenson-Clarke, 2005; Barrett & Cox 2005; Kelley & Bonner, 2005; Simon et al., 2003; Keith-Speigel et al., 1998; Whitley, 1998; Burke, 1997; Ritter, 1993).

11. Academic staff responses to incidences of student plagiarism, and any lack of alignment, may be affected by their perceptions of themselves and their role in their university. In particular, if academic staff perceive their role to be flexible and adaptable and to represent the institution, then they will tend to respond in ways that align with the responses expected of them by their institution. In comparison, if academic staff cannot make sense of the changing environment, or keep up with changes in policies and procedures, then they are more likely to feel disconnected and not align with the responses expected of them by their institution. This finding is supported by research on academic roles which suggests that the relationship of the academic with their institution influences how they perceive their roles and their commitment to the institution (Sabri, 2010; Feather, 2010; Clegg, 2008; Churchman, 2006; Henkel, 2005).

12. A way of understanding academic staff responses to student plagiarism is though the 'Three-view'model which suggests that responses to student plagiarism depend on who or what the academic staff member prioritises when responding and also how academic staff perceive their academic integrity policy and procedures. This 'Three-view' model is another outcome of this study.

5.4 Outcome 1: A nine-element definition of student plagiarism

The first two research questions in this study sought to explore the understandings of academic staff at four Western Australian public universities of the term 'student plagiarism' and to what extent their understandings were consistent with how the term was expressed in the academic integrity policy of their institution. The understandings of the term were determined from definitions of plagiarism provided by both the four public Australian universities in their institutional documents and in the definitions provided by academic staff in answering question 17 of the online survey. For the purposes of answering these research questions, it was necessary to separate the definitions provided by the four public universities and compare these with the definitions provided by academic staff employed at each. However, at all times, it was never the intention of this study to compare and contrast

individual institutions per se or suggest that one had a better definition of plagiarism over the others.

The literature suggests that most academic staff do not define plagiarism consistently or define plagiarism in a simple way, reducing the concept to something workable and practicable (Sutherland-Smith, 2010; Fishman, 2009; Pecorari, 2001).

The definition of plagiarism provided by Fishman (2009) contained only five elements while Pecorari's (2001) contained six but omitted the essential element of 'action'- what the student does when they plagiarise. Actions could range from copying and cutting and pasting to misrepresenting information. It is important to distinguish between the various types of action as each might suggest a different level of seriousness which may be useful when deciding which penalties might be imposed. However, the issue of penalties is outside the scope of this study and is not explored further, save to say that being accurate with terminology is important for many reasons. For example, the terms "misrepresenting" and "intellectual theft" connote an element of deception or even criminality as compared with terms such as "copying" and "cutting and pasting", yet all these types of action could be viewed as plagiarism, regardless of intent. Thus determining whether or not there was intent would not be necessary in deciding whether or not plagiarism had occurred. It could also reduce possible connotations of criminality found in definitions of student plagiarism which would be in line with an educative rather than a punitive approach to plagiarism (Carroll, 2005; Park, 2004).

The findings from this study suggest that the academic staff participants from the four public Western Australian universities provided definitions of plagiarism which contain additional elements which are sometimes not found in the definitions of plagiarism provided by their institutions.

Using document analysis, it appears that the academic integrity policy documents from Universities A, B, C and D had definitions of student plagiarism which contained six, seven, seven and six elements respectively. Academic staff from these institutions provided definitions of student plagiarism which, when taken together, included the additional elements of 'intention', 'deception' and 'gain', elements which were not always found in the definitions provided to them by their institution. Where academic staff definitions of plagiarism were consistent with definitions provided by their institutions were in the first six elements of 'actor', 'action', 'work', 'possession', 'another', and 'acknowledgment'. In other words, there was some consistency between the definitions provided in institutional

documents and those given by academic staff, but not a complete match. When all elements in the definitions provided by academic staff are combined, a definition of student plagiarism containing nine elements emerges. This definition, which contains nine elements and which is represented in Figure 5.1, is more comprehensive than definitions of student plagiarism provided by the institutions. It is suggested that all these nine elements must be present for plagiarism by students to have occurred so that academic staff may respond.

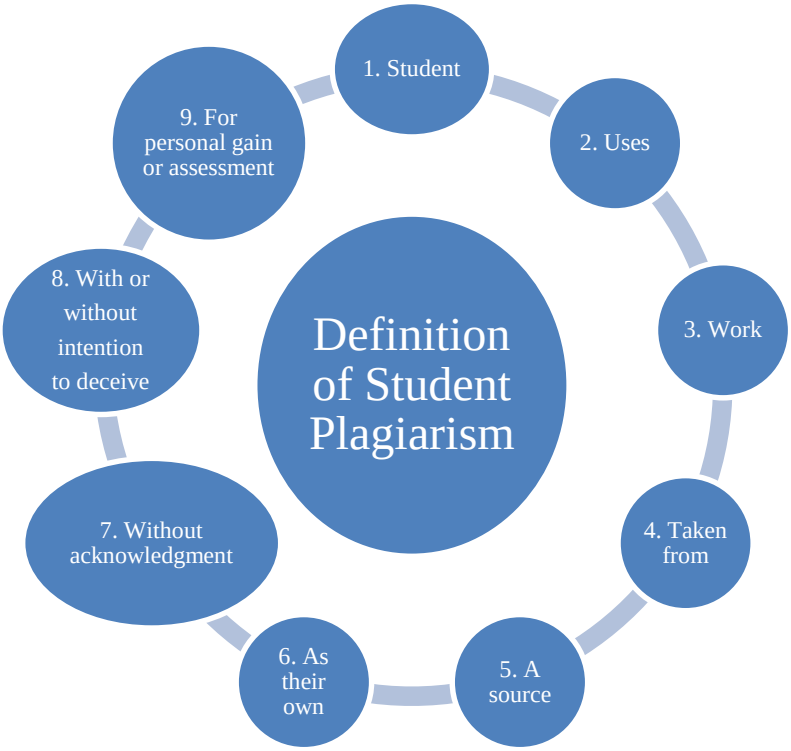


Figure 5.1: A comprehensive definition of student plagiarism containing nine elements

The ninth element in this definition, the element of 'gain', was found in some of the definitions provided by academic staff but not found in institutional definitions of student plagiarism. This element is similar to the element of 'personal gain' in Fishman's (2009) definition of plagiarism. While making the definition of plagiarism cumbersome by including this ninth element, the implications of including this term might it make it clearer for academic staff to know when to respond to plagiarism and would lessen any possible confusion. For example, one focus group participant in this study was not sure how they would respond to a case of plagiarism when the assignment was not worth any marks but rather was part of a tutorial, as stated:

> *"I did come across a couple of students who copied each other's tutorial questions....I don't know if plagiarism policy also extends to tutorial work which is not officially submitted for a mark."* (Focus group participant).

If the element of 'gain' is missing, that is, if the work that was allegedly plagiarised was not submitted for marks or assessment, then it would be meaningless or perhaps unnecessary to respond to cases of student plagiarism when it might mean more work for academic staff with no perceived detriment to the student in terms of loss of marks or failing in the unit.

Thus, although there were common terms or elements found in the definitions provided by both the institutions and their academic staff, neither of these had a total of nine elements for defining student plagiarism. As a result of this study, a comprehensive definition of student plagiarism is as follows:

A student uses work taken from a source as their own without acknowledgment and whether or not they intended to deceive, for assessment or personal gain.

It is believed that this nine-element definition of plagiarism is an attempt to define what is a complex issue in the broadest terms to cover all possible understandings that academic staff might have of the issue of plagiarism. Though wordy, the definition of plagiarism makes it clearer that for academic staff to respond to plagiarism, all these nine elements need to be present. Also, no single element in this definition should be viewed as more important than another, but rather all elements should be present to establish that plagiarism has in fact occurred. y

What is noteworth is that the comprehensive definition does not contain the element of 'self-plagiarism'. As discussed in Chapter 4, this element was not included as it was not found in the definitions of student plagiarism provided by both the institutions and the academics, perhaps because it is viewed as a type of 'self-collusion' rather than plagiarism. For this reason, the element was not included in the comprehensive definition of plagiarism.

Having a clear and comprehensive definition of student plagiarism would be a helpful start in developing a shared understanding of the term. This is important considering that the findings from the survey instrument in this study suggest that fewer than half of the respondents believe that other academic staff understand nor respond to student plagiarism in the same way as they do (See Table 4.10). However, having a common understanding does not necessarily mean that there will be similar responses to incidences of student plagiarism by academic staff, as the next section illustrates.

5.5 Outcome 2: A 'Three-view' model for academic staff responses to student plagiarism

To understand how staff might respond to incidences of plagiarism by their students, it is important to firstly understand how academic staff perceive the issue of plagiarism, since perceptions may influence responses. In this study, the perceptions of academic staff were obtained primarily from their responses to the online survey instrument, and in particular their responses to Question 26 of the online survey where academic staff were asked to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement with statements relating to institutional academic integrity policies and procedures and student plagiarism in general.

At the same time, the actual responses of academic staff to incidences of student plagiarism need to be explored to see if the responses are aligned with the responses that institutions have set out in their academic integrity policies and procedures.

From the findings, a model has been developed by the researcher to help explain why academic staff respond to incidences of student plagiarism in the way they do. Though appearing simple in structure, it is a combination of two concepts which examine the priorities and the behaviours of academic staff, respectively. Before describing in detail the 'Three-view' model, the two concepts will be described to clarify the process which led to the development of the final model.

5.5.1 The 'three-priorities' concept

The 'three-priorities'concept was the first developed to help explain why academic staff might respond to student plagiarism in ways which to not align with the responses expected of them by their institution. It is based on who or what the academic staff might prioritise when thinking about how to respond to incidences of student plagiarism. Figure 5.2 presents this 'three-priorities' concept.

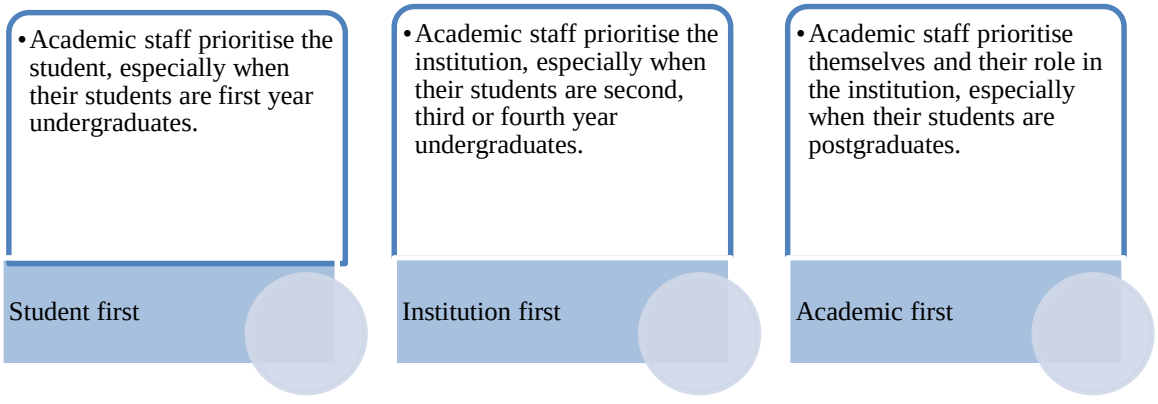


Figure 5.2: The 'three-priorities' concept of academic staff responses to student plagiarism

The ‘three-priorities’ concept in Figure 5.2 suggests that academic staff behave in diverse ways when responding to student plagiarism because they have in mind different priorities depending on the particular incidence of student plagiarism they are responding to. For example, when the academic staff puts the student first, their responses to incidences of student plagiarism would favour the student. This can be clearly seen in the findings for vignette 1 in the online survey where academic staff did not report the first year undergraduate student but rather counselled them and allowed them to resubmit their assignment. This response is not in line with the response expected of academic staff by their institutions, as found in the academic integrity policy and procedures of all four universities which would be to report the student. This finding is supported by the findings from the semi-structured interviews, as found in Table 4.31, where a ½ indicates that academic staff responses align, in part, with the responses expected of them by their institution.

The findings of this study indicate that academic staff prioritise the student when they focus on the particular student and in particular, the student’s educational level, language background and whether or not they are new to the institution.

Prioritising the student can also be seen in the following quotes from the academic staff participants in this study:

> *“I would talk to the student informally…I would try to find out why [they] had plagiarised and offer help”* (Survey respondent).
>
> *“…I would discuss the matter face-to-face with the student, listen to their story…refer [them] to online resources…and recommend that the student attend workshops…”* (Survey respondent).
>
> *“… I do think sometimes, you know, if they’re new students…or if there is a language difficulty. I think just going straight down the ‘we do A, B, C’ doesn’t always work for everybody” (Interviewee 12).*

When academic staff put their university first, it appears that their responses to incidences of student plagiarism align with the response expected of them by their university. This was seen in the findings from vignette 2 of the online survey where the student was a third year undergraduate so had spent some time in a tertiary environment and also had been found to have plagiarised before. In this case, academic staff would report the incidence of plagiarism as they would be expected to do by their institution. This finding is supported by the findings

from the semi-structured interviews, as found in Table 4.31, where a √ indicates that academic staff responses align with the responses expected of them by their institution.

From the findings of this study, it appears that the academics prioritise their institution when they perceive responding to student plagiarism is not too difficult or time-consuming and when the student is not a first year undergraduate or a postgraduate student but one who has been in the institution for a number of years and who may have plagiarised in the past.

Prioritising the institution can be seen in the following quotes from the academic staff participants in this study:

> *"I think there is a difference between a first year and a third year response to plagiarism. You'd expect by third year that the student would be familiar with the notion…where a third year submits a plagiarised piece of work, I would certainly go to the Head of School saying we need a more formal process because at third year I think they should know"* (Focus group participant).

> *"As a third offence, our policy would require this case to be escalated to a full investigation"* (Survey respondent).

When the academic staff put themselves first, they are thinking of their role and position within their institutions ahead of students or the institution itself. This means that their responses to incidences of student plagiarism may not always align, or may only partially align, with the response expected of them by their institution. This was clearly evident in the findings from vignette 3 of the online survey where the student was a postgraduate. In this case, the most common response from academics acting as supervisors was to counsel the student and allow resubmission of the thesis. In contrast the response expected of academic staff by their universities would be to report the postgraduate student and only a few academic staff in this study did so. This finding is supported by the findings from the semi-structured interviews, as found in Table 4.31, where a × indicates that academic staff responses do not align with the responses expected of them by their institution.

Thus, it appear that the academics prioritise themselves when they perceive responding to student plagiarism to be time-consuming, when they feel overworked or stressed or perceive a lack of institutional support. These findings appear to be supported by the literature on academic staff responses to student plagiarism which suggest that academics ignore instances of plagiarism for the reasons suggested above (Coalter, Lim & Wanorie, 2007; Nadelson, 2007; Pickard, 2006; Flint, Clegg & Macdonald, 2006; Sutherland-Smith, 2005; Brimble &

Stevenson-Clarke, 2005; Barrett & Cox 2005; Kelley & Bonner, 2005; Simon et al., 2003; Keith-Speigel et al., 1998; Whitley, 1998; Burke, 1997; Ritter, 1993).

The following quotes from the academic staff participants in this study suggest that the academic is thinking of themselves ahead of the student and the institution:

> *"One of the main things that determine how I respond to cases is where we are in semester, and how much workload I am under"* (Survey respondent).

> *"There is a sense that given the already overworked schedules of teaching/research staff, following through with plagiarism issues is a burden rather than an accepted part of the job"* (Survey respondent).

> *"Essentially I ignore the policy now as it takes a lot out of my time for no outcome and I am undermined anyway by under the table resubmissions anyway. It's basically in my own best interest to let most cases slide when asking the student to review or fix their work"* (Survey respondent).

> *"I guess what I'm thinking about right now in terms of that, you know, is this too hard? How big of a deal is this?..."* (Interviewee 16).

> *"I did not want a young female Asian student accusing me of being sexist or racist or something like that…"* (Interviewee 17).

> *"…I don't allow these things to upset me…I don't want to waste my time with reprimands and go through the system …I'm here to teach them how to write and how to think… I'm not here to do appeal processes and when you ask me about Turnitin I'll be very strong-minded about that"* (Interviewee 26).

5.5.2 The 'three-responses' concept

The second concept developed from the findings of this study to help explain why academic staff might respond to student plagiarism in ways which do not align with the responses expected of them by their institution was the 'three-responses' concept. This concept, represented in Figure 5.3, is based on the relationship between the academics and their institution, and, in particular, how they perceive academic integrity policy and procedures.

Figure 5.3: The 'three-responses' concept of academic staff responses to student plagiarism

In the 'three-responses' concept, an academic may flex institutional documents for some incidences of plagiarism if they perceive the academic integrity policy and procedures to be unfair to themselves and the student and also if they believe they have some discretion. This appears evident in the findings from this study, especially in the responses of academic staff to Question 26 and to vignette 1 in the online survey. For example, in vignette 1 in the online survey, where the student involved was a first year undergraduate, most academic staff responded in a way which was not aligned with the response expected from them by their university. Is is also evident in the responses of academic staff in semi-structured interviews as found in Table 4.31 where partial alignment is represented by a ½.

The following quotes from the academic staff participants in this study suggest that the academic is flexing institutional documents relating to academic integrity:

> *"If I have the opportunity to speak to the [first year] student and I think they've made a genuine mistake,,,they should be given the opportunity to fix the mistake first…so I'll give the student a chance to resubmit…second and third years I'll follow procedures"* (Interviewee 1).

> *"The trouble with policies is that they're quite black and white, so if it's something like 'Is this a third year student?' well, yes, it might be, but it might be a third year student who's never been in Australia before…So you have to[use] your discretion"* (Interviewee 12).

In other cases, an academic may follow institutional documents when they perceive academic integrity policy and procedures for responding to student plagiarism to be fair and easy to understand. This conforming to institutional rules was seen in academic staff responses Question 26 and to the second vignette in the online survey where the student involved was

not a first year undergraduate and had plagiarised before. This reponse is also evident from the findings from the semi-structured interviews as outlined in Table 4.31 where complete alignment is represented by a √.

The following quotes from the academic staff participants in this study suggest that the academic is following institutional documents relating to academic integrity:

> *"There is a policy to follow…so we follow the policy…I think the policies need to be there and they do need to be followed"* (Interviewee 4).
>
> *"I'm more or less in accord with the procedures that were set up"* (Interviewee 14).
>
> *"I think they're [procedures] very clear…And I think if they were implemented […] levels of plagiarism would decrease"* (Interviewee 19).

In some instances, an academic may ignore institutional documents if they perceive the academic integrity policy and procedures to be impractical, difficult, stressful or time-consuming to follow. This is seen in the responses of academic staff to Question 26 and vignette 3 in the online survey where the example involved a postgraduate student and in the responses of some interviewees to the particular incidence of student plagiarism they had personally encountered in their university. This response is also evident from the findings from the semi-structured interviews as found in Table 4.31 where non-alignment is represented by a ×.

The following quotes from the academic staff participants in this study suggest that the academic is ignoring institutional documents relating to academic integrity:

> *"My institution's plagiarism policy is unwieldly to follow"* (Survey respondent).
>
> *"I try to talk to them [students] as well, and have a think about it…not send them up to Head of School"* (Interviewee 12).
>
> *"I've had a couple of examples where there's some very poor paraphrasing going on…I've really sat on those and thought, oh, do I…put that through…and I've chosen not to in that case"* (Interviewee 16).

5.5.3 A 'Three-view' model

Both the 'three-priorities' and 'three-responses' concepts have their limitations in that one is concerned with the priorities which may affect the behaviours of academic staff while the other focusses on the relationship between their responses to student plagiarism and institutional documents on academic integrity. These two concepts were refined by combining them to develop a more complete understanding of staff responses to student plagiarism in the four Western Australian public universities. A representation of this 'Three-view' model is in Figure 5.4.

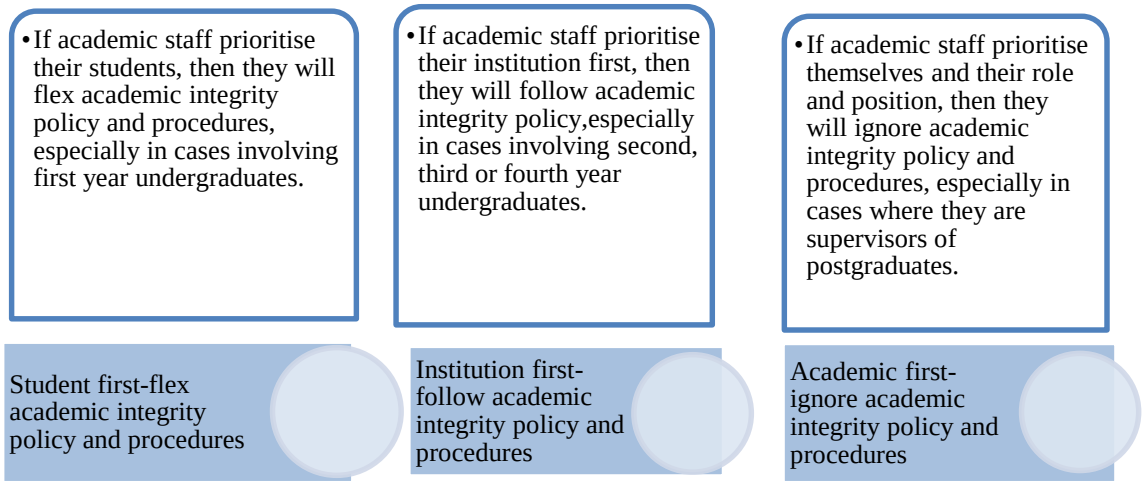


Figure 5.4: A 'Three view' model of academic staff responses to student plagiarism

The 'Three-view' model outlines three possible reasons for academic staff responses to student plagiarism based on who and what they view as taking priority. The 'student first-flex academic integrity policy and procedures' view in Figure 5.4 suggests that academic staff respond to incidences of plagiarism by flexing or bending the rules relating to academic integrity, especially when the student involved is a first year undergraduate. That is, academics partially follow procedures for responding to student plagiarism in that they do not always report the incidence of plagiarism to someone higher in authority as expected of them by their university. They would follow the rules to some extent in that they will still consult with and counsel the student.

This flexing or bending of the rules was evident especially in the findings in this study on the responses of academic staff to vignette 1 in the online survey and the findings from the semi-structured interviews as seen in Table 4.31 in this thesis where there was partial alignment (represented as half) of academic staff responses with the responses expected of them by their institution.

The second view in Figure 5.4 is the ‘institution first-follow academic integrity policy and procedures’. In this case, the academic staff member prioritises the institution above themselves and their students. That is, this academic will respond to student plagiarism in a way which is expected of them by their institution as found in institutional documents. This type of academic was evident especially in the responses of academic staff to vignette 2 in the online survey where the student was an undergraduate who was not in their first year at university.

The third view outlined in Figure 5.4 could be described as the ‘academic first-ignore academic integrity policy and procedures’. This view means the academic thinks of themselves and their perceived role in the institution first which means that they would respond to incidences of plagiarism by ignoring institutional documents and so not align to the response expected of them by their university. This view was evident especially in the responses of academic staff to vignette 3 in the online survey where the student was a postgraduate.

It is suggested that the ‘Three-view’ model could also be interpreted in a different way by considering who or what benefits or gains from following institutional processes for responding to student plagiarism. For example, if the student is a first year undergraduate, responding to the incident of plagiarism would be, among other things, stressful and time-consuming for both the academic staff member and the student when an easier, educative approach which would include counselling the student and allowing them to resubmit their work would suffice. That is, there would be no benefit or gain for the academic or the student in following completely the institutional processes for responding to student plagiarism where the student is a first year undergraduate.

On the contrary, if the student has been at university for some time, following institutional processes for responding to student plagiarism would outweigh the effort, stress and work involved in responding. Following procedures would benefit the institution as there would be alignment between their expected response and the response of the academic staff member. There would also be no perceived detriment or loss to the academic staff member.

Finally, if the student is a postgraduate, there would be no gain to anyone in following institutional processes for responding to student plagiarism as doing so might have a negative effect on the role and position of the academic staff member who in this case would be the supervisor. There would also be loss to the postgraduate student in that they would not be

able to graduate and perhaps the reputation of the institution or of its awards would also be negatively affected.

The above examples show the flexibility and the broader application of the 'Three-view' model which adds a new way to understanding the responses of academic staff to incidences of student plagiarism in institutions of higher learning.

5.6 Significance of this study

Although the findings presented in Chapter 4 are not conclusive and cannot be generalised, it is hoped that this study adds to the conversation on academic integrity in two ways. Firstly, it is hoped that this study supports the notion that the issue of student plagiarism remains complex. Secondly, this study has shown that there may be a myriad of reasons why academic staff responses to study plagiarism may not always align with the responses expected of them by their institutions.

In terms of original contribution to the field of academic integrity, it is hoped that the comprehensive definition of student plagiarism containing nine elements, proves useful as a standard definition for the academic integrity policies of Australian universities. Also, the 'Three view' model presents a new framework to help understand the responses of academic staff to incidences of student plagiarism where all responses fall under one of three ways (flex, follow or ignore academic integrity policy and procedures) depending on who or what is viewed as taking priority (student, institution or academic).

It is hoped the both the comprehensive definition of student plagiarism and the 'Three-view' model can be of use to all stakeholders in institutions of higher learning in Australia in the revision of academic integrity policy and procedures and more importantly, in gaining a deeper, empathetic understanding of the perceptions, views and beliefs of their academic staff and the important role they should play in the development and implementation of academic integrity in universities.

5.7 Limitations of this study

This study did not look specifically at how academic staff perceive their role in their institution of higher learning. In hindsight this may limit the application of the study to academics' roles in relation to their responses to incidences of student plagiarism only. However, it may be that the proposed model could be applied to other forms of academic staff behaviour or responses to other issues that may arise in institutions of higher education which require some response on behalf of academic staff. The survey did not contain specific

questions relating to academic staff perceptions of their roles, responsibilities, power and discretion which may have been useful in showing the place of the academic in modern universities, although the findings from the semi-structured interviews suggest these are issues which need further investigation.

The number of participants in this study was limited to academic staff from four public Australian universities situated in Perth. The results therefore cannot be generalisable to other Australian universities in other states nor to institutions of higher education or colleges overseas.

5.8 Summary of Chapter 5

The objective of this mixed methods study has sought to explore the perceptions of academic staff in four Western Australian public universities of academic integrity policies and procedures and their responses to plagiarism by their students. Through the analysis of data obtained from over 200 academic staff through focus groups, an online survey and semi-structured interviews, seven research questions on their perceptions of academic integrity policies and procedures and responses to incidences of student plagiarism, were addressed.

A key finding from this mixed methods study appear to suggest that academic staff have similar understandings of the term 'student plagiarism' and that their understandings are consistent with the definitions of student plagiarism found in institutional documents. This finding contradicts early research by Crisp (2007), Flint, Clegg and Macdonald (2006) and Phillips (2005) which suggested that academic staff did not have a clear and consistent understanding of student plagiarism.

On academic staff perceptions of academic integrity policy and procedures, the findings from this study suggest that almost all the academic staff participants view their institution's academic integrity policy as fair and easy to understand; however around half of them view institutional procedures for responding to student plagiarism as being impractical or difficult to follow. Apart from the study by Gullifer and Tyson (2013) which found that students were confused about academic integrity policy and procedures, a comprehensive review of the literature has not shown research on academic staff perceptions of academic integrity policy and procedures that either support or contradict this finding. This lack of evidence is probably due to the fact that these documents, in their current forms, are fairly recent introductions, or have recently been reviewed, in Australian institutions of higher learning.

With regard to the responses of academic staff to incidences of student plagiarism, the findings from this study suggest that there is a lack of alignment between academic staff responses and the responses expected of them by their university. Reasons for this lack of alignment may be as a result of views regarding who or what takes priority when the academic staff member is responding to student plagiarism. Academic staff might respond to student plagiarism because of their perceptions of their institution's academic integrity policy and procedures. If they find procedures time consuming or stressful, or if they feel a lack of institutional support, academic staff responses to student plagiarism will not always align with the responses expected of them by their institution as set out in academic integrity policy and procedures. This finding is supported by the literature on academic staff perceptions and responses to student plagiarism (Coalter, Lim & Wanorie, 2007; Nadelson, 2007; Pickard, 2006; Flint, Clegg & Macdonald, 2006; Sutherland-Smith, 2005; Brimble & Stevenson-Clarke, 2005; Barrett & Cox 2005; Kelley & Bonner, 2005; Simon et al., 2003; Keith-Speigel et al., 1998; Whitley, 1998; Burke, 1997; Ritter, 1993). Conversely, the findings from this study suggest that if academic staff prioritise the institution and where the student involved is not new to the institution and has plagiarised before, then they will more likely follow institutional processes. This finding is consistent with research by Brimble and Stevenson-Clarke (2006), Sutherland-Smith (2005), Burke (1997) and Ritter (1993) which suggests that academic staff will follow institutional procedures for responding to student plagiarism where the plagiarism is considered serious and where there is some indication of an intention on the student's part to plagiarise.

From document analysis, a comprehensive definition of student plagiarism was obtained and from a grounded theory approach, the 'Three-view'model was developed to help explain academic staff responses to student plagiarism in four Western Australian public universities. Although the study has limitations, it is hoped that it has made a significant contribution in keeping the conversations about academic integrity and the role of the academic in higher education current and robust.

In the light of the findings from this study, the next chapter proposes some recommendations to both institutions of higher learning and their academic staff. These recommendations seek to ensure that there is a shared understanding of the term 'student plagiarism' in the hope that the responses of academic staff to incidences of student plagiarism and the responses expected from them by their institutions are more closely aligned.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Conclusions drawn from the findings

This mixed-method study has sought to explore the perceptions of academic staff in four Western Australian public universities of academic integrity policies and procedures and their responses to plagiarism by their students. The aim of this study were to explore staff understandings of the term 'student plagiarism' and compare these understandings with the definitons of plagiarism provided by their institutions. A related aim was to explore the responses of these academics to incidences of student plagiarism and compare these responses to the responses expected of them by their institution. The findings from these aims would help address questions of alignment and consistency, both being essential elements to ensure the maintenance of standards and the integrity of awards at institutions of higher learning.

Under the paradigm of pragmatism, data from over 200 academic staff and the four Western Australian public universities was collected using institutional documents, focus groups, an online survey and semi-structured interviews. The data were analysed using descriptive statistics and document analysis based on an adapted model as outlined by Miles and Hubeman (1994). A grounded theory approach as enunciated by Strauss and Corbin (1990) was utilised to elicit key themes. Seven research questions were posited to explore the academic staff understandings of term 'student plagiarism', their perceptions of academic integrity policies and procedures and their responses to incidences of student plagiarism, were addressed.

The two outcomes of this research were a comprehensive definition of student plagiarism containing nine elements and a 'Three-view' model to help explain academic staff responses to student plagiarism in institutions of higher learning.

These outcomes may have useful to, at least, the four public universities studied and may resound with other national and international institutions of higher learning. In practical terms, the conclusions allow for recommendations to be made which may help ensure consistency and alignment on issues of academic integrity in higher education.

This study is original in terms of its focus on academic staff perceptions of academic integrity policies and procedures in four Western Australian public universities, an area of research which is only just beginning to be explored as academic integrity policy and procedures, in their current form, are fairly recent introductions to institutions of higher learning. It is

significant in that it supports the literature which shows that plagiarism is a complex issue and there is no single, workable solution to resolve it. It also reveals the views and values of academic staff in West Australian public universities as shown in their diverse and not always aligned responses to incidences of student plagiarism. This study has made a small contribution to the development of theory to explain how and why academic staff respond to plagiarism in the ways they do.

The next section outlines some recommendations for both institutions of higher learning and for their academic staff which may be useful in achieving this consistency and alignment. Recommendations for university students was not within the scope of this study, but could potentially be extracted from the conclusions.

6.2 Recommendations for institutions of higher learning

From the conclusions, the following recommendations are made for institutions of higher learning to assist in ensuring consistency in the understandings and responses to student plagiarism:

a) Provide a comprehensive and consistent definition of plagiarism in all policy and procedure documents relating to academic integrity that contains the nine elements of (1) actor, (2) action, (3) work, (4) possession, (5) another, (6) acknowledgment, (7) intention, (8) deception and (9) personal gain.

It is important to provide a comprehensive definition of plagiarism in institutional documents relating to academic integrity. The findings from this research suggest that academic staff define plagiarism as including up to nine elements whereas the current definitions of plagiarism provided by the four public Australian universities appear to include no more than eight elements. A comprehensive definition of plagiarism will mean that all stakeholders understand that all nine elements need to be present before a case of plagiarism can be established. A working definition of student plagiarism could be as follows:

"A student uses work taken from a source as their own, without acknowledgment and whether or not they intended to deceive, for assessment or personal gain".

b) This comprehensive definition of student plagiarism should be the same across all documents relating to academic integrity. This may include rules and regulations, statutes, guidelines and other documents dealing with the conduct, assessment and teaching and learning of university students.

c) Ensure that any changes to academic integrity policy and procedures are communicated to academic staff and other stakeholders. It appears from the findings from the online survey that although academic staff appear to be aware of their institution's academic integrity policy and procedures, not as many are aware of any changes made to these documents. Changes, if any, appear to be communicated via email to academic staff but this may not be the most effective means. Additional modes of communication such as meetings, training sessions or hard copies of changes may be needed to ensure that academic staff are aware of changes made which may affect how they respond to incidences of student plagiarism.

d) Streamline procedures relating to responding to student plagiarism. Although almost all the academic staff respondents to the online survey view their institution's academic integrity policy as fair and easy to understand, only half of these respondents viewed their university's procedures as easy to follow.

e) Resolve incidences of student plagiarism in a timely manner. Most academic staff from this study found their institutional procedures for responding to student plagiarism wordy and time consuming, with some cases taking up to 18 months to be settled. By this time, the student or academic staff may have moved on without an acceptable resolution to the issue. Incidences of student plagiarism should be dealt with as quickly as possible, which means that procedures may need to be amended to streamline the process so that it does not take up so much time and is less stressful for students, academics and institutions.

f) Acknowledge that academic staff may have diverse values, perceptions and beliefs when responding to incidences of student plagiarism. In particular, the findings from this research suggest that academic staff respond in diverse ways, for various reasons, taking different factors into account. In particular, academic staff tend not to follow their institutional procedures and do not report incidences of student plagiarism when the student involved is in their first year at the university and there is no perceived or apparent gain to the academic or the student in following academic integrity policy and procedures for responding to student plagiarism. In contrast, academic staff appear to be consistent with their institutional policy and procedures when responding to incidences of plagiarism by undergraduates in later years.

g) Reconsider procedures for responding to plagiarism and take into account the educational level of the student as an important factor to ensure alignment and consistency among their academic staff and their institutional documents.

h) Involve academic staff in the implementation and revision of academic integrity policy and procedures to better develop a shared understanding of the issue and to assist with consistency and alignment in responses to student plagiarism.

6.3 Recommendations for academic staff

From the conclusions, the following recommendations are made for academic staff in institutions of higher learning to assist in ensuring consistency in their understandings and responses to student plagiarism:

a) Be aware of and understand the institution's academic integrity policy and procedures for responding to student plagiarism. From this current research, it appears that academic staff only access their institution's academic integrity policy and procedures when faced with an incident of student plagiarism. It might be helpful to become familiar with the relevant documents before an incident occurs so that they have time to understand and be clear about what is expected by their institution. In particular, academic staff could attend training sessions or seek advice from experts in the field before faced with a situation of plagiarism by one of their students.

b) Keep up to date with any changes made to academic integrity policy and proceudres in the institution. This will ensure that academic staff remain consistent and aligned with their institution and with other academic staff. The findings from this study suggest that academic staff are busy and time poor and may ignore or miss communication relating to changes to institutional policies and procedures. Checking all emails and official communications from the institution, no matter how onerous this may be, is advised.

c) Welcome the opportunity to attend any comprehensive training offered by the institution to help become more aligned and consistent with other academic staff when responding to incidences of student plagiarism.

d) Be mindful of personal, individual views and perceptions you hold of your students and your institution as these views may affect your responses to incidences of student plagiarism.

e) Understand that other academic staff may be acting on their own personal views, perceptions or beliefs when responding to student plagiarism but that most of the time, academic staff appear to be consistent with each other in how they respond to incidences of student plagiarism. So, do not feel that you are alone on this issue.

6.4 Suggestions for future research

This study on the perceptions of academic staff of academic integrity policies and procedures and student plagiarism in four Western Australian public universities has shown that there is a need for longitudinal studies in the field of academic integrity both here in Australia and overseas.

In addition, more studies on the academic, their roles and responsibilities in the modern university are required. There have been changes to the higher education climate in Australia such as cuts in funding from the Federal Government, a shifting of focus from teaching to research and changes in how public Australian universities are managed which may have an impact on academic staff and affect their views on the institution, students and academic life in general.

Finally, there is a need for further cross-disciplinary studies to offer more comprehensive explanations for academic staff perceptions, behaviours and responses to not just student plagiarism but also to other issues faced by the modern academic. Such research would provide a clearer, more holistic picture of the interaction of the academic with the changing higher education environment.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Email invitation to focus group participants

INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE - FOCUS GROUP

Are you interested in student plagiarism?

Would you like to share your knowledge and experience with others?

My name is Carmela De Maio and I am a post-graduate research student attached to the Faculty of Humanities at Curtin University of Technology.

The purpose of my study is to examine **lecturers' perceptions of student plagiarism and academic integrity policies at four public WA universities** and I would like to invite you to share your knowledge and experience by being part of a **focus group**.

Ethics approval has been obtained from Curtin University, Edith Cowan University and the University of Western Australia. If you have any concerns about ethics related to this research, you may contact the Human Research Ethics Committee (Secretary) at Curtin on 9266 2784, by email at hrec@curtin.edu.au, or in writing c/-Office of Research and Development, Curtin University of Technology, GPO Box U1987, Perth WA 6845.

The focus group forms the first stage of my research and would meet only **once on (DATE) in (VENUE) at (INSTITUTION) at (TIME).**
The discussion will include 4 or 5 others, a facilitator and a scribe, and the proceedings will be tape-recorded. The whole meeting should take no more than **one and a half hours**.

At all times, **confidentiality** will be maintained and you and your institution will not be identified. Your name and **personal details will not be recorded** and you may withdraw from the study at any time. All information obtained from you will be kept in a **safe and secure place**, while all details that can personally identify will not be kept or used in any future publications of this study.

If you wish to participate in the focus group, please let me know by email at c.demaio@curtin.edu.au or 0403 797 575.

For more information on my research you may wish to contact my supervisor:

Assoc. Prof. Katie Dunworth
Associate Professor, Faculty of Humanities, Curtin University
Email: K.Dunworth@curtin.edu.au
Phone: 9266 4227

I look forward to meeting you soon.

Carmela

Appendix B: Consent form for focus group participants

CONSENT FORM FOR FOCUS GROUP

Academic staff perceptions of student plagiarism and academic integrity policies in Western Australia's public universities.

I am willing to participate in a focus group (1-1.5 hours) for the above mentioned study which has been described to me.

I confirm that I understand what my participation involves, that I can withdraw at any time, and that no information which could identify me will be used in published material.

NAME:

CONTACT EMAIL:

CONTACT NUMBER:

DATE:

SIGNATURE:

Thank you for your interest and participation.

Carmela De Maio
c.demaio@curtin.edu.au

Appendix C: Guide sheet for focus group participants

FOCUS GROUP GUIDE SHEET

Thank you for taking part in this focus group.

The purpose of the group is to share information and experiences which will help develop the survey instrument to be used in this study.

1. Where do new academic staff obtain information about student plagiarism and the plagiarism/academic integrity policies of your university? Where did you get such information?

2. How does your university define "student plagiarism"? What things are included in the definition? What things are not included?

3. In your opinion, are your university's plagiarism/academic integrity policies adequate? Why/why not?

4. Please consider the case study:
   a) A first year undergraduate NESB student has submitted an assignment which does not appear to be their own work. Your suspicions are raised because you see very little referencing and the language used is not what you'd expect from such a student. What would you do?

   b) Would your response to the above situation change if the student was a third year undergraduate ESB student?

5. Do you think other academic staff would respond in the same way to the case study?

6. Any other comments or experiences on the topics of student plagiarism and/or plagiarism policies?

Thank you for your time and contribution.
Please feel free to contact me if required.

Appendix D: Transcripts of proceedings from focus groups

FOCUS GROUP HELD AT UNIVERSITY A ON THURSDAY 16TH APRIL, 2009 AT 10AM

PARTICIPANTS: RG, Lecturer, University A

JG, Lecturer, University A

JI, Lecturer, University B

JP, Lecturer, University A

I, Interviewer

SCRIBE: GC

Member introduced themselves to each other as I wasn't sure that they would like to and I thought they'd like to remain anonymous but they were quite happy to introduce themselves.

I: *Welcome welcome everyone and thanks for um wanting to participate in my focus group. This is the start of my study and I'm going to use what you've got, what you have to say in a questionnaire. It's quite a sensitive topic so if you, well, please feel free to express what you like if you've had experience in this area. Please let us know cos it's all going to be, you're going to be de-identified and it's all going to remain anonymous. So it's just like an initial stage so I want to make it informal and not too serious even though the topic's quite serious.*

JP: The questionnaire is that for staff or students?

I: *That's for staff. So I'm only looking at staff perceptions. I'm not going to interview the students because there are problems…with ethics it's more troublesome so I've decided to focus just on us and our perceptions and I'm going across the four unis so I might pick up differences there but here today we've got two unis and this afternoon I've got the two other unis because we couldn't combine the focus groups so it will be interesting to see if there are differences at this early stage but I'm assuming there might be*

RG: […]? Are you including […]?

I: *No, because it's not public. So it's only the four public universities… so, OK, I've got a guide sheet so if we can work through it cos I know that RG and JG have to leave at 11, the main one is question 4 but the first three questions shouldn't take too much time and we can always come back to them*

So the first question is:
Where do new staff at your uni obtain information about your uni's academic integrity policies or if you're not sure where did you when you started where did you get such information if anything?

JI: It's online so that um at [...] in the[…] school where I work um there wasn't a particular training moment that focused me to um the rules and regulations the [...] rules and regulations on plagiarism. So um it's automatically it's a template for the unit plans we give students for each unit and some of the information is set there you can't change it, and so the online addresses the links which staff and students can go to they are automatically on the template for the unit plan for each unit that each student gets for each unit so that's it

I: *So that's how you found out?*

JI: That's how I found out and that's how our students find out it's constructive knowledge so even if the students don't read the unit plan it's assumed because it's in there that they've read it

JP: Yeah, it's a dangerous assumption to make. At [...] all of our assignments well I don't know if this is true for the other faculties, but certainly for Engineering they have a cover sheet for every one of their assignments that they submit um which has a line that says they have read and understood the policies and procedures and plagiarism and I've dealt with a number of cases of plagiarism and in every case I've asked them whether they have read those policies and procedures are they aware of signing this piece of paper that says they have read the policies and procedures and almost always the answer is no. Um, just so to answer the question I've been teaching at [...]for 18 months, and when I arrived I did the teaching of learning module-Foundations of Teaching and Learning- and plagiarism was discussed there and the policies and procedures were discussed there and they're also available online at the uni's website which contains all of the policies and procedures. Um my one concern about that is I've found that there seem to be a lot of documents on plagiarism –you know there's one there's a policy document, and then there's a separate flowchart and then there's a separate um proforma that you're supposed to fill out you know there's maybe 4 or 5 or 6 documents and each of these are sort of separate things they're not all together and it's you know it takes quite a lot of work to work out whether they are consistent with each other that's what I've found..

JG: There's also a book. Um

JP: Oh yes, that's right the purple book I don't know what colour it is

JG: Blue. It's blue

JP: Blue, yes

JG: Um certainly as I only teach first year students and we really look at level 1 plagiarism so most of our students are plagiarizing by mistake um very occasionally we get a collusion problem but I reckon 95% of our students are actually plagiarizing cos they don't know what plagiarism is even though we actually teach it in our classes until they get picked up for making the mistake they really don't listen to lessons on plagiarism. Um, so, I'm very comfortable with that first year level keeping it most of the time as a Level 1 plagiarism and really doing it as a learning experience and I would hope that because we deal with groups of sessional tutors so I see it as my job to make sure the sessional tutors are aware of what's going on and I'm sure that a lot of them do the foundations and also there's ,I don't know at the beginning of the year there's a new, I'm not sure I just cant' is it at the beginning of the year that compulsory for new staff

JP: Oh there's the new staff induction

JG: Yeah, I'm not sure is it covered there?

I: *Not really*

JP: No I don't think it is actually

JG: Because if you don't do the foundations which is not compulsory, where do you get it?

JP: Yeah

RG: Um I've been here 20years and I've taught 1st, 2nd, 3rd,4th 5th 6th postgraduates everyone so that in answer to the question of whether new staff has any information on this, the answer is I'm hoping that they get given it at the foundation of teaching that they become aware of it through the unit outline so if we've got a unit outline at […] is it university wide? I think we are gonna…

In the last 5 or 6 years […] has had a unit outline which actually has that information listed I don't know whether new staff go to those links they're aware there's a policy now. Also a book that in our school we're all given one which is great cos going to the net is a pain in the bum to be honest with you and I actually don't do it but the book is something …the other thing I should say is cos I was at

the school and I was involved in some cases um discipline procedures and …so I just want to reflect on that cos when I first came here in the first place we actually didn't have any policy on plagiarism and a lot of ad hoc behaviour you know what would happen with cheating as it was known then um and so it came to a head particularly in […] because of the large influx of international students we found that something like 60% of our students were international students um and that it did generally present a problem in fact it's not actually international student that plagiarise exclusively, and to answer the question I think that information is on the web and just one final point we do have a staff induction in our own school we also do induction for out tutors as well and for our tutors and we refer them to that plagiarism policy.

I: *Do you have anything like that?*

JI: An induction? Um we do have training for new staff but I think like this foundation unit they are not compulsory at this time so whether I don't think I've done mine yet I've taught a long time at the university I've taught at[...] since 2006 but I don't think I've done the training and inductions yeah so there might be something there that's more for staff but yeah they're not compulsory those, that that training I think I think it is compulsory but no time limit so one day I'll get to them (Laughs)

JP: It's not practically compulsory

JI: Yeah, that's right When I find time I'll get to these things inductions

JG: That would be interesting I to check and see whether that two hour one which is the compulsory one actually

I: *I did it and I don't recall*

JG: does it refer to the book?

I: *The book yes but nothing much else because it's all pretty much admin more admin stuff. I'm just going to ask a sub-question for 1*

If there are any changes to the policies how would you know? Or how would new lecturers know?

JP: I'd be hoping we receive an email um you know it's the case where you have to deal with a case of plagiarism you'd go and check the policy and you know hopefully there would be ah you know this policy has been modified on such and such a date and you can check that because I do actually refer to the website in the first instance rather than the book um and they usually do have update dates but year I would be hoping it'd come out in an email

RG: Can I just comment on that, I don't pay a lot of attention to the emails that come round that there's been a new policy or something because … I mean because as you said you really focus your attention when you get an incidence of plagiarism um yeah I go to the book in the first instance also I go to our Dean of Students who's obviously closely connected with plagiarism I will quite often go down and check and say what's the latest and how to deal with it so that's another thing that I've done

JP: I wouldn't expect that they would make substantial policy changes to the policy between years so I mean if they're gonna make a change it'll be for next year's book

JI: Yeah I think at [...] we're probably get an email you know [...]'s very good at administrative emails but that's the problem as an academic you don't waste your time on them

JP: Plus they all come at the same time.

JI: Yeah, it's pretty uneffective … emails are pretty uneffective yeah universities run on the administrative stuff I think they fulfil their obligations by sending out emails but academic staff are focusing on different things

JI: Just because one side of the university beast has fulfilled their obligation doesn't mean that the information has actually been absorbed. Um but plagiarism is a serious I think we'd just get an email and I don't think many of us would pay attention to it the academics and um we'd really learn about it when an issue would arise and we'd have to delve into the policy and see the update ourselves in a practical sense.

I: *Thanks. I'm gonna skip question 2 cos that one is like a little test. I'm going to question 3. Um some of you have had experience with plagiarism issues with our students so some of you may know of someone that has so do you think your university's policies are adequate do they cover everything are they adequate for the experiences that you've had?*

JI: Well I'd like to start that by saying that's a kind of interesting question because to be really honest with you on a practical level I guess in the first instance when I suspect an issue of plagiarism I actually don't engage with the policy so I engage with the student with the work and try and get feedback and to see to get from them whether there is an issue of plagiarism and on what level um and whether it's not so issues of plagiarism in fact you know I've taught maybe 15 years at university level honestly I can't recall too many times when I've engaged on a formal level the policies and procedures of plagiarism but I've dealt with it on an academic informal academic to student level to be quite frank. So to say to form an opinion about whether the policies and procedures are adequate I don't know how to answer that because I think that I adequately I think that most times I as the individual academic using my academic discretion adequately professionalism and ethical um um positions I take hopefully um adequately deal with it myself wiith my own knowledge of plagiarism general knowledge of the policy just engaging with the practical issue one on one. There's not too many times where it has to go start that formal process

JP: Is that extent of flexibility is that um covered by the policy as in….

JI: Yeah, that's interesting cos as I was just speaking like that I was just thinking to myself and was wondering is it in the policy that flexibility and I'm not too sure to be quite frank I just don't know

JP: I think at [...] you know if it's deemed to be level 1, we've got a level 1 a level 2 a level 3 and level 1 depends on the extent of the plagiarism and the level of the student you know if they're a first year and it's not very substantial then it's level 1 which means that the unit co-ordinator can deal with it and there's a range of penalties that they can apply without going to Heads of School and …

JI: That's right yes so maybe I am engaging with the policy in an informal way but maybe there's a built-in informal step there's the first couple of steps that you take I'm really not too sure in that

JG: As an academic literacy person, that step is really, really important to me I work with 1st year students because it's really important to me that we don't engage the legal things too early and that we actually look at um what's your understanding in here and why is this happening and I know that some students are lazy or um and it's last minute stuff quickly grab something and they probably do know they shouldn't have done it but it's just that it's um I don't want to become too serious too soon and I guess because I'm only dealing with 1st year students I'm really …have that space

JP: It's really different dealing with 1st year students because you know I think especially if they're coming in from overseas they don't know in the first six months what the expectations are and the general expectations in Australian schools and universities is not the same as the general expectations in other countries um and you know that first six months to a year is our opportunity to let them know what the rules are. I deal mainly with 2nd and 3rd years so I have a you know a higher expectation in terms of plagiarism and so when I discover plagiarism that is reasonably blatant then I'm gonna apply the policies fairly fairly strictly

RG: Um I've got to agree with everything that's been said. Going back to the question, are they adequate or not my response to that is the fact that the university has a policy is a very good thing cos the fact of its existence sets a benchmark and says you know we take it seriously and the fact that we're identifying the students is a good thing. Um my response to the policy then when is that we get serious about this cos I think more about the things I have to do in the stage of plagiarism proofing my

assignments so coming from a law discipline there's ways we can do that you can set problem questions which are very difficult to plagiarism you know it's just analysis and legal thinking makes it difficult for the students to you know plagiarise but what you do get on occasions is collusion that's the worst form and then you're on a level 2 or 3 you deal with it that way but the most common things are lack of referencing and cut and pasting that sort of stuff I'm with JI here where you would engage the students and ask them what's happening, did you realise that's someone's work and I think we um that discretion we've got and ideally with the policy says is whenever you detect plagiarism go to the Head of School and have a talk about it and resolve it with action in other matters and in many cases I'd go ask my students to resubmit so the penalty is you have to do it properly but you get a chance to talk to the students and say look there's a problem you realize you can't do this or you know with your writing you can't use those words you need some help with that and so that you engage in that sort of process and maybe get some support CBS has some support now where you can send the students to gets some support so I' m trying to exercise that

I: *So you'd do like would but would you record that report that as Level 1.*

RG: Yes. Um that's the ideal situation. One of the reason behind that is that gauging the level of plagiarism which is occurring in the university is quite important and so is a record and having the Head of School do that and ideally of course that policy says that note goes on the student's file filling out the sheet um and yes that's certainly what I encourage that as Head of School and from time to time I look at that but I've got to say the occurrence of it seems I don't know to be that I'm teaching postgraduates not first years but I'm not picking up much of it at the moment

JG: We kind of have mixed the process into our assignments where we actually get students to redraft, every student does that so submit an assignment and redraft and that the first draft they get feedback on that so even at that level we don't see it as something to be put on files because it's your first draft this is what is plagiarism now you need to resubmit and so at that level um

JP: I think at first year that's quite appropriate

JG: Otherwise I think my view is that at that stage it's probably more than half the people have some degree of plagiarism at that first year level so we'd end up covering everyone's files with notations so yeah,at that first year level we'd have plagiarism so we'd end up with covering everyone's files with notations so we find the first draft helps

I: *Like a chance, like a first chance?*

JG: Yes

JI: And for the students they're submitting an essay twice basically

JP: But in some ways you know it's an essay writing exercise you're expecting them to be doing well after a while

JI: (Laughs) You're wishing them

JG: We actually find that and this is a side issue, we actually find that the marking is not too tough cos you're not really marking twice

JP: Just to answer the question which I haven't yet, umm, I think overall I'm pretty happy with the policy, you know I think the three levels make sense, the sort of levels at which they're deal with, you know they have one at the faculty and one at the school or department level and one at the coordinator level that's that's fine. One thing that I've run into in the past, is that you know if one student copies another student's work, there's no um clear policy on dealing with the student whose work has been copied so if a student provides his work to another student, in you know an electronic form um and then they change a few things and submit it as their own work, we've had this happen and that student whose work had been copied is not covered by the plagiarism policy as far as I'm aware and I've had discussions with …about this and in in and so that can be dealt with under academic misconduct but

there's it's certainly not as clear um how you deal with that person as how you deal with the actual plagiarist

I: *And whether the penalties are the same*

JP: And whether the penalties are the same and you know I've heard mixed views on whether whether even providing a copy of your assignment to another student is acceptable and I've heard some you know senior people say that they think it's acceptable for a student to give a digital copy of their work to another student as you know you can use this to help you do your assignment help you do you assignment I don't know

JI: It's a bit of a side issue but in […]we really encourage study groups … and I'm pretty blunt with my students I teach 1st years and 2nd years and in first year I say to them you know this is legitimate cheating you're allowed to help each other in study groups

JP: Yeah

JI: but there's a fine line between working together in research and discussing legal problems to get the character argument to get the good argument between each other and actually just copying each other's work

JP: I have that as well but I have no problem with that kind of approach where they're working together but submitting distinctively

JI: Yeah there's that fine line to submit individually so where that line is pretty grey for academics and I think for students it's pretty grey as well but that way it does raise problems because I think study groups can work very effectively in certain disciplines and law is definitely one of them

JP: I think where my red flags go up is where a see a cut and paste

JI: Yeah, that's right…

RG: From one student to another which means that he's had a digital copy from someone else's work.

JI: And I kind of say to my students we know when you're actually just copying from each other because it's got to do with style and voice and structure cos most of the students don't have the same style and voice and structure and that's when the study groups overstep the line sort of thing

JG: So what have you done in that case, what has been your response to collusion?

JP: Um well there was this one case where one student had copied another student's work um I think in the end we dealt with it at a at a low level because partly because you know the marks they were getting for the assignment were so dismal… You know they're copying each other but still getting 1/10 so, umm, so it was kind of dealt with at that level that it was made very clear to these students what they had done wrong what their expectations were

RG: Can I just chuck in a couple of things here again going back when I first started here, um the kind of assignment that we would set for legal framework would be a problem question that they would take it away and then submit it and we found very early on there some of students who are at the […] campus we found in particular we were getting amazing quality work and we were very suspicious about it and that's when we started to rethink you know there's a better way of doing this and so we actually had in class tests in class problems but that did throw up issues of collusion as well as we are being dreadful, we'd tell students "there's really only one mark available here so which one of you wants it?" …A very Solomonesque kind of thing which I don't think is in the policy now… It would lead to all sorts of you know nasty outcomes as soon as there was somebody who confessed there would be this terrible friction between these two students but um and obviously that's not very appropriate.

JP: It's funny cos when I've had to deal with a couple of cases like that where you actually have to approach two students and say OK somebody's copied, usually someone fesses up and takes the rap and you know in my experience they're actually wanting to take the rap to prevent the other student from taking a penalty as well.

RG: For me when sharing the work, again this is a matter of opinion, um I take a fairly dim view of someone who submits their essay and is copied in some shape or other and the person has taken too much advantage of their friendship what that might be there's no favours for anyone and there's a real risk as we've said before of poor structure it does come out

JP: So this is one thing I wish that the policy covered and made it clear that it's not acceptable to give a finished assignment to a colleague

RG: I haven't really got to looking at the policy in great detail

I*: It's not in, would that be in one of the definitions of student plagiarism?*

RG: I know there's definition for collusion in the policy I'm pretty confident of that, maybe where it's picked up

JP: I'm pretty sure that a the time of this particular case, I inspected the policy in detail and I spoke to senior people, S, I dealt with you know she wrote the policy and there was no there was no um clear understanding that giving your assignment to another person was plagiarism or was misconduct or anything like that so

JG: I heard the case in one of the departments we service where a student contacted me because he'd given his assignment and he ended up with zero and he was just devastated and wanted me to speak on his behalf he was like the top student and I spoke to the Head of the Department and I said look he's a top student I'm sure it wasn't deliberate and he just said say "policy I'm not interested" and this was at first year so there are departments around who are doing that umm the student who supplied this assignment got zero and the other one I think got suspended

JI: Really wow

JG: Yeah, that was very very strange

JP: See I don't think that would, was this recently?

JG: Yes

JP: That doesn't sound to be consistent with the university's policy because to to actually terminate someone's enrolment that has to go to level 3, that's got to go to boards of discipline, and things like that

JG: Yeah, I think the one who had just supplied the assignment was the one that actually appealed

JI: Also I think JP was it? Um you mentioned a point before of having to inform the Head of School we have that at [...] as well but that's to keep a record of so when they're in 1st year there might be a level 1 plagiarism then if that student keeps on coming up in the record you know there's something more intentional and malicious going on with that student who keeps continuing doing it so that's when you can feel more comfortable to make those sorts of disciplinary decisions but on one off in 1st year or a one off in their 2nd or 3rd year if there's no tracking issue with that student then it's why it's important to keep that record

I: *I'm gonna move us on cos, I'm sorry, only because RG and JG have to go. So can we do the case study, what I'd like to do we sort of talked about this before, can we join the first part a and c together so we've got two students one is a first year undergraduate Non-English speaking and then another*

would be a third year undergraduate English speaking so we've got two different types of students what would you do for each of them? And do you think that other people would do the same?

RG: Can I go first cos I want to go off after this one. Sorry. Ah I'm gonna try to deal with it this way. I think there is a difference between a first year and third year response to plagiarism. You'd expect by 3rd year that the student would be more familiar about the notion and would be much more careful about what they're doing. Um, the question says a 1st year student from a non-English speaking background submitted an assignment which does not appear to be their own work. That's a bit ambiguous cos it could be coming off the net or it could be some other student and there are shades of culpability there I mean cutting and pasting from the net is probably less culpable than pinching your friend's assignment um but again we've already talked about this my um tendency has been to get that student to come in and talk to them about this and say you know how has this occurred there's usually some story about lack of time there may be a whole emotional thing that comes out and there's a story behind it or there's an assessment where the student's been a bit lazy um you know so it's the level of a kick up the bum there and in some cases it's an explanation that you can be sympathetic to and give them some support, in other situations say look this is something which is… will get back in a week. With you question with a 3rd year, I'm teaching 3rd years and I've just got a late assignment in which I've just picked up and thought this is very much a cut and pasty looking thing. I doesn't go to the point of being plagiarism cos the student has acknowledged the work, they're not trying to say it's theirs but they're doing it's very unoriginal put it that way it's fine by me but I'm very tempted to say to the student it was late for one thing second thing it doesn't look like you put a lot of effort I want you to resubmit. Um

I guess I'm not saying it's plagiarism in that example where a 3rd yr submits a plagiarized piece of work I would certainly be going to the Head of School and saying we'll need to go through a more formal process cos at third year I think they should know

I: *So would you skip level1 and go to level 2?*

RG: Oh yeah it may be that the Head of School decides that it's still level 1 um but in the first instance with a first year I'd probably go outside the policy to be honest and deal with it in my academic discretion in inverted commas, again these are matters of practicality too because you know you gotta get hold of the Head of School, make an appointment, come down with the file and the Head of School is buys he's got other things to do. I know that I would be sometimes when I was Head of School, look you know what this thing is about so yeah I'd be very slow to do that. But in the case of third year I would probably want to have that conversation.

JG: Can I ask if you asked someone to resubmit, do you then mark it?

RG: Yes I would but it's usually 10-15% off but I'm saying look here's an opportunity otherwise I'll fail you know this is going to be under 50 but you got a chance of passing sure the maximum is going to be less than a 50 but you can still pass and that usually has a good response cos the second time round they get it. And I feel like I've done my sort of academic duty in the sense that I've taught that person something not just about policy but about discipline and also referencing, whatever's required.

I: *Would others in the school of[…] do the same do you think? That's a hard question.*

RG: Um, ooh it's a mixed thing. I think there's people who are at either end of the scale. There's some toughies and there's some softies. I guess I'm probably at the softer end maybe because I've taught first years in this university where you've got 1000s of student enrolment I did that for 10 years and some of the numbers are overwhelming so you can't be that fanatical about these things all the time. I'm glad this is confidential

JI: That's all that discretionary stuff are you soft are you hard to what degree do you exercise your discretion

RG: My comment about that is the fact that there is a policy is very helpful. When we didn't have a policy it was all….

JG: Maybe it would help us to have a preliminary level on the policy. We're all saying lecturer's discretion most maybe that could actually be in the policy as a pre level 1

JP: I think level 1 covers that because

RG: A nice conversation thank you for inviting me (RG LEAVES)

JP: I was gonna say I think level1 covers that because you know it's dealt with at the lecturer level and the minimum penalty is a warning can be as little as a warning. Um, and it's a note on file that stays for 12 months I think

JG: What I'm saying from my point of view is how many people would be putting a note on file most of the time because I'm talking at first year level first semester maybe half the students misunderstand what plagiarism is so I would want an earlier level where it's almost something like an intervention

JP: I think you could probably make that fit around the level 1

I: *I'm gonna ask JG to answer first because she's gotta go. Just the same what RG's done. What's your opinion? The first year and the third year.*

JG: Um, yes, see I'm not teaching third years so don't want to go into that but for first years, whether it's an NESB or ESB I would do exactly what RG said, I would talk to them um and as I've said we'd have a compulsory session where I would say lets resubmit it this needs to be fixed up. We also use Turnitin and that gives me some actual information which I can use as part of the discussion. And a lot of times I'm not doing it, it's actually the sessional tutors doing that so I would hope that my sessional tutors would engage with their students. Occassionally, our sessional tutors bring them to me and I then would have the conversation if it's really a concern but I would do it in an informal ..

I: *So when they come to you from the sessional tutors, would you consider that level 1 or still below level 1.*

JG: I'm like what JP said I don't put information on peoples records ever unless it's if it was a collusion matter then I'd go because we service teach I'd go back to the Head of Department of the owning department and I've had to do that a couple of times when generally I have an interview with the students but that goes back to their department which puts messages on their files

I: *So as coordinator you haven't had to issue a warning or anything?*

JG: No, only with the other departments because we don't have access to student records anyway cos they're held by the departments

I: *Thank you JG thank you for coming and giving your time* (JG LEAVES).

JP: I was just going to say that I don't think there's a great deal of need to treat a non English speaking student all that differently from an English speaking student certainly at a third year level, my expectation would be the same. I don't teach 1st year at the moment but if I did teach 1st year there might be a little bit of extra leeway for somebody that's not an English speaking student. But you know much as the other two have said, um you know if it's a first year student you try and kind of deal with it between yourself and the student as much as possible. I guess when I see these first signs, you know my suspicions are raised, it doesn't appear to be their own work, I'm not using Turnitin at the moment but I think I'm going to be moving to doing that. I've actually had some plagiarism cases in final year thesis which have been very serious matters and with those I think it's gonna be necessary to use that um you know there've been cases where I've had to Google sections of someone's submission and you find that it's copy and pasted from Wikipedia or from a Masters thesis in the UK or something like that um so that's one step. Usually you can tell if it's come from a third party source like Wikipedia or something as opposed to copying from another student and if it's copying from another student it's usually because you've identified the similarities and so you have that and then once you have a bit of evidence then you can talk to the student and usually I present the

evidence to the student even if I think it's beyond a first level 1 plagiarism I'll usually get the student or the students to come and see me and to give them an opportunity to explain what's happened and in the cases I've dealt with they've usually been straight up about that and they've confessed to whatever it is um I've had a few cases where they've plagiarized from a previous year's assignment um those are usually quite blatant because it's a slightly different assignment though they look the same and so you can see immediately that it's last year's assignment and in those cases I've actually asked them to give me a copy of the assignment they've copied and they've always done that they've always done that um I mean they're not obliged to do that, I don't tell them that they're not obliged to do that um but they've never objected to doing that and that obviously gives you a better opportunity to assess the extent of the plagiarism. Um, if it's a third year student and there is any apparently deliberate plagiarism then it would go after that meeting to a meeting with the Head of School or the Head of Department and then that usually becomes a level 2 plagiarism which means it still means probably the maximum penalty is that they'll get zero for the assignment. Um if it's level 1 then I might give them an opportunity to resubmit or I might get a smaller penalty or something like that. Um if it's one of these more serious situations like plagiarism in a final year project then um so that can go to level 3 which means it goes to the Pro Vice Chancellor and faculty hearings and so on so but even then the penalty is often still they get zero for the submitted work or though if it's a final year thesis it's obviously a much bigger penalty than a 15% assignment.

I: *And do you think other […] lecturers would do the same would do something similar?*

JP: Yeah, well look I think a lot of them do. I think some of them are not perhaps as vigilant about plagiarism as I've been I mean I've only been here for 18 months you know I've had

I: *You've had a lot of experience*

JP: I've had a lot of cases to deal with maybe 8 or 10 a lot of cases and you know more in my final year project I'm the unit coordinator for […] in the final year project unit um so those cases have come to me and I think you know if I compare the number of cases that I've dealt with in plagiarism with the number of cases that other lecturers have dealt with I think I'm dealing with more and I don't know if that's because I'm more vigilant about it or because students are plagiarising in my units more than others. I'm not sure.

I: *Maybe you're more aware of policies*

JP: Maybe, I couldn't be sure

I: *Thank you JP. JI?*

JI: I guess I'd deal with it generally the same but slightly different I guess. The two issues of first year third year then Non English speaking background and English speaking background. I guess with the first year I would take into account the cultural background whether that's indigenous or non Australian and for me that's appropriate um indigenous there are policies proactive policies to assist and so I think that's appropriate to take that into account.

And whether they're non Australians, Asian or European, or whatever I guess I'm sensitive to different cultures and different learning patterns so perhaps they are not engaged with the Western learning pattern and this could be their first engagement with it so they really are naïve about issues of plagiarism and originality of thought. So I would take their non-English speaking their background into account. But that's part of that discussion that I would have with the student about what a Western University expects and if it's indigenous, about granting extra support to try to get them though a law degree particularly for indigenous because it's so hard for them. Um I'd be more so I would take that into account and yeah and just generally first year, yeah I think it is more of a learning issue for first year about plagiarism a learning experience for them about where that line is drawn. For third year, I think I'm slightly different from what the others said. I'm the same in that my expectation would be higher for a third year student they would've learnt by now they would've had their learning experience about where the lines are drawn about plagiarism in first year second year

DIGITAL TAPE ENDS HERE AT 47 MINUTES 20 SECONDS. REVERT TO CASSETTE TAPE BUT VERY HARD TO TRANSCRIBE AS TAPE KEPT SKIPPING

JI: My expectation is higher in terms of engagement having said that any issue of plagiarism even for third and fourth year I'd still use a degree of discretion because I've had examples of circumstances for example where I've had very good students that I've suspected…one at third year they shouldn't be doing it and second … But you'll find that there are circumstances there suddenly they can have an emotional moment they didn't have it all a psychological problem whatever they couldn't have time for other reasons to engage in the assignment so it really was pasted together and it's the best I could've done and you know and they know from that discussion that that's not fair for their score you know and they know from that discussion that there's plagiarism but I think that I've got a right to exercise discretion in that circumstance that there are circumstances in their lives that have drawn them to submit that paper they've engaged in plagiarism. So W would deal with that if I was satisfied that this was a one off even at third year, that because of the circumstances where they presented to me as to why this assignment is like it is if I'm satisfied … with that I'd be encouraged to do what I would in the past. I'm pretty sensitive about my workload I'm not really into resubmissions … and so if I use my discretion and make the decision OK there's justification why this one off assignment you know is engaged in plagiarism I'll understand it I'll given them an opportunity to look at it and say I will give it either a pass or a fail and if I cannot give a grade and look to some degree there is original thought um up there If I can't give it a grade you'll just get a 5/10 If I can't see anything then I'll just give it a zero. I think I'm like other academics said about being soft or hard, There are degrees of academics of being hard being soft I think I'm more of a softie, um, I don't think I don't know I don't think other academics for example some academics don't engage in conversation at all they won't be part of that. Their idea of equity is kind of a straight line equity that would be one …I know other academics say we're not trying to fail you. And there's all sorts of things academics do have discretion and I'm not afraid of using my discretion. Back at the beginning when I first started I'm really not too sure what they do. There might be something in the initial stages of the policy that says something about that, but I haven't read it in a while and I didn't prep for this

I: *There's no need to prep. I didn't want you to prep, but be natural, both of you.*

JI: So it might take that into account it might not I'm not too sure

I: *OK, I think I've got more than enough information but is there anything you want to add or to go further. Did you want to talk about I was interested in the levels you gave those students you had 8-10 students*

JP: I've had one student had a level 3 that involved a graduating student. Apart from this plagiarism it wasn't sort extensive plagiarism like in the other case that I've mentioned but still engineering as well the issue… even with a fourth year student there's a certain element of …

I've got one at the moment who's a third year it's difficult at the moment because on the one hand you want to exercise your discretion … engineering as well the issue of communicating I had staff plagiarism the penalties for someone in that situation…could have gone into our report because my recommendation to the client would have been …I would've been the one …this person has written something from Google yeah …

JI: Is there any additional information which would be interesting for the specific study of plagiarism and the internet that it's spiked up in the last two years. The issue of technology in plagiarism is interesting

JP: Also we have improved detection. Because if you're copying from a textbook in the library how do you discover it it's hard to detect

JI: So, yeah um the issue of technology in plagiarism is an interesting one

I: *Maybe for my next PhD. Thank you, thanks for coming* END OF FOCUS GROUP/TAPE.

TRANSCRIPTION FOR FOCUS GROUP HELD AT University D ON
THURSDAY, APRIL 16, 2009 AT 3PM IN THE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS.

Recording commenced at 3.05pm after participants introduced themselves to each other.

PARTICIPANTS: RS, Head of Discipline, University D

MC, Sessional Lecturer, University B

VC, Lecturer, University D

GB, Lecturer, University D

HP, Tutor and postgraduate student, University D

I, Interviewer

SCRIBE: HM

I: *Hello everyone and welcome, my name is I and I'm going to take you through a few questions which will be part of my study on plagiarism. Um so if you look at the first question, I'd like to ask you: Where do new academic staff at your universities obtain information about student plagiarism and plagiarism policy. And if you're not sure about new staff maybe you can think about your own experience where you got the information about academic integrity policies and what you have to do*

MC: Like me to start?

I: *Yes, please, we'll go around…*

MC: When I first started there was nothing really but about 4 or 5 years ago [...] had introduced a new policy where all staff-sessional had to attend a, I don't know what they call, essentially about 6 hours of training that looked at a whole range of issues that you know covered assignment marking and putting together etc and part of that covered plagiarism but only a very small part, it was really you know a slide that said here's what it is but we didn't look at examples or really how to deal with it just except that

I: *Is that compulsory, the training?*

MC: Yeah, everyone had to do it, compulsory training

RS: My understanding is new staff have to go on induction and although I undertook this in 2001 when I returned to University […] from the University […] um I can't actually really remember whether we dealt with student plagiarism policy. I know that we had a large section that, a paragraph that alerts students to the course outline where the talk about student policies and discuss the sanctions, etc, ah, They seem reasonable but to be honest, I can't remember the detail

I: *Great. So through your students' course outlines*

RS: Yes

I: *People still get information*

RS: We certainly have that that opportunity but I suspect that a lot of people are like me in that they would…

GB: Now, as I said, I've come to […] School from […] School so I'll talk about […] School. First of all I was there for 17 years and had no trouble in plagiarism when I was co-ordinator. Ah, that probably not the […] School's fault, it's probably because I just omitted to go to a session or two not organized however, however in the course outlines that I was responsible for the attention of students was always drawn pertinently to the […] school's policies on plagiarism and they would…and the onus was placed on them to familiarise themselves with the policy and with the sanctions if they transgressed before embarking on writing their assignment, or whatever they had to do, you know, in the course of introducing the unit I would talk specifically about plagiarism but only in order to refer them to the website where they would get all the technical details and the information they needed but like RS I can't actually (laugh) tell you what was there. My own experience of plagiarism is when, ah, you're marking scripts, large numbers of scripts, ah, sometimes the handwriting is not very clear and it can be quite difficult to detect although in most the latent cases you read something and then 10, 11, 12, 15, 150 scripts later you read it again

Now somehow something in your mind says look where have I seen this before, you go back and you check and ah then you find they copied from each other or that they've both used the same source without ….And then of course when it comes to assignments, ah, you tend, the other indicator is the sudden change in the style of language

MC: Yes when they're using it and then suddenly

GB: Yeah that's right, suddenly the language changes and you realize that you've gone to new territory, that that isn't really the candidate speaking

I: *What do you do about it, GB? Can I ask you, what would you do what did you do when you found the student's script…*

GB: I would refer things like that to the Associate Dean who is responsible for disciplinary issues so as long as I've drawn their attention to it as long as I've told them how serious it was and as long as there is an outline which tells them then it was always up to the Associate Dean in the […] School to apply a policy uniformly across, and I must say I'm really much in favour of that because I do think that whatever you do now, however you respond to, the response should be uniform because you know, some people react aggressively and adversely, they will give it and others won't

I: *Good, good, good, thank you GB. VC?*

VC: Ah, I joined the university in February so when I got my contract, at the very back of that "please familiarize yourself with the policies" and then on the website there was a policy

I: *So there was a link to the policy on the contract?*

VC: Yeah, and um during the foundation of teaching and learning we got that… it goes for six months now the sessions

RS: (Says something in surprise about the length)

I: *Is that compulsory VC? Compulsory?*

VC: Yeah

RS: It has been since 2009 but as I say….

VC: And, then they go to the Associate Dean of Teaching and Learning, to get that consistent response

I: *So all cases would go across the university to the Associate Deans, not just […] School, would it be the same for the School of[…]?*

VC: That's it. Yeah. The foundations of teaching and learning course they do for all the different ones, all the different faculties and schools and that's what they teach us from the foundations of teaching and learning

GB: I'm unaware, I can't help you as to whether there are any major differences between schools

MC: There are between universities

GB: and the quality

I: *Yes, OK I think that's alright thanks VC. Do you want to add anything?*

HP: I also take the foundation of teaching and learning course

I: *OK. Did they mention the policies?*

HP: No the policies actually we have a course called the ACE Academic Conduct Essentials which all students must take when I start the PhD program and the staff they actually allow us to have a login in order to look at the content of the course to familiarize ourselves with it

I: *This is the student course?*

GB: Yes

I: *Only the students not staff?*

VC: Yeah staff have to be aware of it

GB: Students have to do it

VC AND HP: It's compulsory

HP: and not only for undergraduates but students that are starting a new course as of this year

GB: That's something else that's in the student outline

I: *the link to there*

GB: That's something the university won't release results to students who haven't completed it and it's something you do online

MC: You mentioned the student outline. Again …some units have them, some schools make that part of their unit that staff can because I've worked across schools, yes the Faculty of […] they were included in their outline, it appears to be automatically. The School of […], some do and some don't, umm and the ways of dealing with plagiarism are dealt with the Head of School that the case I dealt with in that school only went as far as the Head of School, it didn't go any further

I: *OK. Would you say they were level 1 or 2 or 3? Do you know the level number? Do they have level numbers at [...]? Levels of plagiarism?*

MC: Ah, nope, no

I: *Apart from learning and going through the website and going through the unit outlines, do you get any handbooks or manuals about academic integrity policies? Do you get given any?*

VC: Yes

I: *Do you get given that, do new lecturers get given that when they start, or?*

MC: Yeah, there's a red book, little red book that's got something in it

RS: You don't get given a book, you get a whole mass of information. Just to get about reading it would take up the whole probation period

I: *Yes*

GB: And then you'd be fired

I: *Yes, information overload. Ok ah, just still on question 1, I'm going to add a little bit: if there is a change in the academic integrity policy, how would you become aware of that if there was a change?*

MC: There'd probably be an email sent to everyone

I: *Ok though emails?*

MC: Probably

GB: I don't think that's an effective way cause when I come to the office everyday the first chore I have is to go to clear and delete, delete, delete, I get trapped by this for all the wonders of modern technology, I'm not sure that it's really an effective way to deal with important….

I: *Information, like changes?*

GB: Yeah

I*: OK. Good. I'm going to skip question 2. I think it's a little bit like a test and I want to go to question 3 and this could be useful if you have some experience in plagiarism then you would've had to use the university's academic integrity policies. So you might be able to tell me whether or not they were adequate, based on your experience. If you haven't had experience you can still answer it but if you have you might actually know whether they worked for you, you'd be able to tell me if they were adequate for your purpose. So I'll go around again*

MC: No, no. They don't work. I'll give you two examples of two particular issues. One when I first started as a temp 7 years ago absolutely minor. It was two first year students who essentially had taken, did the assignment together so it was pretty well the same format, pretty much the same they'd changed a few sentences so being first years first semester, they were referred to as I was only working as a sessional, referred to the course coordinator and we counselled those students and the rest of the class without actually saying what had happened about counselled the two students and then talked to a whole class about what plagiarism actually was…

The last case occurred last year and I was running an online unit I had four students, one from Australia and three overseas. One of the overseas students had taken large chunks of text off the internet and simply put them into assignments. I found it very easy some of the reasons you said changed the style of changed descriptors and it was simply the case that I took one phrase and put it into Google and up popped all of the documents a number of them. I approached the course coordinator who simply referred this to the Head of School whose essentially first response was oh

my God don't do anything, don't fail the student whatever you do. Um there seemed to be a very strong preference for not taking any action because oh my God that would mean that we were being mean to overseas students and we wouldn't get all their money and that's essentially the kind of undercurrent um I was really told not to do anything and that I couldn't take marks off I felt I couldn't do anything so all of the emails that I sent the student about direct taking copied from the pdf and it looked like 3 papers that had large chunks of copied material and I took those and sent them back to the student in an email and to the course coordinator and the Head of School and showed them that plagiarism had occurred and explained why it was plagiarism and why it was not acceptable and that's as far as it went

GB: Can I please add something?

I: *Yes, yes.*

GB: Were you satisfied that the student would've been aware of it?

MC: The student told me that I was wrong that he had not plagiarised. There was no way. He had it was all his own work even when

GB: He knew that he wasn't to copy someone else work ? He knew that that was wrong?

MC: He claimed that he had not copied anyone else's work even if it was blatantly obvious that it had occurred and that one paragraph was 49 words long and there 3 words that different

GB: My question is a much more fundamental one: cos you're talking about international students that come from all different sorts of background and I suppose…

MC: Yeah that's a really interesting question

GB: And the question is always are they aware that in this culture that plagiarism is a really serious offence

MC: Yes, obviously. There were 3 students, two from Hong Kong and one from mainland China. I knew there were language issues and we had addressed that earlier on. One of the other students in one of his earlier assignments did something similar and when I said hey your referencing was all wrong and he said 'Oh sorry, I was just being lazy' so OK the other student that vehemently opposed that he had done anything wrong that he was totally in the right and that I couldn't prove it, so

VC: Have you heard of Turnitin?

MC: Yep at present it's very difficult for sessional staff to get access to Turnitin at [...] um I could have done that

VC: I was not allowed when I was at the former uni I wasn't allowed to use Turnitin at all because I would find something

GB: What is it? Is it called Turnitin?

VC: Yep it's plagiarism checking software and it highlights the passages where it's …

GB: I had heard of these technological things used to detect plagiarism

VC: As long as the people don't use it

MC: I understand it was spoken about at this training session we talked about at that point it was being used for postgrads so I submitted my PhD through Turnitin um but it's not standard practice for undergrads not yet and let me say there students I was dealing with were Masters students so they were postgrad not undergrads but they were some had come from […] backgrounds on the one hand others had come from […] so you know very different there were also different expectations in terms of why can't I use anything off the web and if I take that paragraph and put inverted commas around it is it OK then even if I don't reference it

I: *So the policies from your experience, you were told to forget about it?*

MC: Forget about it

I: *so they're not adequate for you they're not followed perhaps?*

MC: Well, it just seemed to be "why don't I just plagiarise everything that I knew if that's all that's gonna happen"

I: *Thanks, MC. RS, do you want to share your experience?*

RS: Yeah, uh, I think we're fortunate here that we have a slightly different model in terms or our recruitment students in that we have fewer international students who especially fee paying here. I think it also depends on how much the Asssociate Dean follows up on this and our Dean has very severe lines so something like that wouldn't be countenanced over here. That said, questions are the academic integrity policies adequate. I think the formal policies are adequate but I think our implementation is wrong you know I really want to endorse GB's point in that what I think was GB's point in that crosscultural issues in perceptions of, rather crosscultural differences in perceptions of plagiarism so what we think of as plagiarism might be seen over there as actually quite appropriate referencing of authorities. For example …but what I think we have a poor job of doing is making it salient to students at an appropriate time what might constitute plagiarism and I think it's not enough to have it officially in the things but actually to have examples given to them and even devote a lecture to say this is an example of plagiarism this isn't and explaining why um we like to think of as original research as important fine if you come from culture where citing authorities is considered …

GB: What is considered inappropriate because we have this which overrides…

RS: it is overriding. The other question is have we given enough thought to the appropriate design of assignments and things. I think not everyone, myself included, has come to grips with the internet in the sense that especially in Shakespeare when we criticise Shakespeare's loves labours lost on the internet

RS: We need to design something original which can't be copied off the web

GB: There's just one point I want to raise here-we seem talking about the literal meaning of plagiarism, it has nothing to do with the idea that everything to do with the expression of the idea that you are

MC: That seems to be the focus though. There doesn't seem to be nearly as much attention paid to that idea of philosophical plagiarism. It's really about did you copy these words verbatim or paraphrased them and stuck the intext reference after the paragraph to show that

GB: Cos the other one, you know the philosophical plagiarism I find extremely difficult for example you know that there's no such thing as an original thought…anything you said has been thought of (Laughs)

MC: You might be able to find someone who's said it before

GB: You know I think for an undergraduate student really coming in to academia that's a very difficult road to follow but when it comes to the literal plagiairsm.

I: *We have a very small definition but again q.2 is how you define it and you have a much broader view of it than the rest of us might just define it as what we've experienced which is cut and paste, no referencing and copying from the web*

GB: You could take a paragraph and simply rephrase it

MC: Yes but I'd still expect there to be some reference. And if I think about again what's at the bottom of the page at [...] this is what plagiarism means it is defined, talks about literal plagiarism, it talks about taking someone else's work and not citing it adequately, umm, using words verbatim or whatever

VC: Let's say that if it's in art and a painting, it's not the same as you've experienced, that's different, discipline specific

I: *VC, you've had, sorry GB she's got a few stories so from your experience, um, when you were dealing with student plagiarism, did you find the policies adequate for you.*

VC: Umm, yes this is at the University […] where I had two groups each with four students and they had pretty much identical assignments submitted and I then I sent them an email going what's happening and then I got the equivalent of the Assoc Dean of Teaching and Learning email me saying she would handle it all and she did interview, indepth interviews with each student who'd been involved to try and find out what happened.

I: *It's a group assignment?*

VC: It was a group assignment so apparently in one of the groups they've gone to the printer and oh there's an assignment left on the computer, so they grabbed that and copied it and one of the group members he brought it to the group and said look we're not doing very well, let's just chuck this on the end and then the Assoc Dean she went through this sort of knew what to do, she handled it all

I: *Did you know the outcome? Would you know the outcome?*

VC: I had to strike out all the bits that were the same and then mark what was left. (Laughs)

I: *So they got a grade, they didn't get a zero or something but a low grade?*

VC: But a low grade yeah

RS: Can I just add something here what is an issue we don't consider seriously although it's even arguably more serious, um, is the free rider problem in the group assignments when someone …when someone plagiarises he takes from someone else whereas a free rider just gets away with nothing…

MC: Have you ever been or had a group where you've had someone come up who hasn't complained to you about the free rider in the group?

RS: Oh yeah

MC: But then again you still give them the final assessment but we've introduced some peer … in some of our assessment in some of our assignments so there's the chance for them to stab the other person in the back for not doing anything

VC: or if we had smaller groups…one or two...

GB: two to four…

MC: Not peer assessment but in a group I've got 5 in a group part of their submission is to submit their assessment of the other's contributions so f someone gets a big zero for something from everyone you know he's a free rider

RS: Do you …for that

MC: Depends on what it is I've taken people to council over it and you know

VC: At the university […] department we did have an exam I got an email from one of the unit coordinators we couldn't find anything in the report

I: *So they ignored the issue completely?*

VC: Ignored.

MC: Can I make a point here that perhaps identifying the particular school in which one is involved may not be a good idea.

I: *You will be deidentified, don't worry.*

MC: I didn't say who it was

I: *We don't know*

MC: When you asked me that question, I kinda went blur because I didn't have any other outlet I didn't have anyone else to talk to and it really gave me a feeling well what do you do you're told to deal with plagiarism and when you do nothing happens, so you've confronted the student, the continue to display the same behaviour

VC: They go on to the next unit, that's the thing

I: *they slip through*

MC: it's very disconcerting

GB: To just emphasize the point that MC made and I think this is really important MC has by pertinently bringing it to their attention, I think there is a deterrent effect, because I get a sense that one of the major problems particularly when you've got vast numbers of international students and local students and everything else is that if you are going to deal with plagiarism adequately it is a very time consuming process and I don't think that we're able with all the other constraints of time to search that we are adequately resourced and so I can see why in some situations there's an incentive there to do nothing done otherwise it's going to occupy us for months

I: *Time and resources…HP do you want to add anything?*

HP: Mmm, probably just a short one I did some tutoring last year and as a tutor we would adhocly collect assignments, not submitted for marks, I did come across a couple of students who plagiarized, I mean they copied each other off each other they shared and copied off someone else's work, I did copy some of their assignment all that they submitted …tutorial questions, so I consulted the lecturer and showed them pieces of their work, almost identical not the whole assignment but maybe just a page or just one section of the question so my lecturer told me I said to him to you want to take action

according to the university policy because it's not an officially submitted piece of work just in a tutorial so my lecturer came back and said just counsel the student and tell them that that what they have done is not permitted

I: *All right, just counselling*

HP: Just counselling because this is just I mean I didn't collect the tute for all the students that was just like from time to time I pick up their work to look at because I don't know if plagiarism policy also extends to tutorial work which is not officially submitted for a mark

I: *Not submitted for a mark I'm not sure either it's a good question*

GB: What springs to mind and maybe within the context of our universities here is that we've got a lot of students who are not studying through their mother tongue

I: *That's right*

VC: Mmmm

GB: and I don't know if that's any information to this effect but could it be that some are impelled to plagiarism not because but they're not impelled due to language shortcomings in the sense of pinching someone else's work they don't have to do it in their own minds I understand it perfectly and I'd be able to explain it in my mother tongue but I'm required to explain it in another language you know that is not an issue

MC: It is certainly an issue and I think you've made a very valid point. It is also then they are in Australian universities and the primary language is English so for someone who's had to deal with a number of overseas students over the years my approach is always to I don't go anywhere near the same level of grammar or whatever I'm looking for the content as opposed to the style first expecting that over time as they become more … but there's also a point where someone is adequately able to express and they've obviously hit changes so you can see that they have stopped making their own attempt and just chucked in someone else's word

I: *MC, you've just brought me to question 4 so maybe we can have a look at that and GB we might have some answers to the case study*

GB: One more point, and that is my personal experience has been that there are students here who actually do not have an adequate knowledge of language and I know they pass IELTS and what not all the different tests for the but they actually the level of the research and the research integrity that we require of them they actually don't have that

MC: I mean that's right you know you can go to fablefish type in your own language and translate to English there are ways of getting around that

GB: Getting around that yeah

RS: Before we go to the case study can I just make one point and I think it's ah I'm appreciative of the fact that other people from the other universities have been quite open about their problems and it seems like as I mentioned earlier that we are in a fortunate place at [...] that we can afford to take a stricter line but I also want to express some sympathy for the and the Heads of Schools over there who I expect have ethical values just as strong as ours but actually are in a severe economic pressure that we can't appreciate here and I just don't want to rush to judgment to them I don't know where the problem lies but its sometimes they're forced to take students they might be told we don't have this number of students in the course we don't and that's not something at [...] we've ever had to face um fortunately so I just want to make clear that I'm not taking the high moral ground here but it's something not the same but it is a problem that problem might lie somewhere beyond legal administrative pressures

HP:I think it would be true if the particular uni gets advise from present students you know overseas students

VC: The reputation. That student from that uni goes back home and says to all their friends don't go to that unit it's rubbish that's what they are worried about

MC: Another point of view, not being at [...] and being at [...] and all the reputation issues around some of our universities, um, there are still some extremely good students and these are not the norm, you know the case that I talked about now is not considered to be normal but not

VC: The students who are doing what they're supposed to do are rolling their eyes or they're even really upset about them and that's what happens the majority will do the right thing and then they would come and say the student is not penalised for plagiarism then why did I spend

MC: all my time

VC: waste my time and the majority is losing out

MC: And if it becomes known to the student at this university that you can turn it whatever you like and you'll get marks then why would I bother doing the work that I do

VC: And they become jaded by the time the third year comes

MC: Yep and why do I not want to be a fulltime academic

RS: There are costs

I: *Can I just, sorry, when RS was saying that yes,[...] is lucky they have the resources they have the time you're on to it, can I ask if you have a special unit or department or officer, do you have some sort of academic integrity officer that would oversee plagiarism cases or just*

RS: No, we don't have that. Our system is the same as all the other universities but I think it's just that that our because we don't rely so much at the margins on the students from overseas our knowledge is independent that we can afford if you like to enforce our policies more rigidly…in a way that I think I'm sure all universities would like to be able to enforce um… I think somebody described the costs so in the long run we do have some costs but who knows what we'd do if we are faced with that situation

MC: Yes

I: *OK, yes, shall we go to q.4 then? What I'd like to do is I'd like to combine the two examples of students so we've got the first year undergraduate NESB stands for non-English speaking background*

GB: right

I: *that's the new terminology it keeps changing*

MC: as in CARD

I: *yeah, ESL and the third one you've got a third year undergraduate ESB, English speaking local student so you've got both these different types of students, different years but they've done the same thing, they've submitted an assignment that doesn't look like their own. So what would you do what would your response be firstly to the first year, undergraduate international student and then the third year student?*

MC: Well, OK, I've got some experience, even though they were post grad, they were the first year in that particular discipline and so both are similar in terms of the question and you never know where someone else has been through and I've had students from the […] school but it seems to be more technical than academic approach for someone to write long assignments might be a challenge for

them. So in this case I did I actually went through it was only a short piece only about 1000 words we went through and rewrote how it would need to be presented so it wasn't plagiarized so I gave them their example actually took it and showed them exactly what needed to have been done. Um, other staff were gobsmacked is probably the word I'd use, cos it took them extra time and they were online students, I couldn't do it face to face so the only way I could do it was to be really quite comprehensive online and that really like it took me hours…but also it was only a short piece so if it had been a major assignment there's no way I could've done that but that was my first approach was to say OK I can see what you've tried to do, let's look at how it actually needs to fit within and gave them direct reference to the university referencing guide. So didn't talk about it in terms of plagiarism at that point, talked about it in terms of needing to reference correctly

I: *That was the first year undergraduate*

MC: Actually he was the first year postgraduate but he was first year, NESB and first year discipline had come from and […] background into […].

I: *So you pretty much rewrote his assignment and gave counselling*

MC: Mmm but marked his assignment he'd submitted it was also online and that made it more difficult

I: *And what about a third year? Would you do the same, respond the same way with a third year?*

MC: Umm, if it, I'd probably wouldn't have been as comprehensive. Certainly if they had been in that university and been so they'd come through that system and I knew that they had been in, then no I doubt I would've been that comprehensive with that student or invested that amount of time

I: *What would you have taken alternative action?*

MC: I may have only, um, rather than correcting it may have even talked about you need to go to the referencing guide and look at it or maybe marked it but highlighted bits that needed to be done without going through the physical process of giving them a comprehensive example of how it actually needed to have been done

I: *Would you have reported this student to your unit coordinator?*

MC: Um, in the…actually in the very first one, the online one, no I didn't report them I took it as OK it was just a referencing issue you need to see what's happening here. If it had been a third year, I probably would've gone to the unit coordinator and said hey what's going on um and again, I've come into the […] school from a […] background where ah referencing etc is a really like a a make it right or get out and that question then about in the scientific realm is it handled differently so I had to actually resolve that issue within the school as well, so yeah

I: *RS, what would you do?*

RS: As of now, when you said the language used, I suspect the language used was far better than the

I: *yes.*

RS: now as of this year and maybe last year I would've just alerted the Associate Dean and got him to handle the problem before that what I would've done is call the student in um, congratulate them on their work and ask them a series of questions designed to see whether or not where they got the referencing from so where the references were, um, ask them it that's their normal style or if they consulted others, um, if they consulted who did they consult, um, and gradually that kind of thing that I'd expect that they would admit to some degree that they did some short cuts in which case I would counsel them that's it's not appropriate and explain why it's inappropriate and then I'd try to use, I'd tell them I'd be raising their things in a public way where you'd tell one student but there's a whole

class out there you know that I've discussed the case in a group um to the whole class so that they'd notice this is what's going on

I: *But you said you would've done that but now you'd call the Associate Dean. Why?*

RS: Because I thought that one reason, two reasons one is that I think it provides consistency in dealing with these kinds of problems much of these problems come to them and it lowers costs. But there's one good thing I'd miss out the discussion about the class, where I would raise the class issue that would not happen. No

I: *OK, and you'd do the same for both the first year and third year? You'd straight through to the Associate Dean for both?*

RS: Both of those, yeah, expect um for, I'd do some checking in the first instance. I'd confirm with the undergraduate student the kind of marks he or she had got in other units, maybe consult with other lecturers about that student's performance to see if it's consistent

I: *Why would you wanna to check if they'd done it before?*

RS: No, if the quality of the work is consistent.

I: *Oh, if it's the same. OK and GB.*

GB: RS said exactly what

I: *He said exactly what you'd do.*

GB: I would do I'd certainly would at the higher level my main concern is that the work is so good I'd immediately see the standard given that those grades would had been awarded by other members of the faculty and just make sure it was consistent with what others had done. And then the fact that if it was a case of plagiarism, I'd put the name forward for the same reasons

I: *Consistency.*

GB: I'd be consistent and selfishly I could afford to spend little time worrying about it, counselling or doing all these other things. Quite frankly, I'm not really qualified to do that because I'd need to familiarize myself..

I: (laugh) *OK so you'd do the same?*

GB: Very much the same reaction as RS.

I: *Good. VC?*

VC: Yeah. The same

VC: Additionally, it takes it away being at my level because I am just a lecturer at a junior level, so it tends if the students think it comes from me they are going to go to the coordinator so if I take it to the coordinator and further to the Associate Dean then it's not about me saying no it's about them saying no the uni saying no the dean saying no and that it's not accepted so it depersonalizes it because I've gotten into one on one battles in the past so and it's always oh but you're saying that and you're just a lecturer you're not…jJust a lecturer and you know they like to think it's just VC saying that whereas if it's someone above me saying it then it's not just VC

MC: Can I just another perspective to fulltime? Fulltime? (pointing to all [...] lecturers who nodded) sessional. Really different

MC: again, it wasn't so bad when I was doing the face to face cos you could kind of just go and see if the unit coordinator was on campus or you know not busy or available in the timeframe you had to see them you also didn't have a place where you could go and counsel students you'd kind of take them to the coffee shop or in the back of the lecture room or whatever but doing an online unit, nope. It's like, you're out there yeah it really

I: *GB and VC, your action your proposed action would that be in accordance with [...]'s policies? You're telling me that's what you need to do and that's what you would do?*

GB: No, I think in [...] you would always find yourself in a situation where the Associate Dean would prefer you to keep it that you have all the but I really do believe that it's so important that the truth be dealt with at a level where the policy is applied consistently and I think one person in the school and make sure that everybody is treated the same and that person would be in a position to compare cases and compare the severity of cases

RS: It's the same students often

VC: Yeah

GB: Then they might, would've been in a position to say hey I've seen you before the second charge and you know all that I think is really important in relation to

VC: And all that information is in that file where it's kept

GB: An uncoordinated response I think just gets the institution into trouble ah because then there's discrimination treating them and discriminating between the students not treating everybody the same

I: The students can sue us?

GB: that's the idea and the arguments they raise

VC: Then they go to the student guild and the student guild will represent them

MC: I think the issue of comparison is really important because whatever I'm responding to or reacting whatever you want a reaction to you know might be very different to what someone else says is quite OK you know that lack of referencing in that particular case I know for someone else whereas for me it might be Oh my God I see it as plagiarism I need to deal with it now I'm not saying that's what did occur but I'm saying that level of clarity and acceptance you know what would I accept as being OK and not as plagiarism just the student being a bit slack

VC: 10% is normal, 30% is OK, 70% is getting for some people it makes a big difference for other people it makes no difference at all

MC: Yeah

GB: It's also very important for someone new to our school to know the differences so isolated, uncoordinated responses you might have a severe problem for the school

VC: Yeah, semester through semester they go through change

MC: The particular student that said you know he hadn't done it , when I told the story towards the end of the semester I got all this my hair was missing and I didn't know what to do, I mentioned it at morning tea to one of the other lecturers who actually had done other some online work and she named him straight away

VC: So that student has a reputation of often

MC: So you've got M in your class

GB: So had you known that, your reaction would've may have been quite different

MC: well it went to the Head of School cos again I mean my reaction to the Head of School cos again I'm sessional and don't have any authority um as it turned out she hadn't gone to the Head of School she'd dealt with it by herself so he wasn't aware that this had happened often

GB: So it's purely accidental that you mentioned it

MC: Yeah, I I felt a lot better that I wasn't like "oh my God, horrible woman you picked on this poor student and ruined his life um", yep and that I wasn't going crazy and imagining things

I: *HP, would you do the same as ah…I suppose you have to say yes, don't you, the same as GB, RS and VC?*

HP: Definitely the same as what GB would do

I: *For both levels?*

HP: But I do have another question, when you look at your case study it says that first year and third year students have submitted an assignment, my question would be what percentage of that assignment?

I: *Oh, is that important? If it's plagiarized, does it matter?*

HP: Let's say that the assignment is only worth 5% of the total marks, would everyone take the same steps?

I: *OK, That's a very good question*

MC: That's a very good question

HP: Oh it seems that this student has plagiarized a 5% assignment am I going to report that to the Associate Dean and ask him to take appropriate action? Whereas a 40% assignment yes, the student has done, has committed plagiarism or a 30% assignment, yes, that would constitute a huge part of the marks, I'm going to go to the Associate Dean through the steps

GB: I should take the high moral ground here, and say that the percentage of the final mark is immaterial. In other words,

VC: If it's submitted

GB: if it's submitted material which would be a component of this student's final grade mark, then I don't think it matters whether it's 5% or 30%, then I would because the principle is the same

MC: Could you make the same assumption that if they plagiarized at 5% they would've plagiarised a 40%? And if you picked up the 5% maybe you'd miss the 40%, don't know

HP: Maybe I did, I did. I'd like to share something that I did. We have a working paper on this. We looked at the propensity of students to commit plagiarism and one of our factors is the percentage of the assignment and we found that the higher the percentage of the assignment, the students have a higher propensity to plagiarise…You can go to the website we have a paper done by myself, G from [...] and this paper won an award at last year's

I: *OK. I'll have a look at it. That's the student's view but we need the teacher's view*

HP: But we did that one as what we call an experiment…So in a sense that does support by the theory that they have a higher propensity to plagiarise at a higher level if they are plagiarizing at the 5% then we can assume they'll go all the way

RS: So it would suggest that you hit em hard at the start. The other thing is though all of these options is to make clear that the university's policies are now, as we discussed earlier on, they are slightly different in expectations that if it's at the 5% level it's better that we clear that up now rather than at the 30% level where we would be more reluctant to give them the benefit of the doubt. Yeah I think that counselling would be the same where you might give them more the benefit of the doubt as to smaller assignment make it clear to them that in a bigger assignment

MC: And the type of plagiarism

RS: Yeah

I: *Great. Does anybody want to add, I think we've covered all the questions, does anybody want to add anything to finish off? About academic integrity policies in general? Student plagiarism in general?*

SCRIBE: I think student plagiarism I've been marking for 8 years now and the first year I taught I was absolutely staggered at the level and I was sessional and I think in a way sessionals we take more time and don't get paid for it and it takes a long time to mark assignments and I was failing about 50% of my students and for plagiarism and I was saying I remember standing there saying what's going on and some guy came out to me and said he'd found plagiarism in 30% of a Master's thesis and I'm really convinced that it's not how many students are doing it, it's how many lecturers are actually picking it up and I know that might be very contentious but um there's I think the level out there is actually higher and some people have more time and others simply don't have the time or some people have more because I teach one of the things I do is teach plagiarism in the four hour sessions with the stuff I taught so I was saying it's not acceptable and this is really making sure to look at it and using Turnitin the ones that are just doing it to are not doing it because they think they can get away with it and the ones that are doing it because they don't understand can use Turnitin as a teaching tool so I think it's a really valuable thing to do and I had a paper that somebody had marked that had given an 18/20 to and had put it up as this is a brilliant paper and I looked at it and I would've given it probably 2 and it was plagiairsed I said he's pulled it off and he said whoops and so I think it's a huge issue and it is a lot of it some of it is timing it's time and I can't do it

GB: and if it's handwritten and you are marking just by looking at key words

RS: A couple things, one is that overseas students have been singled out in the press on a whole range of things as being more prone to engage in what we consider plagiarism, ah, but two things one is that I wonder if the language of these as GB says it tells them to plagiarise a bit more and secondly is whether we catch them out a bit more because it's more obvious it's easier caught out cheating

GB: You are studying in a foreign language, I know because I did it myself, you tend to ape the language of the texts and the things that you view because you don't have the diversity of vocabulary which you have in your mother tongue and you're quite right, it sticks out like a sore thumb you see this rather stilted language and it suddenly flows beautifully and with someone who's actually plagiarising in English, an English speaking plagiariser, it's much more difficult

I: *Harder to detect?*

MC: It's hidden in all the rest of it

SCRIBE: It's fairer a more fairer system to use Turnitin because both the students aren't getting away with it. International students they aren't pinned at all

RS: I mentioned Julie Bishop, there's also Robert Hughes the famous architect but there's a couple of things ah he said in his defence was he must've read it sometime ago and another plagiarist is me! It's certainly a cultural tension when we think of creative original work

GB: Just one other question comes to mind, if you set an assignment question that has really been dealt with so many times before by so many people can you really expect an answer

MC: Anything

GB: It's addressed in every textbook in so many ways that quite frankly as a student you could find yourself in a situation between the rock and a hard place that everything you say has been said before. Sometimes we do we set very general questions..

I: or we repeat them

GB: or the repetition we need a searching question where we get a better understanding a practical application

MC: or an original thought

GB: That's when we really do expect them to

MC: Also the lower level in some ways I see them as being set to teach the process of referencing if you like so that that may not be about the content but the process if you like so I know as a first year what you're doing is that you are going through and pulling out those different definitions and putting them together talk about how they work and then reference so you are actually pulling out those different definitions

GB: Yeah

HP: There's a paper on this, which teaching students how to referencing and its on the […] website in 2000 … I'll send you an email.

VC: And sometimes in the library they have a template and stuff on how to reference with the quotations in there. It seems that every library has that template and sometimes the librarians agree to do something to talk about it

RS: We've got the templates but I don't think they know why it's important, how to reference

I: *It's in essence application. You've got the policies you've got these things but it's how you apply them.*

RS: That basic lesson as to why this is important and why they might value it is not clearly conveyed at all and I think that's something that's up for discussion.

I: *Thanks everyone, is it OK if I turn off the tape?*

RS: Then we'll tell you what we really think!

TAPE OFF.

After tape turned off, discussion continued for another 5 minutes. Scribe took notes to this effect:

RS: There's a sense of non support from universities because of financial constraints Also, need not only explain the policy but make sure you reinforce the policy.

GB: Has anyone tried to explain the legal implications of plagiarism? At a societal level there is the celebrity status of plagiarism. Moral, legal or practical sanctions? The traditional university response has been that you were sent down and kicked out. Financial constraints.
END OF NOTES/FOCUS GROUP.

Appendix E: Feedback form for respondents of pilot survey

Thank you for completing the questionnaire. I would appreciate it if you could take some extra time to complete the following feedback form.

Feedback on pilot survey questionnaire

1. How much time did you spend completing the questionnaire?

2. Is the length of the questionnaire appropriate? Too long? Too short?

3. Are there any instructions you found ambiguous or difficult to understand?

4. Did you think the questions flowed in a logical way?

5. Did you feel you had sufficient opportunity to express your views?

6. Were there any questions you found hard to answer? If so, why were they difficult?

7. Are there any questions that were not included which you think should be included?

8. Any other comments?

Thank you once again for your assistance.

Carmela De Maio

Appendix F: Final online survey

(In Word format)

INSTRUCTIONS TO PARTICIPANTS: This survey contains 35 questions and will take approximately 20-30 minutes to complete. Please answer all questions in relation to the university where you primarily teach. Your participation in this survey is completely voluntary and you may withdraw from the survey at any point. All information provided will be de-identified and your responses will remain strictly confidential. Please indicate your agreement by clicking in the box below then press the continue button to proceed.

Q.1 What is your gender?
1. male
2. female

Q.2 What is your age?
1. 29 or below
2. 30-39
3. 40-49
4. 50-59
5. 60 and above

Q.3 In which country did you receive most of your secondary education?

Q.4 In which country did you receive most of your tertiary education?

Q.5 At which university do you primarily teach?
1. [University A]
2. [University B]
3. [University C]
4. [University D]

Q.6 On what basis are you employed at your university?
1. Full-time academic
2. Part-time academic
3. Casual/sessional/short-term contract academic
4. Other

Q.7 How many years have you been teaching in your current university?

1. Less than 5
2. 5-10
3. 11-20
4. More than 20

Q.8 How many years, in total, have you been teaching in tertiary institutions?

1. Less than 5
2. 5-10
3. 11-20
4. More than 20

Q.9 In what discipline do you primarily teach?

1. Science
2. Engineering
3. Medicine/Nursing/Health Sciences
4. Law
5. Business
6. Humanities/Education/Arts
7. Other _____

Q.10 What level of students do you teach? (Select all that apply)

1. first-year undergraduate
2. other undergraduate/honours students
3. post-graduate (coursework)
4. higher degreee by research (masters/doctoral)
5. Other

Q.11 How many of your students are from a non-English speaking background (NESB)?

1. Less than 10% (Few)
2. 10-50% (Quite a few)
3. More than 50% (Most)

Q.12 Are you aware of your universitys policy on student plagiarism?

1. Yes
2. No

Q.13 How did you first learn about this policy? (Select all that apply)

1. Universitys website on policies
2. Staff handbook/teaching and learning booklet
3. Email/letter
4. Professional development/training courses
5. Supervisor/unit co-ordinator
6. Other academic staff
7. Other

Q.14 Have you accessed/had to use this policy?

1. Yes
2. No

Q.15 Why did you access/need to use this policy? (Select all that apply)

1. Seek information on how to deal with a specific instance of student plagiarism
2. Training/work requirements
3. Review
4. Request by supervisor/unit co-ordinator
5. General interest
6. Other

Q.16 Have any amendments/changes been made to this policy?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Unsure/dont know

Q.17 How would you define student plagiarism?

Q.18 In the past year, have you encountered student plagiarism (in your role as academic teaching staff)in your university?

1. Yes
2. No

Q.19 In the past year, what was the overall level/seriousness of student plagiarism in assignments you assessed?

1. Low
2. Moderate
3. High

Q.20 What was the educational background of the students involved in the incidences of plagiarism you encountered? (Select all that apply)

1. First-year undergraduate
2. Second/third year undergraduate
3. Postgraduate by coursework
4. Postgraduate by research (Honours/PhD)
5. Other

Q.21 What was the language background of the students involved in the incidences of plagiarism you encountered?

1. Mainly ESB (English-speaking background)
2. Mainly NESB (Non-English-speaking background)
3. An approximately equal amount of ESB and NESB

Q.22 In the past year, have you acted on student plagiarism (in your role as academic teaching staff) in your university?

1. Yes
2. No

Q.23 In the past year, what proportion of incidences of student plagiarism did you act on?

1. Less than 10%
2. 10-50%
3. More than 50%

Q.24 What was the overall level/seriousness of the incidences of student plagiarism you acted on?

1. Low level/Not serious
2. Medium level/Mildly serious
3. High level/Serious

Q.25 Do you use any software or online services to help you detect student plagiarism?

1. No
2. Yes (please specify)

Q.26 For each of the statements below, click on the response that is closest to your opinion.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Unable to judge
My universitys policy on student plagiarism is fair	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
My universitys policy on student plagiarism is easy to understand	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I follow my universitys procedures when responding to student plagiarism	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
My universitys procedures are easy to follow	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
My universitys procedures are practical to implement	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Student plagiarism is a problem in my university	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Identifying student plagiarism is difficult for me	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Acting on student plagiarism takes up too much of my time and resources	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Academic staff in my department take student plagiarism seriously	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Academic staff in my department understand student plagiarism in the same way as I do	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Academic staff in my department act on student plagiarism in the same way as I do	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I take student plagiarism seriously	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I understand what constitutes student plagiarism	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I feel I am able to use my discretion when encountering student plagiarism	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I feel I am able to use my discretion when responding to student plagiarism	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑

Q.27 If you have any further comments or wish to elaborate on your responses to the above question, please do so here.

Q.28 CASE 1: You are the assessor. A first year undergraduate student has plagiarised most (more than 50%) of their assignment you are marking. The assignment was worth about one-third of the total mark awarded for the unit. The plagiarism consisted mainly of poor paraphrasing and referencing. This is the first time the student has been found to have plagiarised. What action would you take?

Q.29 For Case 1, select the TWO most important factors that played a part in your response. (Select TWO only)

1. Educational experience(in a tertiary context) of the student
2. Number of times the student had previously plagiarised
3. Value/worth of the assignment
4. Type of plagiarism involved
5. Amount of plagiarism detected
6. Whether the plagiarism was intentional or unintentional

Q.30 CASE 2: You are the assessor. A third year undergraduate student has plagiarised some (about 10%)of an assignment you are marking. The assignment was worth about one-tenth of the total marks awarded for the unit. The plagiarism consisted mainly of cutting and pasting information from websites. This is the third time this student has been found to have plagiarised. What action would you take?

Q.31 For Case 2, select the TWO most important factors that played a part in your response.(Select TWO only)

1. Educational experience (in a tertiary context) of the student
2. Number of times the student had previously plagiarised
3. Value/worth of the assignment
4. Type of plagiarism detected
5. Amount of plagiarism involved
6. Whether the plagiarism was intentional or unintentional

Q.32 CASE 3: You are the supervisor.A postgraduate student has plagiarised parts of their research project dissertation which constitutes a major component of their course of study. The plagiarism consisted mainly of ambiguous/limited referencing of other peoples research findings so that some of the findings appeared to belong to the student. This is the first time the student has been found to have plagiarised. What action would you take?

Q.33 For Case 3, select the TWO most important factors that played a part in your response. (Select TWO only)

1. Educational experience (in a tertiary context) of the student
2. Number of times the student had previously plagiarised
3. Value/worth of the assignment
4. Type of plagiarism detected
5. Amount of plagiarism involved
6. Whether the plagiarism was intentional or unintentional

Q.34 If you have any further comments about academic integrity policies and/or student plagiarism, please write them here.

Q.35 Are you interested in a follow-up interview?

1. NO
2. YES (please provide your email address which will be kept separate from this survey and will not be linked to the survey)

END OF SURVEY

Appendix G: “All-staff” email for survey sent to academic staff of University A

Are you interested in student plagiarism?

Curtin PhD student, Carmela De Maio, is investigating academic staff perceptions of student plagiarism and academic integrity policy and procedures.

It would be most appreciated if you could give 20-30 minutes of your time to complete an online survey by clicking on the following link:

http://questionpro.com/t/AES3cZH61D

If the link does not function, please cut and paste the link into your browser or contact Carmela De Maio (c.demaio@curtin.edu.au) for assistance.

All responses will remain confidential and secure; and you and your institution will be de-identified. No details that can personally identify you will be kept or used in any future publications of this study.

This study has been approved by Curtin University Ethics Committee (HR121/2008). If you have any concerns about ethics related to this research, you may contact the Human Research Ethics Committee Secretary on 9266 9223, or by email at hrec@curtin.edu.au.

If you require more information about the study you may contact the supervisors, Associate Professor Katie Dunworth (k.dunworth@curtin.edu.au) or Professor Shelley Yeo (s.yeo@curtin.edu.au).

Appendix H: Advertisement for survey sent to online magazine of University B

Participants needed for plagiarism survey

Friday, 11 February 2011

Related Contents

PhD student and lecturer, Ms I De Maio, is asking academic staff and lecturers to take part in a new investigative study which analyses staff perceptions of student plagiarism and academic integrity policy and procedures.

Interested staff are asked to take 20 - 30 minutes to complete an online survey, with all staff responses to remain private and confidential.

For further information, please contact I De Maio on or alternatively contact study supervisors, Associate Professor Katie Dunworth or Professor Shelley Yeo.

This study has been approved by Curtin University (HR121/2008) and ECU (Project 5405).

Appendix I: Email sent to Heads of Schools at University B

DRAFT EMAIL TO HEADS OF SCHOOL, [...]

Dear Professor.....

I am a sessional lecturer at [...] and a PhD student at Curtin University. I am contacting you to enquire as to whether you would mind distributing this email to your academic staff as it contains a link to a survey I am conducting.

The survey forms part of my PhD study which investigates the perceptions of academic staff to academic integrity policies and student plagiarism at Australian public universities. The survey is online and takes 20-30 minutes to complete. All responses will be de-identified and participants may withdraw at any time.

The link to my survey is http://plagiarismsurvey.questionpro.com

(Please cut and paste this link to your browser if it does not open).

The study has been approved by Curtin University (HR121/2008) and ECU (Project 5405). My supervisors are Associate Professor Katie Dunworth (k.dunworth@curtin.edu.au) and Professor Shelley Yeo (s.yeo@curtin.edu.au) should you wish to contact them.

I thank you in advance for your assistance.

Yours sincerely,

I De Maio

c.demaio@ecu.edu.au

Appendix J: Email invitation to academic staff of universities C and D through QuestionPro.com

Dear academic staff member,

My name is Carmela De Maio and I am a PhD research student at Curtin University.

My study seeks to investigate academic staff perceptions academic integrity policies and student plagiarism at Australian universities and I would appreciate your feedback on this issue by completing the attached online survey.

I have approval for this study (HR121/2008) from Curtin University and this approval has also been recognised by your institution/the Head of your faculty has given me permission to recruit participants.

My supervisors are Associate Professor Katie Dunworth (k.dunworth@curtin.edu.au) and Professor Shelley Yeo (s.yeo@curtin.edu.au) and you may wish to email them if you have any queries.

Your responses will be coded and remain confidential and secure and you and your institution will be de-identified.

PLEASE CLICK ON THIS LINK TO COMPLETE THE SURVEY:

http://questionpro.com/t/CH61DZEEWXB

If you have any questions about the survey, please email me at c.demaio@curtin.edu.au.

Thank you in advance for your assistance.

Yours sincerely,

Carmela

POWERED BY QuestionPro

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Appendix K: Email sent to Heads of Faculties/Schools in Universities C and D

… 2010

Dear Professor […]

My name is Carmela De Maio and I am a PhD student at Curtin University. My research is on academic staff perceptions of student plagiarism and academic integrity policies at Australian universities and involves recruiting academic teaching staff from Western Australia's four public universities to participate in an online questionnaire and one-on-one interview.

The supervisors for my study are Associate Professor Katie Dunworth (k.dunworth@curtin.edu.au) and Dr Shelley Yeo (s.yeo@curtin.edu.au), both from Curtin University.

I have been granted ethics approval to conduct this study by Curtin University and a copy of this approval (HR121/2008) is attached. Approval has also be given by Edith Cowan University where I also teach.

With regards to the University […]'s procedures for ethics approval, I have been asked by […] to contact you as Head of […] to personally seek permission to recruit academic staff from the schools in your faculty.

It is important to my study that I include participants from your university so I would be grateful if you would allow me to recruit academic staff from your faculty (via their work emails) over the next few months.

If you are happy for me to go ahead, you do not need to take any action. If you would like more information or have any concerns, I would be grateful if you could email me or my supervisors.

I thank you in advance for your assistance.

Yours sincerely,

Carmela

Carmela De Maio

Tutor/Postgraduate student

Curtin University of Technology

c.demaio@curtin.edu.au

Appendix L: Email invitation sent to interview respondents

Dear

Recently you completed an online survey on the topic "Academic staff perceptions of Student Plagiarism and Academic Integrity Policies and Procedures" at the end of which you indicated that you were willing to be involved in a follow-up interview.

I would now like to invite you to participate in a one-on-one interview to share your views on the topic. Interviews will be conducted within the next few months, will be audio-recorded and should take approximately 30 minutes of your time. You will be asked to sign a consent form prior to commencement of the interview.

Interviews will be carried out on Tuesdays and Wednesdays from August to October. Kindly select one or two dates suitable to you. I will then contact you by email to confirm the arrangement.

DATE	TIME
Tuesday August 23	
Tuesday September 6	
Wednesday September 7	
Tuesday September 13	
Wednesday September 14	
`Tuesday September 20	
Wednesday September 21	
Tuesday October 4	
Wednesday October 5	
Wednesday October 12	
Tuesday October 18	
Wednesday October 19	
Tuesday October 25	
Wednesday October 26	

Thank you for offering to participate in the interviews.

Please email me or telephone me if you have any further queries.

Yours sincerely,

Carmela
Carmela De Maio
c.demaio@curtin.edu.au
0403 797 575

Appendix M: Consent form for interview respondents

CONSENT FORM FOR INTERVIEW

Academic staff perceptions of academic integrity policies and procedures and student plagiarism in Australian universities.

I am willing to participate in a follow-up **interview** for the above mentioned study which has been described to me. The study has been approved by the HREC Committee, Curtin University (HR121/2008).

I understand that the interview will be audio-recorded and will take between **20-40** minutes. The interview will be conducted at a time and place convenient to me.

I confirm that I understand what my participation involves, that I can withdraw at any time, and that no information which could identify me will be used in published material.

SIGNATURE:

NAME:

DATE:

Thank you for your interest and participation.
Carmela De Maio

Appendix N: Guided question sheet for interview respondents

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

A: *Tell me about an incident of student plagiarism which you experienced that you found memorable or frustrating.*

B: *Following are a pair of statements obtained from the survey.*

Please give your comments/say the extent to which you agree or disagree with each and why.

1. "Policies and procedures for responding to student plagiarism are fair."
2. "Implementation of policies and procedures on student plagiarism is a joke."

3. "My responses to incidences of student plagiarism are overturned by those higher in authority."
4. "I use my discretion when responding to incidences of student plagiarism."

5. "It's mostly NESB/international students that plagiarise."
6. "Penalties handed out to students who plagiarise are too lenient."

Appendix O: Transcripts from 26 semi-structured interviews

INTERVIEWEE 1

I: *Good morning, thank you for agreeing to be interviewed.*

R: That's OK.

Q.1 Incident of plagiarism

I: *My first question to you is this-could you tell me about an incident of student plagiarism which you experienced that you found memorable or frustrating?*

R: Yes, certainly (Laughs). Over Easter finally the university new plagiarism policy applied. Before then we told our external markers anything to do with plagiarism I'm obliged to report in this first year unit ^I don't actually have a choice to do that The markers were very experienced they've had 16 years' experience between them external marking and the requirements of [...] are actually more stringent in this 1st year unit than usually would be. Usually they would have tried to correct through modelling and very good feedback and that was a very different approach to what […] was now calling for. So over Easter I was marking these assignments instead of having Easter with my family, and I was looking at what the markers where doing and I discovered that these were first year book reports, reading reports and one of the requirements in the question was write a little bit about the author and a huge chunk of the students had just cut and pasted stuff about the author from wherever they'd found it on the internet with no correct attribution which was substantial enough/ large enough piece of the report you know given that it was huge quotes in a very small 750 word report for it to be a substantial amount of plagiarism. I then needed to contact the students, contact the markers and say look not sure what's happening here. Instead of using [inaudible]and tone in the papers. And then I needed to get the markers to remark picking up where the problems were to let me know. I didn't want to release the assignments that had been recorded as plagiarism or not plagiarism until I had checked, because I wanted to make sure that what the markers had picked up as plagiarism actually was if I was going to report the students, which meant that I needed to delay handing back all students' papers.

I: *How many would you say?*

R: Phew, this was an […] and a […] internal unit and there were a couple of people in […] who were very, very vocal in that unit. I had more frustration from the students than from the […] students and there were one or two who were really very upset ^so what I did was that I double-checked the marking and found that there were 1 or 2 that I said let's not report them, they were borderline so they were actually allowed to see what they had and those who had plagiarised had to resubmit.

I: *Resubmit?*

R: Without any penalty. The problem was that this being a first year unit, I had presumed that the introductory units that they were doing at the same time would have ^very clearly schooled them in academic writing and what was required. They signed something in the cover sheet saying 'I am familiar with the academic integrity' so they had no excuse except that somewhere the students had been let down ^ partly by thinking that they were doing which was introduction

I: *Foundation?*

R: Yeah. Not making it clear, possibly not them reading the academic integrity booklet which I'm not surprised that they hadn't, ^ I certainly had by the end of it (Laughs) But also the unit wasn't set up that they had some scaffolding before they handed in this assignment.

I: *Your unit is a first year unit and it's all online?*

R: I was babysitting it…it was

I: *So it was fully online?*

R: We had some internal students as well, externally probably about 5 or 6 of them and definitely all the […] were online. So there were a lot of unfortunate things one of that was most unfortunate was that the […] policy it was required to be implemented but it hadn't been published. We had a few problems oh I'm trying to think what they were, we just had a number during that period. I had 3 units and in all of them the fact that it was a new policy we had put that it was a new policy. I had some students, postgrad and undergrad co-taught. Yeah. Post grads were in their 1st year of […] experience but the undergrads because they were in 3rd year weren't in their 1st year of undergrad experience which meant those that I had picked up plagiarising if they were postgraduates first year of […] experience, I could just handle it and report it myself. Those who were in 3rd yr undergrad I had to then report differently in a way that seemed more severe and more scary for the students. So that's what I remember.

I: *But was this the same unit?*

R: This was a different unit.

I: *Oh right. So initially the 1st year unit had been at the time the policy was changing*

R: All of the way

I: *And so these are the other units that you coordinate*

R: Yep

I: *And so you teach those units? Both teach and coordinate?*

R: Yeah

I: *So for the first year unit, how did you deal with those plagiarism issues, the two or three that you picked up?*

R: The first year we had 11 out of there, we had so many, it was something like 50 students, you know…The unit is now being taught by somebody else so I was just babysitting, however I changed the assignment question to say something about the author, you must cite this even though it's said very clearly. My questions, I added this to the unit, my questions always have a checklist of about 30 points check this before you hand in and it actually said to the students everything attributed in the context APA 6th style so part of it was them not reading it clearly.

I: *And in that first year unit they weren't actually taught, you assumed they were taught about plagiarism in another unit?*

R: Yes. Yes ^had I not you know if I was continuing with the unit had I not realised that, I would have put more stuff in earlier. As it was with the workload that I had last semester, I couldn't change much at all. I did go about changing it after this so that in the last two weeks of semester they had some tasks to do that were, you know, towards participation, they had to go to sites and work out the citations, they had to put a quotation in the first paragraph. So I fixed it up afterwards however not at the start of the unit.

I: *And with those other three units, you said you dealt with them differently to those 11 in the first year unit?*

R: I had a postgrad. I had one case, I don't think that that student's identifiable, so when I think about it it was the external marker. ^ I teach librarianship and the external marker happened to work for a state library that had produced the report the student had plagiarised from, she recognised the words, so as a result, I put it through Turnitin and I discovered a whole lot of stuff that she'd plagiarised. So we set it up and that was Level 2 plagiarism. I then entered her blackboard assignments, put them you know cut and pasted them put them through you know stuff from e-how. I then emailed the student saying something like 'if you would like to consider what you've learned from your experience with assignment 1 and check your blackboard assessments and rewrite them and submit them to me please do I'm sure neither of us would like…'you know/so it was basically coached in 'not that I think you've done it all dear (laughs) should you by chance (laughs) check you would have do that'…

I: *Ok, so you gave her a chance to resubmit?*

R: Yeah. And then in her last assignment, there were little bits that had different typeface and different colours, and I double checked, this was one of the students who would change three or four words, so she actually knew quite clearly what she was doing. The frustrating part of that the student passed my colleague's assessment because they weren't doing the same vigilance about plagiarism that I was, you know, the audacity of the student. I wasn't out to get her in any way however I found it unfortunate that she got as far as she did… obviously doing this all the time.

I: *She's a first year?*

R: She was actually a third year, that's why I had to send it up to…and I mean technically the blackboard one I should've sent out as plagiarism. I talked it over with the assessment office and said look this is the approach I'd like to take what do you think? They said yeah.I feel a bit like it's a…I think that if we're not all doing it, it makes in some ways a mockery of… I mean I had another student that I picked up, she had health issues, her husband had health issues I mean genuine health issues, but she'd also plagiarised. And I was just you know I ended up saying 'look there's two assignments that you've plagiarised on, this one because you're a first year postgrad no she wasn't actually, I'm going to counsel you thru this or you can have a chance to rewrite it and I'd like you to rewrite so she could either rewrite both or she could get 10 marks off for the first one so it was more or less using discretion that I probably didn't have, but I found that very confronting.

I: *That was quite difficult?*

R: Yeah.

I: *So she wasn't given level 1, 2 3, you didn't go through…?*

R: I reported one incident as a level 1, which technically, I used common sense and compassion rather than process which other people would've just let it through. I just didn't think it was there given the other student who had no excuse and she'd done a similar thing.

I: *Right. And this was all happening at the time that the policy was changing?*

R: Mmm(laughs).

I: *So as a result do you feel you understand the new policy?*

R: I understand the new policy very…

I: *Much better?*

R: Yes. We had questions that we needed to ask, cos we were told that the external marker needed to stop marking at the point when the plagiarism was discovered, then continue. The only thing is that if they stopped marking then I would have to mark it and find the other plagiarism and actually prepare the report. So I actually said 'don't hand anything back to the student, mark up what plagiarism you see, informally again because this isn't on my record. I basically said to them mark the jolly thing if they resubmit because they can only change the plagiarism because you've already done it, or don't. Chances are they would resubmit in which case the work that the marker had already done…because, to be fair, just to pick out plagiarism and not the spelling mistakes wasn't fair to the marker .The markers because they only get one hour marking per student per unit, and that's all they are allocated, which if I was marking myself I'd spend a lot more time. I ended up marking the exam in that unit rather than handing it to the markers because I think it was unfair if they also have to mark, so it was extra work for me as a result rather than saying look there's plagiarism here, they need extra funding for their marking. Yeah in a way it's sort of forcing you into ^uncomfortable practlces, but if the students have been let down for a long time, once it gets to me…I mean in my first semester here, this is my third semester, the first semester here I was dealing with plagiarism, I didn't have a policy to guide me, I was told this is the norm and I was crying as I was marking stuff that I know I was letting through because I thought for the postgrads in particular, they'd been let down a long time before, I don't have time to actually sit and counsel these guys…it's unfortunate.

I: *So from that first semester til now because of what's happened in, between would you do would you do the same thing?*

R: Would I do the same thing? I would change the questions.

I: *Oh right so change the assessments?*

R: Yeah I mean it is very clear it said you know all kinds of fact must be backed up with authorities correctly cited it's written there, it's in the checklist. However some of these were first year students, OUA students I found really wanted to be given a go in the way that the university structure didn't allow for, you know, we've come back after millions of years away and you know they've never done this before. What I mean it was unfortunate that I didn't' understand how ill-equipped they were or the expectations that they had about what they would have to do.

I: *Alright so now your assessments are clearer? Your unit plan your unit guide does it talk about extra things?*

R: For the first years no, because it was all there but it was in the same 'you must all agree with the yahdidadida' that would do the students' heads. After that as you know I do video feedback

so once I discovered the plagiarism for all my units I said look this is what's required with plagiarism, there is a new policy go…[inaudible] was so grateful. So you can actually say I take this very seriously so I put four or five resources about plagiarism, I found this sort of lovely gamey interface something the library has done there is a Norwegian plagiarism video.

I: *The library one, yes I've seen that.*

R: I've played that to them and said look… yeah, I actually do library videos and how libraries use video so this is useful to you for the other stuff as well. So what I did was, once I realized the problem, I wanted to provide them with a lot of support, but also I copped a lot of flack from the students on te board saying it's not fair we're only first years and we don't have anything to go on before we submit our next assignment.

I: *It took a lot of time*

R: Exactly and it was a choice I made because somebody had let the students down and at some point we have to say 'let's stop doing that' and we'd like to put on …

M: *You've done well*

R: Well yeah

Q.2 Policies and procedures

I: *Thank you. I'm now going to give you the sheet. Thank you for sharing that. And so we've done A and we've got B so I've got pairs of statements that were taken from the results of my survey, so could you just have a read through each of the pairs… you've probably answered most of those anyway in what you've told me, but just want you to tell me how you feel about each of those pairs.*

R: So 1 and 2 are pairs

I: *1 and 2 are together because they're sort of related…*

R: With each one not with…

I: *Yeah. So for each pair, how do you feel about…'policies and procedures for responding to student plagiarism are fair' 'implementation of policies and procedures on student plagiarism is a joke'.*

R: Yeah. They're fair but the time allocated to actually deal with them well isn't fair. Yes I think they are actually quite straightforward if everyone was behind them it would be fabulous. People don't follow them for a lot of reasons not their own fault and I think that's where the system falls down. I'm actually very, very pleased with how seriously […] has been taking it and the advertising, the publicity they're doing internally about it,cos when I came here last July that first semester marking was extremely demoralizing seeing what was there and now I feel like I've got the institution's backing even if everybody else isn't doing nothing, it's about doing the right thing by their students cos to me it's about the students.

The implementation of procedures on student plagiarism is a joke yep (laughs). Yeah yeah exactly. ^It needs to be consistent and students need to be given the same message about academic freedom.

I: *I'm a bit confused about this statement that it's a joke. Is it because it takes so long?*

R: Yeah I would say that it's not only that. There's a disconnect about what the university is doing, what it wants, what academics are doing in response, and what academics want. Those four things are disconnected and a lot of it has to do with time and what people are paid for. ^I think there's two school of thoughts both of which believe they are adults and they need to respond to university requirements and a lot of them are just out of school let's make it easy so they can be scaffolded and have an increment.

Q.3 Responses to plagiarism

R: 'My responses to student plagiarism are overturned by others higher in authority' no they were more or less supported. The student with the you know she did the blackboard thing and then the other one, the final one was you must do a writing course but we're not going to tell you by what date, they asked me to put in a grade not submitted and said she needs to resubmit her assignment. She didn't do that.

I: *This was the level 2?*

R: The first level 2 was you're going to get zero for your assignment, the second level 2 for that student was you need to do a writing course and you need to resubmit your assignment I need to put a grade not submitted. I actually had to ring the board and say by what date does she need to submit and by what date do I need to change and she was meant to do the writing course give me the certificate to put onto her file and again I had to say by what date because there was no parameters given…so I've got a note on my file to check on her.

' I use my discretion when responding to student plagiarism' yes I do.

I: *Do you feel bad about that when you do that?*

R: No, no it can't be enforced to the letter. There was one incident where we realized that if you enforce the policy to the letter … it was basically to do with the students in second year versus the students in first year and students in 1first year who had something that was relatively minor it would be an easy level 1 if they were first year experience, do we want to basically bother the people who enforce the policy with this small…

I: *To bring it up to them*

R: Exactly. However it's not our call. The policy falls down where if you say please resubmit we say please resubmit you'll get zero if you don't resubmit, I had one student resubmit where half the plagiarism was fixed up and half wasn't. So as a result the office of assessment said you mark that down as you would if they'd done it….

I: *In the first place*

R: In which case why the heck were we reporting it? Because they're being marked down for less serious plagiarism than…

I: *Than the original*

R: Yeah. So the policy is stupid at that point it can't allow for all contingencies, so what I basically said is if the plagiarism is not fixed up you're going to get 50% off, your mark will be your mark decreased by a factor of 50% which the office of assessment thought was kind of a bit rough to do but really I hadn't expected that when we said that it's plagiarised that half would be fixed up and half wouldn't… so yeah you have to use your discretion cos otherwise you'd

get the absurd…outcome that you do less plagiarism and you get a more severe penalty than doing the full plagiarism and resubmitting it.

Q.4 Students and penalties

R: ‘ Most NESB’ no I don’t think that it’s mostly NESB but then again we don’t have a large contingent.

I: *It’s mainly locals.*

R: Not the plagiarism I’ve seen. ‘Penalties handed out to students who plagiarise are too lenient’ ^I like the way we’ve got plagiarism level 1 2 and 3 because I think level 3 plagiarism and level 1 plagiarism it’s quicker to call it plagiarism. However I had a student who I said please rewrite because if you don’t it’s going to look plagiarism. This was an assignment where it’s just a task where I say find out more about these technologies, do not cut and paste from a site and if you do make sure you attribute correctly and she hadn’t. And look I said ‘the new policy means I have to report you for plagiarism please remove the plagiarism from the work you’ve done’. She was very upset that I’d used the p word, upset her entire perception of the unit, etc, etc, etc. you know so I …

I: *She was the 1st year?*

R: No, she was a post grad. So I didn’t have Turnitin the first semester. I was marking, I was going through cos I’m familiar with the field, I knew where they were stealing stuff, you know I was just totally demoralized by…

I: *What you saw?*

R: Yeah, and at that time yes I thought the penalties were too lenient cos basically my colleagues were letting stuff through …when I sought advice was basically told ‘let it through’ [inaudible]….

I: *So who was saying let it through?*

R: Others. I was new to the thing, I came two weeks before semester restarted, I didn’t have time to rewrite most of the material.

I: *And you’ve come from a university?*

R: No, practice. I used to be the new technologies expert at […], did new technologies for learning so had teaching familiarity but hadn’t actually taught at the university level myself, so everything was new…I really had no idea you know I hadn’t seen anything like that before but was was shocking probably was I didn’t know. Now I have the knowledge, much more ability to apply discretion because I’ve seen it more. However if now under that policy I was marking those assignments, a lot of them would be redoing them cos I don’t think I’ts fair to the students or the profession to let them through…

Q.5 Other comments

I: *Thank you. Do you have any further comments you’d like to add?*

R: no. (laughs)

END OF TRANSCRIPT

INTERVIEWEE 2

Q.1 Incident of plagiarism

I: *Thank you for agreeing to be interviewed. My first question to you is could you tell me about an incident of student plagiarism that you've experienced that you found memorable or frustrating?*

R: Mmm. The first very serious one that I came across was where a student had purchased an essay and I was teaching Organizational Behaviour and we had an essay a critical essay due on equity theory which is a motivation al theory. He had purchased an essay from somewhere which was equity theory relating to law and it was clearly exactly the wrong topic and it was footnoted rather that Chicago referenced. ^He clearly purchased it, yeah, that's the one I remember the best and I knew then and I was like what the hell do I do with this ? Yeah.

I: *Was that long ago?*

R: 2009.

I: *What did you do, can you remember?*

R: I called him in to see me… he's an overseas student… I'm very sensitive to ^ how my actions are perceived by students so I said 'this is clearly not on topic and you are given and this is about law and legality are you doing a law degree here?' ' No', 'so how come you're talking about principles of law in a motivational theory essay?' ' I just got mixed up' and as I was talking to him I could see that his vocabulary did not match the lexicon did not match the cognitive assignment.

I: *How did you know he purchased?*

R: I'm assuming

I: *You're assuming. You didn't run it through Turnitin?*

R: It was through Turnitin and didn't show up

I: *Oh then how did you know?*

R: Well I can only assume that he purchased it. ^I found out, I had a very steep learning curve with this because enough clues were left by students to lead you to various websites through Turnitin. And I look at them and I can see that they're offering essays for a price which are guaranteed foolproof in Turnitin. And I'm assuming he got one of those. I actually referred him to the unit controller I don't know what happened to him after that. That was the most…you wanted memorable that was the most memorable one for me.

I: *And you were curious about what happened to him? You don't know what happened to him?*

R: No I don't, but I was taking four seminars with 40 students in each so there's a lot to do.

I: *Right. That was only one that you've experienced?*

R: Well just last year we had something interesting where we had a pair of fraternal twins a brother and sister in a class and the brother's assignment was 80% matched with his sister's assignment.

I: *Was that through Turnitin?*

R: Yeah, so that was refereed off to the channels, the system and I think he got excluded from the unit. That assignment got given a null score in the end.

I: *The sister?*

R: The brother.

I: *The sister was OK?*

R: I'm not sure what her involvement was and he defended her. The brother said ah 'she just let me read hers to get an idea of what to do and I copied it and she didn't know about it'. Yeah.

I: *So with these incidences of plagiarism you refer them on to the unit coordinator?*

R: I was the unit coordinator. I put that up through to…

I: *The Head?*

R: Yeah.

I: *Oh right. Was that frustrating as a unit coordinator to deal with that?*

R: It was surprising, I hadn't expected that. I expect to see lazy and sloppy copy and pasting and attempts to obviscate coped text and stuff like that. I don't expect to see siblings working together collusively to..

I: *So that was a bit shocking?*

R: Yes, I was certainly surprised.

I: *And were they international students from overseas?*

R: They had come from overseas but they actually had PR here in Australia. They did their secondary education in […].

I: *So they weren't really NESB students?*

R: No, no. They did speak […] but their first language is English.

I: *And as unit coordinator that was memorable. Have you had many others as unit coordinator compared to when you first started? Do you find as unit coordinator you'd see more cases, more incidences from others?*

R: Yeah. It's a part of the unit coordinator role is to monitor the quality of the work that's submitted using the Turnitin process, and I did spend an awful lot of time going through my tutors' e-boxes in Turnitin and picking it up from …The more experienced tutors picked it up straight away before and the new tutors I went through to double check and tell talk them about it you know this guy, this guy, this guy…significant parts of copy text.

I: *And do you get a lot of that coming through to you?*

R: Yeah the first year course that we had, a tremendous amount of them. Interestingly I don't have stats to back this up but it seems to me that here at Bentley, giving people the benefit of the doubt, it was more to do with 'I'm not sure how to reference, I didn't know that that was not in the public domain', etc. etc.

I: *For this first year foundation unit?*

R: Yeah. A lot of the students are like… everyone knows this fact and I'm like 'it doesn't matter you still have to reference it', or they think that Wikipedia is public common knowledge and don't reference that, ^so that might be an awareness, an education training issues but the offshore campuses I was finding…

I: *And you manage those as well?*

R: Oh yeah, they work us to death here at […]. You get flogged to death. The work coming from my boss from the school the workload is tremendous. Like when I was doing that unit, I had in Australia I had […] I had […], three in […] what else did I have? I had like nine locations…and I was running a third year course as well. I had about 1600 students under my control one semester.

I: *In terms of incidences of plagiarism for when you're overloaded with work, do you see more or less?*

R: I'd see more.

I: *Cos of more numbers?*

R: Yeah. Just the mass works out the ratio you see more. But the overseas students there is a surprising amount of recycle of old papers, I think there may be a trade in older papers at […] and […] and stuff like that. Do you much about the […] campus? It's run by […] …our courses. I feel there's some cross over between diploma and degree students there' some trade over there.

I: *So do you feel that this is a problem more offshore?*

R: No, it's a problem everywhere. It's a different problem.

I: *How do you deal with them? Because they come to you first?*

R: We've got well defined procedures for Bentley, for level 1 they have to have an interview with the unit coordinator but I'm here so I can't. So that was left to one of the academic staff there. So that process wasn't particular developed by […] but […] obviously hadn't come up before that there had to be a process in place and I spent 10 days to figure out who gets to do what.

I: *So that's frustrating. And those procedures are implemented only by […]?*

R: Yes. Well they only teach […] units offshore.

I: *So you've got your own steps to make it easier?*

R: Yeah. It doesn't make it easier, much more work for the teachers.

I: *So you don't see those. You're mainly concentrating now on local, onshore.*

R: Yeah. Well this is still being worked through (Spoke off topic about offshore agreements).

Q.2 Policies and procedures

I: *Thank you for sharing that. I'll move on. Now here in Section B what I have are pairs of statements taken from the survey so what I'd like you to do is read each pair, two together, and tell me whether you agree or disagree and why when you read them.*

R: OK. ^…can I ask clarifying questions?

I: *OK.*

R: Unfair to whom?

I: *I don't know, that was in the survey. That's a good question. Unfair to you I would say as an academic staff member you're aware of […]'s policy and procedures but you can interpret it for students. That was just a statement made in the survey.*

R: Mmm. …Unfair is such a loose term as well.

I: *But for you, in your experience…*

R: Is it OK if I pass this over for different things?

I: *OK.*

R: Policies and procedures for responding to student plagiarism are fair to the student in that the policies and procedures are quite clearly enunciated in the academic integrity part of our website. So the information is there, however the awareness level among students is not fair. In general the university shoves a lot of things on their website and expect students to remember every minute detail when in reality we know that they won't read anything unless we're out with a gun to their head to do it. And we know that but we have that expectation that they'll do it.

I: *So they're sort of fair and not fair for students? But for academic staff?*

R: Under the current circumstances they're not fair because of the workload they impose. And the AWMS…

I: *What's that?*

R: T he Academic Workload Management System is grossly unfair to staff and misrepresents amazingly the amount of work required in teaching and running a unit and even though policies and procedures prima facie are fair, when it comes to the reality of actually doing the work, it's not fair at all. I'll give you an example, back to Sarawak for the first assessment in semester 1 this year there was like 22 cases of level 1 plagiarism out of a class of maybe 80. It took me 14 hours to prepare the paperwork and the letters and stuff to prosecute those. My total allowance for running the course in Sarawak for the whole semester was 12 hours. So I spent more than the total hours for the course on doing one job for one assessment for one week and as far as fair to staff no.

I had mates managing student plagiarism quite unfair and I fear that a lot of staff are just going to say 'you know what, I don't really care about plagiarism, I'll get the bad ones and just tick the levels 1 off with a verbal warning and not record it cos I just couldn't' be bothered doing the paperwork' and that's what..

I: *And that probably leads to point 2 because we're talking about implementing, what we actually do.*

R: Yeah. Well firstly the implementation has been patchy from what I understand from colleagues in other schools in[…], there's been no training or no discussion about it at school meetings and people only realise the system has changed when they go to do something with it. And yeah the workload thing is just ridiculous. This is why most of last semester I was here probably for a about 80 hours a week I pushed these chairs together and l slept on them at night cos it's too dangerous to drive home I was just too tired at 3 in the morning and even then I didn't get all my work done. Yeah.

I: *So you're saying the workload is a lot for normal academic staff but for you it's triple?*

R : By a factor of 10. They're allowing, the system allows for the same amount of time for a running a single course of third year for 40 students that they do for running hundreds of students across the world.

And can I just pick up on the term fair again? ^ I have severe ethical problems with […] and the conduct of students. We're taking students, especially from overseas, who are underprepared for the rigours of tertiary study in Australia. There are different cultural and ethical understandings and there's a huge diversity with range of English ability and we do not require them, or even educate them on ethical academic conduct. We don't give them any formalized required training in referencing and research and quoting and using citations. It's up the individual unit coordinator to include them in their unit but this semester is so short and

there's so much to cover that everyone starts to think 'well somebody else will do it'. And poor A who runs CIB100 everyone thinks it's her job to do it and it's not, it's everybody's job.

You know when I was a student at […] they had a compulsory unit that everyone had to do …about academic integrity, and even better than that I actually like […]'s system best of all where everyone from vet science to feminist studies does a compulsory unit on I think it's called history of knowledge, which is basically a study skills course and they weave the referencing and academic integrity studies into that and that's the vehicle by which students acquire their information. The thing is here, we don't have any structured path in CBS for students to do. Someone can rock up and do all of their third year courses in their first year and no-ones' gonna stop them. And I think one of the biggest failings of CBS is that we don't require that. First semester of their study here, no exemptions…it should be a compulsory unit for all students and by ignoring that were being unfair to the students and setting them up to fail. They're not doing anything wrong most of the time, they're unconsciously incompetent, they don't know that they don't know, and I think […]'s moral is incredibly culpable for allowing that to happen. I have ethical problems with that, probably gonna end up with me leaving.

Q.4 Students and penalties

I: *Since we talked about students, let's just quickly comment on 5 and 6.*

R: First 5, I don't think it's necessarily true, most of our students are NESB anyway. If you go into Accounting or Management 100, two-thirds of the class are from overseas and I don't notice a statistically higher ratio of overseas students to domestic students, it's just that most of our students are from overseas. That's the way it is.

'Penalties handed out to students who plagiarise are too lenient'

I: *We're talking about the level 1s.*

R: They were given zero.

I: *Oh. I thought they were just given a warning or something?*

R: *Yes you're right they were given a warning.*

I: *So do you think that's too lenient? To save work and time?*

R: I don't know about lenient I'd rather see the penalties for plagiarism for level 1 be formative rather than punitive. I'd rather see like a traffic school like if you get busted for level 1, you have to do 12 hours of reference training compulsory within four weeks, book yourself into one of these courses, we're keeping track of you, , and if you don't do it you're going to be annulled for that course that unit. Kind of like the courts do.

I: *Do they have that? It's up to the individual isn't it?*

R: Again it's up to the individual to require them to do the course but it's not formalised and I think that should be. It's not a question of leniency, I just don't' think we're handling the opportunity well. That's a great opportunity to nip this in the bud and let's say they are being watched to divert them off into a useful program to hope this stuff would never happen again and we're not using the opportunity well.

I don't have any problems with the way the penalties are handed out because they do take many different factors into consideration at the academic misconduct board level. They take into

account the experience of the student, the first offence, the extent of plagiarism, etc. I just think we misuse the opportunity to divert them into a program.

Q.3 Responses to plagiarism

I: *Ok what about 3 and 4?*

R: I don't agree with 3. No it's never happened to me.

I: *That hasn't' happened to you because you're unit coordinator? Or even in the first incident when you weren't unit coordinator?*

R: I've never found anything overturned.

I: *Ok that's good*

R: And yes I use my discretion when responding to incidences of student plagiarism, yeah I do.

I: *And in what way?*

R: ^If I have the opportunity to speak to the student and I think that they've made a genuine mistake I don't think that people should be punished for making mistakes, they should be given the opportunity to fix the mistake first, that's just my own moral ethical stance so I'll give the student a chance to resubmit.

I: *Even if it's first year, second year, third year?*

R: Oh, first years. Second years and third years I'll follow procedure, but yeah I certainly use my discretion at first year level. And…

I: *So you wouldn't record those or report those?*

R: No if they play the game I say 'hey you've made a mistake you didn't do this properly' whatever, I give them a chance to fix it and give it back to me again, again it's a learning opportunity and diverts them from the penalty process.

I: *But first years only you'd use your discretion, not second years or third years or postgrads?*

R: Yeah, yep that's probably what I'd do.

Q.5 Other comments

I: *Ok, thank you for that. Do you want to add anything more? Any further comments about […]'s academic integrity policies and procedures? Your perception of them?*

R: Yeah I think we're not doing the right thing by young and inexperienced students. It's all well and good to say well they're at university and we have this expectation at tertiary level. Anyone who says that and believes it hasn't stood in front of a class of 17 year olds from China who are away from home for the 1st time, let alone a different country and their English has been incorrectly assessed offshore which we won't commit to tape well there are things going on there but the issues regarding fidelity of ESL assessments offshore is well known.

A lot of students generally have got no concept of what plagiarism and they've got no concept that what they're doing is wrong ^and they have got English skills that aren't sufficient to clearly communicate. That's our expectation. I think we need to address the problem of

plagiarism from multiple angles. I think you need to do it by having a compulsory prerequisite course that must be done in their 1st semester of attending regardless of where they come from, regardless of whether they've got another degree, it must be done and use that opportunity not just to address plagiarism but to encourage good study skills etc, etc.

We need to understand that the students we have in front of us today are not the ones that you and I were back in the 1980s or 90s. Their concept of information and knowledge has just evolved way past from what we experienced and for a lot of them stuff on the internet is there to be used, and it's free and if you talk to students about their use of media files for example movies and songs that they illegally download they don't see it as illegal, it's just there to be used. Ditto any information you get off the internet so it's not so much as a for a lot of cases that they are deliberately cheating, it's just that their cultural framework the cultural ideology is that it's there to be used and we are not responding to that appropriately.

I: *So do you think we should have separate policies and procedures for internationals?*

R: No, we can't do that

I: *So the policies are OK for everyone, it's just we need some training for everyone to make sure it's clear to everyone?*

R: Yeah

I: *What about academic staff? The same for us? Especially if you're coordinating units where you've got international, overseas tutors and lecturers?*

R: Yeah that's a really interesting topic. That's your second PhD after you finish this one.

I: *Yeah it's sort of part of this one. I'm thinking cos you have so many different tutors, do you think they're doing a good job? Are they identifying plagiarism, are they responding the same way or do you feel that it's difficult?*

R: No I think that the overseas campuses have to be addressed on a case by case basis. There are different cultural ideologies all over SE Asia. I think people homogenize Asia as a country whereas in fact it's many different countries with many different hundreds of cultural ideologies and you'll find very different attitudes to plagiarism and cheating and assessment in Singapore than you will in Sarawak, than you will in Mauritius, than you will in Penang. That is a whole other topic. It's big variability.

The thing is that the current system relies a lot on a assessment made by the individual on awarding level1 level 2 or level 3 and a lot of different cultural ideology in different countries provides for a lot of variance in the framework and you'll find that they're loosely applied in Singapore and even tightly applied in Penang and very tightly applied in Mauritius but nowhere else.

I: *And how do you as unit coordinator respond to that? Do you double check?*

R: Yeah, I personally made the decision to centralize the Turnitin accounts to here. So I set up the accounts and put the lecturer as tutor so they can get in there to do their work but I can oversee everything that happens. Yet again, that's not factored into AWMS and I do that between 11pm and 2am in the morning. It's a part of my own personal drive to make things fair and equitable…

I: *And consistent perhaps*

R: Consistent

I: *Consistent for all your campuses so you're satisfied that by doing that that everyone is consistent but if you didn't do that then there might be issues?*

R: Absolutely and this is why it's my personal decision to do it and other unit coordinators might not make the personal decisions, they might just say…

I: *Or take the time?*

R: Yeah. I'm in this situation where I'm a single parent and my kids are at their mother's house three times a week and with me the rest of the time, so these three nights a week I'll be here working…

I: You'll be here sleeping?

R: yeah, on the chairs, and other people have got children at home and a partner and don't want to be here at three in the morning and probably say that's CBSI's problem it's not mine. And I won't do that. So there you go.

I: *Ok thank you very much*

END OF TRANSCRIPT

INTERVIEWEE 3

Q.1 Incident of plagiarism

I: *Thank you for agreeing to be interviewed.*

R: That's fine.

I: *My first question to you is, could you tell me about an incident of student plagiarism that you've encountered, that you found memorable or frustrating?*

R: Okay. I should probably explain that I deal with plagiarism in the school so I encounter an awful lot of plagiarism. Not just students in my own class but students from across social sciences who plagiarise. So, memorable or frustrating?

I: *Is that as unit coordinator or is it as academic integrity officer?*

R: Yes, I'm academic integrity investigator. That is the title that we use, yes. For want of a better one. So cases which have come to me? Or do you want me to talk about …

I: *Okay, any case that stands out for you, then.*

R: Okay. The cases that I find frustrating are cases where students really don't get it. They have been through a process where they have been taught about plagiarism in our foundation units, and they've been exposed to that. They've been told about how to reference and all this kind of stuff and yet they still don't get it. And I find that frustrating because there's no reason. I mean, they're really not trying to deceive. I honestly believe they simply, in some cases, simply haven't taken on board the fact that plagiarism is unacceptable and they've been told how to avoid it and have been given every opportunity to know and yet it still hasn't sunk in. So I find that really frustrating. Because it seems to me indicative of the fact that many other things that we teach them probably aren't sinking in either.

But it's the skill … it's the fact that they haven't acquired the skill, yet we've done everything one would think possible to make the message sink in. So I find that frustrating.

I: *What type of students would they be? Are these first year undergrads or are we talking about second year or all across?*

R: Yeah, all across. In first year level I, you know, I don't find it so frustrating because they're still finding their feet. But at second year, where they've been through … they've been through a foundation unit, they've done a number of units and presumably plagiarised their way through those unwittingly, perhaps. And then they might come to me as a second or third year student because someone has finally picked them up on it. So yes, students at all levels.

I: *At all levels. And what … how would you deal with them? Do you deal with them differently? The first year student as compared to the second or third year that comes to you?*

R: Yes, well, I suppose you deal with them in the same kind of way but the outcomes are different. Because the outcomes, or the penalties, for want of a better word, that might apply to a first year student, would not be the same as you'd apply to a second or third year. So we have quite a defined code of how we deal with students and a first year student or a student who hasn't been in the system for very long, an articulated student who may have done … do you know what I mean by articulated student?

I: *Are you talking about coming through from […]?*

R: Yes, yes, that's right. They have done foundation units but not … it seems to me not with quite the same sort of rigour as they do on campus. We do get quite a lot of those students who have problems.

I: *And they come in as second years?*

R: They do, they do. So I would still treat them as first year on campus, in effect.

I: *Oh, is that right. And give them … and if you treat them as first years would you impose the penalty for first time plagiarism offending, for the first time?*

R: Yeah. Penalties depend on whether or not in my opinion as investigator I think it was deliberate or it was simply a failure to understand what was required. And if it's a failure to understand then they have the opportunity to … they may have the opportunity to resubmit the piece of assessment, perhaps, with no penalty or perhaps for a maximum of a certain 50 percent mark, or something like that. But, you know, there are different penalties for a first year student, depending on the severity and what you think was their motivation or what kind of led to this incident.

I: *You said that when you deal with them you don't feel that there's any intent that they mean to plagiarise.*

R: Sometimes. Not always, sometimes. There's definitely an intent to plagiarise.

I: *Oh, alright. And can you distinguish … are you able to …?*

R: Well, we have a system … in our school, and this may not be the case across the university, I don't know … it's a requirement in our school where there is an incident of plagiarism, a suspected plagiarism, we always have an interview. And it's my responsibility as investigator to try and ascertain whether I think they genuinely didn't get it or whether they were trying, you know, whether they intended to deceive.

I: *Okay. And these cases come to you through the unit coordinator?*

R: Yes, that's right.

I: *Right. Okay, through the unit coordinator. As a lecturer yourself, have you had your own … not in your role as academic integrity officer, but as a lecturer yourself, have you found an incident that was frustrating or memorable?*

R: Yes, I have where students have plagiarised and I think deliberately. Usually online sources, but even though they've been told how … because as unit coordinator and because I have a particular role in plagiarism I always really …make the point that plagiarism is not acceptable and I point out to them how, you know, we have the preliminary exercise in most of my units that tends to focus very strongly on referencing. And I always make the point that because I'm investigator I see a lot of plagiarism and it's so easy to pick up, and I ask them to think how would you avoid being picked up? And you know, I say, well in just a few words … pop it into Google and out spits the source. So I explain all that to them but still, you know, you'll occasionally get somebody who plagiarises even though you've spelt it out. I find that frustrating.

I: *Right. And you'd say that might be … frustrating … that might be intentional?*

R: Well I think so, yeah. It's usually spelt out… it's usually presented as carelessness by copy and pasting and I forgot to, you know … it's always I forgot to. But I do find that frustrating, yes.

I: *Right. The type of students that you see, would you say, what type of students would you see?*

R: The whole range. And even to … well, graduate students are dealt with differently … for instance, graduate research students are not dealt with by me but people doing postgrad diplomas and things like that. So I do see the whole range, yeah.

You asked about frustrating incidences. There was one student who was a later year student in theology, whose entire paper, entire paper was cut and pasted from one source. And he came and sat in my office and said he hadn't plagiarised. And he'd cited, he produced a bibliography, he had a bibliography in the paper which was also cut and pasted. And he hadn't of course cited the source that he'd actually used. And he said he must have forgotten. You know, and I … the sheer audacity of a student who can sit there and assume that I must be completely stupid and that his teachers must be completely stupid, I find that really, really annoying.

I: *But he comes to you in your role as coordinator or academic?*

R: No, he came to me in my role as investigator, but he also … he'd already been through the coordinator and told them the same story.

I: *Right. Okay, right. For you, do you find it's hard in your three different roles to deal with plagiarism or do you find it easier*?

R: Yeah, I guess I see the first two as the same, in a sense. But yes, I do. And most of the plagiarism which occurs in my own unit I don't see because I'm not tutoring and marking, at least not at the moment, because I'm doing different things. But I haven't picked up personally any plagiarism for a while. But there has been plagiarism in my units. In the units in which I've been coordinating and tutors have picked that up. So, I don't see any kind of conflict but … it's just the different roles.

Q.2 Policies and procedures

I: *Good. Okay. I would like, if I may, to just go to the sheet and what I've got, part (b), I've got some statements that came out of the survey instrument. And so I've paired them up, and if you don't mind I'd like … if you can comment on the pairs and say whether you agree or disagree with those particular statements and why. So if you want to start at one and two, or if you want to change, it's up to you.*

R: No, one and two is fine. I personally think that in social sciences we do have a good process for dealing with student plagiarism and I think it's thorough and it's rigorous and we fine tune it at a school level. And I think social sciences has been quite forward thinking in producing its guidelines. And now the university as a whole is trying to not model itself on our guidelines but is trying to create some kind of parity across different schools, and across different faculties, which I think is a good idea. So I certainly think that within social sciences I can say that I believe that policies and procedures are fair.

I: *Are they quite different to Murdoch's actual policies and procedures? When you say you've got your school guidelines, then we've got our institutional …*

R: No, they're not different. We had school guidelines, which we had …when the … the university has a policy and then a way of implementing that policy was developed at a school level. But over the last year and half the university as a whole has looked more closely at the policies and rewritten them to some extent, trying to create a kind of university-wide way of dealing … so university-wide procedures, and they tend to reinforce what we are already doing in the school anyway. So there hasn't been … so I think they are supposed to be the same, both policies and procedures right across the university.

But I can't comment on how they are actually implemented across the university. I think they're fair. One of the things that does seem a little bit problematic is that there have been cases of plagiarism where they've been dealt with at a school level but because it was a second offence, it's been dealt with at a higher level. And in some cases we've … there has been some feeling from some of the staff that treatment at a higher level is not as rigorous … the penalties are not as severe as at a lower level and that's certainly frustrating.

I: *Right. And when you say a higher level you mean within the school?*

R: No.

I: *Actually going further up to the Board?*

R: Yes, yes. So that would be a frustration which I personally have felt and which other staff have commented on.

I: *So would that be answering point two, that when …the implementation is a joke when it goes to a higher …?*

R: No, I mean of those two statements I'm saying I agree with the first, but there are instances where I wouldn't say it's a joke but I think there are incidences which are frustrating and which suggest that the policies and procedures in responding are not as fair as they could be, because students in those cases, in my opinion, should have been dealt with more severely.

I: *Alright, alright. Good.*

R: Yeah, yeah. Coming back to point two, 'implementation of policies and procedures on student plagiarism is a joke', we have a lot of teaching offshore and the understanding of plagiarism seems to be a little different for offshore students in some cases. You know, a different attitude to things like evidence and different cultural attitudes to, you know, "if this is the expert and they have done it perfectly why should I rewrite it"? You know, that kind of cultural belief that you can't do any better than the expert. And I think that's one of the issues with plagiarism amongst a lot of offshore students.

I: *You're talking about international students?*

R: I am, I am. Students who are transnational students, so students who are taught in campuses in Singapore or Malaysia or … There is a kind of cultural belief that why would you try to rewrite it when it's already been written so well in the first place. Yeah. And that's really problematic, and I think we need to do more to deal with plagiarism in terms of those sorts of parameters, in terms of cultural differences. And it makes it very difficult because if there is that attitude amongst some students then we get a lot of transnational plagiarism and I'm not sure if it's always dealt with as fully as it could be.

I: *You mean dealt with over there or over here?*

R: It's dealt with by our transnational Deans. It's dealt with over there. I don't deal with that.

I: *So when they come ... sorry, so how do you know there's this plagiarism when they come to you? That's how you pick it up? When you say there's a cultural transnational plagiarism issue, if it's not dealt with by you, how do you, how does it come to you? How do you pick it up?*

R: Okay. Well, unit coordinators here in this corridor, in this school, are coordinating those units. And they would come to me and say, "Look, I've got a plagiarism issue," and I'll say, "Oh well, I don't deal with it. It's dealt with …" ... Yeah, but certainly we can talk about the issues and I know there's a lot that happens.

I: *Alright, right. But you can't deal with them, you have to send through. Okay.*

R: I don't deal with it, no. Thank heavens, otherwise it would be overwhelming.

I: *You'd be very busy.*

R: So there are issues there, yeah.

Q.3 Responses to plagiarism

R: So, three or four. 'My responses to incidences of plagiarism are overturned by those higher in authority'…Yes. Yes.

I: *Is that common?*

R: No, because … no. It's only really where you've got a second offender, second, third offender, probably a third offender, where they really go quite high beyond the faculty. And that's where there have been incidences in the past which could have been dealt with more severely.

I: *Right, when you say second, third offence, would it be a second third year student?*

R: No. It wouldn't be a first.

I: *It would never be a first year?*

R: Oh, I don't know. You'd be pushing it to get a first year student who's offended …

I: *Okay. So it would be later. And number four?*

R: 'I use my discretion when responding to incidences of student plagiarism' well, yes, I do.

I: *In what way? How?*

R: Well, I use my discretion by judging whether or not it's a deliberate or whether it's a question of misunderstanding. And academic staff are encouraged to use their discretion. That's the first line of attack, if you like. If a unit coordinator believes a student has plagiarised but believes that it's not intentional or it's simply a lack of understanding or simply a very poor and of a very minor nature, then the unit coordinator can deal with that at their own level. It doesn't have to be escalated to the investigator.

I: *It doesn't come to you?*

R: It doesn't have to be. In theory, a file should be raised and a student should be advised that the file has been raised, and it should be recorded as on the student's record as not as a first offence

but simply as the unit coordinator had a conversation with the student about plagiarism. And that should happen, but I'm not sure that it always does. Well, that's the intention.

I: *Right, like a warning? You mean like a warning?*

R: Well, it's a kind of even a little bit, yeah … a kind of … yeah, a general … I suppose warning is fair enough but it's not actually recorded as a first strike, if you like. And unit coordinators

I: *Only for unintentional …*

R: Absolutely. If the unit coordinator believes that the student just didn't get it and it was minor or, you know, careless or something like that. Then the unit coordinator can use their discretion. It doesn't have to be escalated.

I: *What about when you've discovered it's, say, intentional, would you use your discretion in terms of what you would say to them?*

R: Well, I suppose, I use my discretion when determining when it's been escalated to me whether it was intentional or whether it was not intentional. But again in terms of penalties, the penalties are fairly clearly laid out. But I mean, I have to use my discretion as to whether I consider it's a minor or a major infringement, that kind of thing, which can't be laid out really, you know, how many words or how many or what proportion. So, yes, I do use my discretion.

I: *So if it comes to you as intentional would you use your discretion and say it wasn't? Do you … would you change any …*

R: It doesn't come to me denoted as intentional, it simply comes to me as a possible issue of plagiarism. There is an allegation of academic misconduct, an allegation. And I look at the evidence and I say, well, the allegation of misconduct is upheld, however, I don't believe it was intentional so my recommendations would be rewriting, resubmission. It's still … it still goes down as, you know, it is academic misconduct, failure to reference properly whether you do it intentionally or otherwise. So, the question was would I overturn somebody's … well, no, because nobody would say …

I: *They just present the evidence and you make a decision.*

R: Yeah, yeah.

I: *As academic investigator, and as a unit coordinator? You make the same decision?*

R: If a tutor comes to me and says … if a tutor comes to me and says, "Look, I think there's some plagiarism going on here," I'd certainly look at it and say, "Yeah, well, I think I should have a word with this student." But whether I would say to the student … whether I would then escalate it or not is a question of discretion. So, I reckon I exercise discretion at that level as a unit coordinator, as a lecturer.

Q.4 Students and penalties

I: *Right, at that level, right. Good, okay. Thanks. What about five and six? What do you think?*

R: Well, it's not mostly but there's a high proportion. And that's partly because of articulated students who tend to have non-English speaking or refugee backgrounds. We also get quite a lot of open university students who plagiarise and some of them are from international backgrounds. But I wouldn't say it's mostly, no.

I: *No. In your courses do you have … a high proportion of NESB students?*

R: In […]? Not as many as in […]. But we have a fair proportion. I don't know what the proportion would be across the school actually. I don't know.

I: *Right. So the students … you don't think that it's mostly them because you haven't seen mostly them? Or …*

R: Well, I do get a fair few but how … and possibly the proportion I see is higher than the proportion within the school. By I don't have the figures so I can't, you know, quantify that.

Penalties handed out to students … I don't think they're too lenient. I think we get the message across. And we give them a fairly stern warning that it better not happen again, I mean, I really do get that message across whether it's inadvertent or whether it's deliberate, you know. I say it shouldn't happen again. They are all required to undertake the … or required, they are told that they have to undertake what's called the academic integrity learning module. Those who are serious and who have done unintentionally will do this module. Those who don't care, won't bother.

We've got no way of enforcing that that's done. But if they come up again … I mean, we can't withhold their grades, what can we do? We've got no power to enforce, to ensure that's done. But if they are picked up for plagiarism again and whether they've done it or not, you know, it doesn't look good. But I suppose it looks worse and it shows that you really are not serious about learning referencing if you fail to take it. But if you took it and you still plagiarised, well then, you know, that's not good either.

I: *That's not good either but it might make a difference in terms of what …*

R: No, a second offence is a second offence, really.

Q.5 Other comments

I: *Right. It doesn't make any difference really. Okay. Was anything else that you wanted to say about academic integrity policies and procedures or student plagiarism?*

R: I think it's a really big problem, and I think the cultural question raised earlier is that it's important that we should perhaps be more aware of the fact that students, international students, do come with a different understanding about the use of … of how one uses evidence and about holding scholars in regard and therefore not changing their words. But even so, that's not an excuse for academic misconduct in the sense of not referencing or not being able to construct an essay. So, I think it's difficult.

I: *So the issue is cultural and it's deeper.*

R: It can be. It can be. But then there are people who just cheat. There are people who just cheat sometimes.

I: *That's right. Okay.*

R: That's probably all I want to say directly on those points.

I: *I'm just interested because you have three roles, so that must be very … in terms of time and resources, time consuming for you. Yeah?*

R: Well, it is, but I do get some teaching credit for dealing with plagiarism. I've had it for a couple of years now. And it doesn't look like anybody else is going to put their hand up for it at the moment! So … possibly maintain it for a while. It's only a very small part.I get probably 10 percent of a teaching load or something. Very minor, it's just an added extra.

I: *Okay. But it's a minor role but it takes up a lot of time? That particular role?*

R: Yeah, a fair bit of time. I don't spend a lot of time dealing with plagiarism as a unit coordinator within my own unit. You know, there might be a case or two … a case a semester probably. Not much, not much. But in cases across the school I'd have probably twenty-five, thirty a semester, something like that from other programs.

The other thing that's frustrating is that the plagiarism cases come up almost always from, you know, a small handful of staff. And I don't believe that students only plagiarise in their units. So a lot of students are plagiarising and not being picked up. Or the cases aren't being escalated.

I: *So your staff are different … deal with it differently?*

R: Yes, yes. And I know some staff think that if you plagiarise you fail, end of story. And that's just what they do and they're not supposed to do that. But they do that. I mean, the failure might be the outcome anyway, but it should go through the whole process, and this is a thing that is frustrating: if a student coordinator fails a student for plagiarism and doesn't put the student through the process, they've failed. But there's no record, there's no mark against that student's record. So if that student comes up again in a formal way through me, I don't know that that student previously has plagiarised. So they're treated as a first offender. Because it's …

I: *So there's no central depository for this?*

R: There is a central depository for those who go through the system, for those who escalate, but if a unit coordinator chooses to deal with a plagiariser and fails them or whatever, there's no record of that. But there's … which is why all incidences of plagiarism, apart from the very minor, are supposed to be escalated to me. So that is frustrating because you don't know…And that means that students can get away with it because if you're dealing with three or four coordinators, all of whom deal with it at that level, then that student might be plagiarising all the time, and getting caught all the time, but there's no larger record.

I: *So you say you see twenty-five, but it actually might be more than that?*

R: Oh, I'm sure it's more than that. Yeah, I'm sure it's more than that.

I: Okay, thank you very much.

R: You're welcome.

END OF TRANSCRIPT.

INTERVIEWEE 4

Q.1 Incident of plagiarism

I: *Thank you for agreeing to be interviewed. My first question to you is, could you tell me about an incident of student plagiarism that you've experienced, that you've found memorable or frustrating?*

R: Oh, they're all frustrating. And I guess they're all memorable from the point of view that it's quite a traumatic experience for both the students and the lecturer who has to deal with it. Probably the one that I have found most frustrating was one where a student copied another student's assignment, told the other student that they had handed in their work already. The student was a personal friend from before university days, and a family friend. Told the other student that they had already handed in their work but could he have a look at her assignment to just to see if he'd been on the right track. But he hadn't handed his in, it was late. And he copied the majority of her assignment and handed it in. Both assignments came to me, and I don't know how he thought that I wouldn't have picked up – 'I think I've read this somewhere before.'

I: *Right. Was that a first year student?*

R: No, a third year student.

I: *So you're dealing with third year students?*

R: Third year students.

I: *And were you the lecturer or the unit coordinator?*

R: I was the lecturer, the unit coordinator and the tutor for that particular group. All three. So, yeah. ^The issue was dealt with through all the official channels, ^but the frustrating part of it was that we discovered that this student had actually been expelled from Curtin for doing exactly the same thing. However, when he'd applied to come to ECU he had missed off part of his academic transcript, which showed that this was the case. We knew it was the case but there was nothing we could do about it because Curtin, for confidentiality, was not allowed to give us his transcript; it had to come from him. And he refused to give us that part of his transcript that showed that he had been asked to leave Curtin.

I: *That he was expelled. Okay.*

R: Involved in the same course, but for these reasons.

I: *Was it the same reasons?*

R: Yes. Oh. For plagiarism. So that was very frustrating.

I: *And you didn't know that before he entered the unit?*

R: No, we had no idea. No idea. This all came to light afterwards. Well, during the process of dealing with this particular event of plagiarism.

I: *And what was the outcome for everyone?*

R: He had to repeat the unit.

I: *Okay. And was that outcome decided after you knew about … did you take into consideration his previous history, even if it's in another university?*

R: We couldn't take it into consideration because we couldn't get the official documentation to show that that had happened. And as I said, he refused to hand it over. And Admissions had slipped up because they hadn't noticed that he hadn't given them his full transcript. That there were pages missing from it.

I: *So that's frustrating for you?*

R: Very. Very. He hadn't learnt his lesson. But he was still doing it.

I: *And he was a third year.*

R: He was a third year, he was going to be teacher, and you know is that the sort of person that you want working with you as staff?

I: *Right. And what about the other student from whom he copied?*

R: That was very personally hurtful for that student, because this person … they were family friends. The families were friends. And …that he had done that to her was very hurtful. But it may have been … I'm not absolutely certain from my memory … but it may have been that person who had alerted us to what had happened previously. When this blew up.

I: *Because you had to bring them both up?*

R: Yes.

I: *Bring them both up for interview to establish …*

R: To establish the order of events, whose work was copied? But it was fairly obvious whose work was copied because hers had been handed in first and his was late. His assignment was late.

I: *And the penalty … he was asked to repeat the unit?*

R: Yes. And it's on his academic transcript.

I: *Alright. And outcome …we don't know yet? Is he repeating …*

R: Oh, he did repeat the unit, yes.

I: *And passed, and he's out there?*

R: Yep.

I: *Okay, and what about the other student? Did anything happen to her? Was she given some …*

R: There was no penalty for her. No penalty for her. She hadn't done anything wrong. She had … he had told her that his assignment was in and that was the story that she gave us and he confirmed that that was the case, that he had said to her that, yes, he had handed in his assignment and that he had deceived her.

I: *So that was the most frustrating that you have experienced?*

R: Probably. Yes, that was probably the most frustrating one.

Q. 2 Policies and procedures

I: *Okay, thank you. I've got … if I can give you this now. I have got pairs of statements that came from the survey instrument. So if you don't mind, if you can go through each pair, and just tell me whether you agree or disagree or make comments about these particular statements that deal with plagiarism and academic policies.*

R: So the first one. The first pair.

I: *Mmm. What do you think about them? Do you agree, disagree, and why?*

R: …I think … do you want to sort of agree … do you want a number?

I: *Oh, you could say, I agree with one, yep … or agree or disagree with one. Or, not sure?*

R: …Well, I suspect that the policies are reasonably fair. ^Implementation of the policies and procedures… I do think we are quite lenient compared to what I'm seeing from other institutions.

I: *From your personal experience?*

R: Well, using that one as an example. This student was asked to leave the course as a result of plagiarism and doing something apparently very, very similar. He was told he wasn't welcome on the course anymore, whereas our response was a lot milder than that.

I: *Okay, and when you say 'our response', was that your response or …*

R: No, because plagiarism has … it was dealt with … it went to head of school.

I: *So as unit coordinator, what would your response have been for this particular … what would you have done knowing …?*

R: I think knowing that there is a history, that was the frustrating part of it and I think really, a second chance wasn't warranted.

I: *Okay, and they knew at the top that there was a history?*

R: Yes. They knew that there was a history but we couldn't get the actual documents from Curtin. Which again was problematic. You know, confidentiality, yes, there has to be some. But when a student has moved from one institution to another and they're continuing that course from one to another, we should be able to get the documents of that student from that course.

I: *Right. That's right.*

R: Into ours. There shouldn't be an issue as far as confidentiality is concerned. They're transferring … you know, they were being given … they weren't starting from … number one again, from first year again. They were given credit for what they had done in the course at Curtin. So therefore they should have … there shouldn't have been an issue with that. I think that was taking confidentiality issues just a bit too far.

I: *Okay. So, in that case it would have … it should have been … you would have sent him off, you would have sent him on his way?*

R: I think so. Yes, …even if he was suspended from the course. But certainly more than was given under these circumstances.

I: *Right. Okay.*

Q.3 Responses to plagiarism

R: Second pair.

I: *Three and four.*

R: …Well, we know that when we identified plagiarism, it's not for us to decide what the penalty is. The policy is not … we're not allowed to deem what the penalty is going to be. That has to be decided by somebody else. So there's not a problem there, I don't make a decision or a response. I just try to find out … just assess the level of the plagiarism. And I identify it, speak to the student, talk, you know, find out the level of intent and whether … how much they were aware of what they had done and why that's not an appropriate thing to do.

I: *So you as unit coordinator, for that particular student, could you have made … could you have suggested to them that this should be the penalty or do you have any …*

R: No.

I: *You're not allowed even to do that?*

R: No. No, just identify it and pass the paperwork on to whoever is going to deal with it. The head of school or the person they nominate to deal with it.

I: *Okay. Alright. So it doesn't apply …that point three doesn't apply?*

R: It really doesn't. And likewise point four, we don't actually have that discretion. There is a policy to follow, a university policy to follow, so we follow the policy.

I: *Alright. And you follow the policy, okay. What about when you identify … do you have any discretion when you're trying to identify the plagiarism?*

R: Really you have to find it out for yourself. You have to be able to … whether it's … ^you know, you find the original documents that the material's been taken from and then you've got …

I: *You investigate.*

R: Yep, yep. So whenever you … and usually some things alert you to it, you know, the student's writing is not very strong and then suddenly you've got this beautiful passage that's well written! Really high quality English and suddenly the alarm bells go off and you think, ah, they didn't write that themselves.

I: *That's right. Check it out.*

R: And Google it and up it comes. And there, it's there.

I: *So when you … so you basically have the document, the evidence. And then you have the policy in front of you, the level one, two, three?*

R: Yeah.

I: *And you … so there's no discretion there, just go that matches that?*

R: Pretty much. Yeah.

I: *Pretty much. Okay, alright. Does that worry you or do you think that's okay? Just matching?*

R: I think it helps it to be dealt with equitably across the university if we have the same standards of how it should be dealt with. ^And I think … I think that since this policy has been implemented... just on an anecdotal feeling about what's going on is that it's actually improved things. Because we were getting quite a lot of incidences and students were saying, "I didn't know. Nobody told me before." So it had either been ignored or it had been mentioned but there was no follow up actions. So somebody had used their discretion about it and students were getting further and further into the course thinking they could get away with it, get away with it, get away with it. I think that the policies need to be there and they do need to be followed. And the students very quickly learn. The word gets around.

I: *Right, that it's serious.*

R: Yep, yep. One of the things that does concern me is our reliance … I don't know about other schools, but our heavy reliance on sessional staff members, who may not necessarily have the time, the inclination, the experience to pick up possible plagiarism. We try to organise assignments so that there's little change of plagiarism, but they still find ways. In some cases we use Turnitin, ^but even that's not a … it's not an absolute measure of whether plagiarism… especially when you've got lots of people handing in the same assignments and using the same quotes and all these sorts of things. It's not a … it's not perfect by any means.

I: *Does your school rely a lot on sessional staff?*

R: Absolutely, absolutely. We have huge numbers of sessional staff and classes that have to be taken by sessional. We've only got a small number of …tenured staff and you know, we run the units but most of the teaching is done by sessional staff.

I: *So … but you would coordinate the sessional staff?*

R: Yes. So in a while you can moderate and do all these sorts of things with them as far as assessments and, you know, getting continuity across assessment is concerned. Marking is always something that takes a lot of time, it requires a lot of feedback, and then to pick up plagiarism as well and think, 'oh, I'm going to have to go through all of this'. They're not being paid to do all of that. They're not being paid to have to come into the meetings that would have to follow up from that with the student to discuss it…Or to spend time on, you know, chasing it up and seeing where this might have … where the plagiarised piece of work has come from. They're not paid to do that.

I: *So you're thinking maybe there are incidences that are not brought to your attention as unit coordinator?*

R: Yes, I am pretty confident that that would be the case. Yes.

I: *Okay. Can anything be done about that, or …? To make everything more consistent because it looks like there is a problem with inconsistency, because you will pick it up but they won't pick it up.*

R: I think a lot more of the sessional staff actually need to be on staff. Basically. They deserve to be. ^And I guess that's where things like Turnitin can be helpful as well. ^From my point of view, trying to create assignments that limit the opportunities for plagiarism, but even with that … as I said, there's still opportunities like that situation that I mentioned …. That they couldn't have looked at somebody's assignment from last year because that was different. There

was little that they could have plagiarised from Internet sources and so on, because it was related to a particular student. But in that case it was because they had plagiarised from another student.

I: *Another student. And you picked that up? Were you the lecturer or tutor for that?*

R: Yeah. I was everything: lecturer, tutor. It wasn't a sessional.

I: *That was actually your own personal case.*

R: No, in all the cases that I've found of plagiarism in the units that I teach, I'm the only person who's picked up plagiarism. None of my sessional staff have ever come to me and said, "Look. I think there's a problem here."

I: *Is that right? How many staff would you have, roughly? Sessional, I mean?*

R: Sessional, in my first year unit, probably five. In one unit, two and in another unit, you know, it's similar across each semester. So I've probably got … in first semester about eight tutorials being run by sessionals. At least eight tutorials being run by sessionals and probably a similar number in second semester.

I: *And compared to full-time staff?*

R: Well, I'm it.

I: *You're it! Okay.You're it, so you really are one hundred percent reliance on sessionals.*

R: We are relying on sessionals. In some cases there are times where you've got another staff member, but that's very rare to get that these days because they've all got their own units to coordinate, the sessional staff to coordinate, we're just too thin on the ground. That's the bottom line of the whole thing. ^So yes, that's … that's probably three and four covered.

I: *Okay.*

Q.4 Students and penalties

R: Five and six.

I: *You sort of covered six, didn't you, with your …*

R: Yes, the penalties.

I: *With your incident. Yes.*

R: We can come back to that one. I'm thinking about whether it's international students or not who plagiarise.

I: *Would you get a lot of international students?*

R: Yes, we do. In the grad dip course. In the grad dip course particularly. Percentage wise it's probably more likely to be an international student than a local one, when you look at the balance, you know, how many of each. There's certainly been both. But I think percentage wise, if you broke it down by what percentage of the students are international, what percentage are local…and the incidence of plagiarism, it probably does. Not mostly but … percentage wise, a bit more on that side.

‘The penalties handed out to students who plagiarise are too lenient’. I think we again have to be careful with this one because what I’ve found in other cases is that instead of it being more work for the students, it’s ended up being more work for me. And I feel like I’m the one who is being punished, because we’ve had cases where students have just been told to resubmit. So you have to mark another assignment or you have to create another assignment for them, just for that student, then follow up on it that it’s been done and handed in and then mark it and check all of that as well.

I: *So it’s time consuming for you as coordinator.*

R: I think the penalties shouldn’t penalise the staff. They shouldn’t create more workload when we are stretched so thinly already. The student has to be responsible for what they’ve done and they have to … ^whatever the penalty is … if they have to do the work, they have to do the work, it shouldn’t be …the lecturer or the tutor.

I: *So no resubmissions perhaps. A zero, or some other form of penalty.*

R: Yeah. Some other form of penalty, yes. That it doesn’t leave…

I: *What could that be but, apart from the zero? Especially if it’s, say, minor, it’s the first time offence. You can’t expel them. So it’s either zero or resubmit, isn’t it? Or fail the unit.*

R: I’m sure if we thought creatively we could find something that the student … if it wasn’t a zero or a fail the unit, something else that they could do that didn’t create workload.

I: *Like a unit or something on plagiarism?*

R: That’s right. Yep, they might have to do some remedial … remedial referencing unit. A remedial academic conduct unit.

I: *Right, academic conduct. Can I go back to the sessional staff issue, because that is an issue for you, it’s a problem. Do you think having permanent full timers on board would actually help with plagiarism and academic integrity?*

R: I think it would. I think it would.

I: *How? In what way?*

R: Well, first of all … from the student’s point of view, if they’d got away with it once, they’re more inclined to do it again. So the fact that it’s slipping through the net sometimes encourages them to have another go, to do it again. So the more chance of it being picked up, especially early on in the course, then the less likely they are to do it. And I think it becomes a habit for some of them, to be honest. They lose confidence in how to write things for themselves. They just think, ‘oh, somebody else can put it so much better. I’ll just put their work, their words down’.

I: *And is it because of full-time staff have … do they go through a training program or is it because you’re all together? So, what would make the difference having full timers rather than …?*

R: I think with the full-time staff, there is the ownership of the academic integrity of the course. Sessionals are just coming in, they’re not part of any of the decision-making that goes on. They don’t feel that same ownership of the course, whereas we feel that if our students go out there and they’re not equipped for what this course is supposed to prepare them to do, then it reflects poorly on us. And it reflects poorly on the course and the delivery of the course. If they don’t

know their stuff then… the course loses credibility. We lose students as a result of that because if the course loses credibility, these students don't get employed. The word gets around and you know, the best way to make sure that the students have a good chance of getting a job at the end of the course is to have these high standards, high standards of integrity, academic integrity in the course. ^And if it's perceived out there that we have lax standards, then our graduates are going to have more trouble getting jobs. And consequently, we are going to attract fewer students to the course, we're going to get the students who can't get in anywhere else rather than the students coming in here because this is a course that's got a good name. So I think …

I: *Having the full timers will help?*

R: Yes. That's part of that whole ethos that the full timers have, which some of the sessionals share, but some of them are just, you know, they're in there, they come in, ten minutes before the class is due to start, if you're lucky. Do the class, walk out, they just leave all the stuff lying there, straight out and off they go, and they go and do a class at another university. You know, so they don't have that loyalty to the program that … that tenured staff would have.

Q.5 Other comments

I: *Okay. Was there anything else, any other comments that you want to make about this university's academic policies and procedures, or student plagiarism in general?*

R: I think I've pretty much said it. I think I've pretty much said everything. And I think these comments at the end really … I mean these are the things that are going to make the difference. They'll make the difference for our students. Although it's sometimes easier to maybe take the easier road and, well, if this student appeals or if this student takes us to the ombudsman, then we've got to seen to be dealing with them fairly. When that student hasn't dealt with the university fairly, where they haven't fulfilled their part of the deal of, you know, they've signed a cover sheet on their work that says that this is their own work, and it's not their own work. And, I think that sometimes we need to be a bit stronger and we seem to be terribly anxious about litigation here. And it doesn't seem to be an issue at the other universities. And I don't know why. Have they got a better legal team that have got the right answers? Do they just nip it in the bud before it ever gets to that stage? Are we just getting the students who have been rejected everywhere else and so they're now desperate? And that's their last resort? I don't know. I don't know what it is. But I do think that if we want our graduates to have good employment opportunities … and you know, I teach in the grad dip course and the primary education … and a lot of our students are graduates who've not been able to get jobs. So they come and do the teaching grad dip, because they just haven't been able to get jobs in their fields. And whether that's an ECU issue or whether that's an employment wide issue, I suspect sometimes the degree from ECU sometimes is not seen as being as good as a degree from somewhere else. And you know, to be fair to our students, because the majority of them do work pretty hard to get through, we need to be making sure that the academic integrity is there.

I: *Is upheld.*

R: Is upheld. Yep. And if people are out there thinking, oh well, that person might have got through without really knowing the stuff…Can you switch it off? I'll tell you about a little separate one.

I: *Yeah. Thank you very much.*

(Tape turned off at request of interviewee). **END OF TRANSCRIPT**

INTERVIEWEE 5

I: *Thank you for agreeing to be interviewed.*

R: That's fine.

Q.1 Incident of plagiarism

I: *My first question to you is if could you tell me about an incident of student plagiarism that you've experienced that you found frustrating or memorable.*

R: Yeah yeah (laughs) um well the first one that comes to mind is probably also the first example I ever saw. I'm you know a fairly junior academic so that's why I don't have many years of experience and this example was quite a brief assignment it was students were asked to write a one page, four single page assignments that summarized an area of evidence-based health care, a clinical situation research they looked at to inform action they would take in that situation and summarizing that research and saying what they would do if they were the doctor. This is medical students I'm talking about and I remember an example where a student have essentially copied like an entire well most of the abstract from a scientific article and served that up as if it was their own work so probably half of his one page was with the odd pronoun here and there changed straight text from the article he'd looked at…and

I: *This was a first year?*

R: A fifth year. And I guess that's something we might come to talk about as well is how expectations might change depending on the level of the course in which the student is enrolled, certainly our policy here treats students differently has different expectations of what students know about academic conduct depending on their level of enrollment, their experience.

I: *So it was a fifth year. Was it like a local student or an international student?*

R: I can't remember but I believe um he could've been international, I certainly got the sense that English may not have been his first language and I guess that's part of the reason why I twigged. I've noticed on some occasions when I've noticed plagiarism that I've noticed a shift in writing. Perhaps a student has a rather idiosyncratic use of language that reflects the fact that English may not be their first language and then there's a shift to actually rather better sort of writing and that sort of gives me the hint that something isn't right here and I might google a portion of the text and find where it's been taken from ^and so it's lead me to wonder whether… cos I've heard it said that you know international students or students from a non Australian backgrounds are more likely to be implicated in cases of plagiarism and I wonder whether it is that those students plagiarise more or whether it's just it's easier for me to detect it (laughs) because I notice that shift in writing style because the passages they compose themselves aren't as ^idiomatically rich.

I: *And how did you spot it? What was your role? Were you tutor, lecturer or unit coordinator when you picked this up?*

R: I was not the unit coordinator. I was sort of the unit coordinator's offside. I suppose I was lecturer but I was essentially in a tutor kind of role and so it was really my job to report that to the unit coordinator and um one reason why this is memorable and/or frustrating is that I guess I didn't get the sense that we quite followed policy on that occasion because I think if a fifth year student does something as obviously plagiarism as that… I'm not actually exactly sure

what the unit coordinator did but I don't think it was reported to the Head of School and you know made a record of on the student's transcript all these things that are supposed to..

I: *So you don't know exactly what happened to this particular student?*

R: Not entirely but my distinct impression was that a softer process was followed than is perhaps suggested by policy. But on the other hand it was a funny situation.

I: *Was it the first time?*

R: Don't know if it was his first time.

I: *So you spotted it and you reported it.*

R: Yeah yeah um I'm not aware of there being any prior concerns about that student in terms of plagiarism or there being academic misconduct more generally but that doesn't mean that it hadn't happened.

I: *You don't know what happened to this student? You know if he finished his degree or?*

R: I certainly don't think there was any significant thing that came out of it. As I said it was a one page assignment and the odd thing about it was although they were asked to do these four pages, we sort of noted that all four were done but summative marks were only derived from the best of the four, I think, and so the one that he'd plagiarised it wasn't the best but the one that he plagiarised even if we said "oh he gets nothing for that" he wasn't going to get anything for it anyway cos he still got the marks from the best of those four. So apart from that one of four was out of contention for the best to be marked to contribute to his marks it really didn't have the potential to affect his mark I suppose and maybe that's …

I: *It wasn't a big assessment?*

R: It wasn't a major assessment but I still think it was wrong that he plagiarized but it wasn't a major piece of assessment, it was a minor piece of assessment.

I: *This was your first case, first time. How long had you been tutoring before then?*

R: Um I had done one year of teaching here in 2004 but that didn't involve much written assessment and the next year when I worked here um was 2009 which was when this happened.

Q.2 Policies and procedures

I: *Okay. Thank you for sharing that. Now I'll give you this sheet. So question 2, part B what I've got is pairs of statements that I've obtained from my survey instrument. So these have been said by people and what I'd like you to do if you don't mind is comment on each pair and say the extent to which you agree or disagree with each pair. So take your time. So there's 1 and 2 together, 3 and 4 together, 5 and 6 together. So statements for you to comment on.*

R: OK. …so policies and procedures for responding to student plagiarism are fair. I think um I think would generally agree with that but with the caveat that my experience of having to go to these policies and follow what they say is limited so if I had been teaching for more years and had more experience of plagiarism perhaps I would've had more opportunities to stumble across scenarios when it felt unfair but from my point of view it seems alright. Yeah.

I: *And did you, just going back to your case, when you discovered it was plagiarism would that have been the first time that you looked at the policies and procedures?*

R: Mm I think so actually. Yeah I think so. When I did my first year working here in 2004 I don't think plagiarism had quite as high a profile. I imagined that policies existed but I'd not stumbled across a case where I found myself having to look them up and I wasn't… I did an introduction to university teaching and learning course early learnt a lot about teaching and assessment theory but I don't remember plagiarism coming up but in that but it may well have I don't recall but I'm going off topic now one thing that's changed at our uni ^is that students I think across the whole university, certainly in our faculty but I think it's university wide students have to sit an online ^academic conduct essentials unit I think it's called and that's delivered electronically on Web CT that's our electronic teaching tool and students all have to complete that and it's listed on their academic transcript. If they don't do it, it doesn't' stop them proceeding but its listed as a fail an no one wants that on their transcript so they all do it in first year. They don't have to repeat if they're enrolling in their second degree at U and they've already done it before, they don't have to repeat it. But this student who I gave the anecdote about when he started in first year, that academic conduct essentials unit did not exist so if I mean I didn't talk to the student one on one about if but if he said "I didn't know it was plagiarism it wouldn't have been an excuse for that sort of plagiarism but we wouldn't have been able to say "well you should've known this because you sat this unit and if the student in my current course now that I'm doing said to me "I didn't know about that" well I could quite confidently say "yes you should've because you sat that unit that made that clear just a few months ago" and that would help me.

Um implementation I'm just quoting here 'implementation of policies and procedures is a joke', your second point. I don't think I'd agree with that at all I think it's my anecdote I've shared with you is an example of where I felt the implementation was imperfect but that's probably why it stands out to me as a difficult case and worth talking about. There's probably other examples where it was more straightforward and um the process seemed to be OK.

I: *And you've had a few more after that or not really?*

R: Ones that I've heard people talk about, ones that I haven't been directly involved in but you know, people sort of called me into the room and said "have a look at this what should we do about this?" There was a case, a very clear cut case where the student had just handed in for a major assignment in a minor unit handed in in an entire assignment from another student from the year before and the person marking it just thought 'I've seen this before somewhere' and that's absolute over plagiarism and understand that that student was going to fail that unit and was going to have to meet with the associate dean of student affairs and that they would be bringing out the big guns in that case.

I: *So people talk to you. Is that as a lecturer or as a unit coordinator.*

R: Just in a collegiate sort of way. I think I was the person walking down the corridor at that time. I think that they just I guess when often I like to think that most of us trust our students so when we see an example of plagiarism that's so overt I think there's an emotional response to that when you see that happen you feel disappointed and you kind of want to talk to someone about that. Well that's how it seemed to me when in this case this staff member said that. She had made up her mind what to do but I think she felt better sharing it to me because I also thought that was clearly inappropriate student behaviour and that her response seemed entirely appropriate.

I: *Does that happen often when you consult each other to check your response or would just that be occasionally?*

R: Well it happened one other time. ^A person who was last year doing the role that I was doing the year before when I had that episode I began with, and she noticed what she thought was some plagiarism in a student assignment and asked me what I would do. This, though, was a difficult judgment call and was much more subtle and…it was a situation where maybe the student was paraphrasing a little too closely but I didn't feel like it was a cut and paste job and I wasn't even sure if it really necessarily fell into within the boundaries of the policy on plagiarism maybe very strictly speaking it might have but I certainly felt like the student probably thought they were doing the right thing and I'm not sure ultimately how that was dealt with; if it was me I think I would have dealt with it on a one-on-one educative conversation with the student rather than going through disciplinary channels. I think that's probably where ^ interpretation of policy might get the most difficult when you have to make that call about how severe is this? is it really plagiarism? ^That's my own experience of that but I wouldn't be surprised if other people say to you that that's a dilemma for them those at the softer end of the scale what's plagiarism what's just not really good written expression.

I: *Right.*

Q.3 Responses to plagiarism

R: Three 'my responses to student plagiarism are overturned by those higher in authority'. OK so I began with an example of that. I don't need to say much more about that.

I: *But you would've dealt with that differently if you could have?*

R: Yeah. I would've taken that particular one more seriously, I would have just followed the policy.

Four 'I use my discretion when responding to incidences of student plagiarism'. Well, you know, only to the extent that I've just implied when it's at the very mild end of the spectrum where you know I think there's reason for doubt as to whether there's plagiarism at all, I suppose would use my discretion there but when it's clear cut and paste sort of stuff or just handing in an assignment that is someone else's work, no I just follow policy. In a sense that's easier. It's more shocking to see that the student has done this but it's easier to know what to do about it, they're clearly breaking the rules so this is what we do.

I: *It goes up, out of your hands.*

R: Yeah.

I: *Those ones that you're not sure of, they stay in your hands?*

R: Well it hasn't actually happened to me. The time I was thinking of was again when I was asked my opinion by one of my teaching peers and I don't know what she actually decided to do but I think she… before she spoke to me might have been more inclined to report it and after speaking to me felt as uncertain as I did. I think she was going to speak to the unit coordinator about it. Sorry, I don't know what the outcome was.

I: *That's alright. It's interesting in that within your department that you talk with each other about it which is good.*

R: Yeah. No I'm pleased that we work well as a sort of family here. I like my department. I imagine there are departments where there's lots of internal politics but we play nicely together, help each other out.

I: *Are there many of you within the department?*

R: ^I think we're a pretty small department and we're mostly part-time partly because ^many of us have clinical jobs but we teach across 5 or 6 years of the course but there's probably about 6 of us and many of us work .3 or .4 sort of positions. We'd probably talk to each other more if we were here on the same days, that's the thing. It can feel like a morgue in here some people say…especially today, no students today.

Q.4 Students and penalties

R: OK. Number 5 we've probably covered this international students that plagiarise. That's my experience but as I've said before, I don't know how much of that is that it is these students that actually plagiarise more and how much of it is that it's easier to detect shifts in writing style.

I: *Would you get many NESB students here? What's the proportion? Is it 50:50 or are there more local students?*

R: Hard to put a..I mean most students are domestic students but quite a few are from diverse backgrounds. Hard to put a figure on it. Certainly I think all of the incidences of plagiarism we talked about…the 3 of them were all from Chinese speaking backgrounds. Now I've heard anecdotal that education in that sort of cultural background may be less oriented towards critical independent thought, more oriented towards ^repeating what you've been told, more about regurgitating knowledge rather than synthesizing or applying knowledge, thinking independently I dunno if that's true or whether it's some sort of cliché. I don't want to theorise about it but that's what I've heard people say. I dunno if that's valid. But if that was valid then that may be some sort of explanation why they appear to (inaudible) more, students from those sorts of backgrounds.

'penalties handed out to students who plagiarise are too lenient'. Well I think that when policies are not implemented properly, that can lead to lenient or absent penalties. I think that penalties prescribed in policies don't seem too lenient to me, they seem appropriate. I wonder if somehow, I don't know, I would be if someone's done something and they know it's wrong and they did it anyway, then I think a harsh penalty is appropriate, especially if it's a major plagiarism in a major piece of work. If someone's in their fifth or sixth year of their course here if it's that softer end of plagiarism student didn't realise well that's too close a paraphrase there or you know, is that really an independent idea or do you think you may have got this idea from this author, you know, when I think the student has meant well and not been quite aware of the academic standards, then I wonder, I'm just not sure if policy takes into account the intent of the behaviour. Maybe it..

I: *That would make a difference?*

R: Yeah. I guess in medicine it's assessment probably revolves more around written and oral and performance exams not written work. There is some written work but a second year arts students might have done more written assignments cumulatively in their degree than a fourth year medical student and so…student knowledge about plagiarism and acceptable writing standards probably derive from experience and so perhaps I wouldn't be as inclined to be as

harsh in judging a fifth year medical student as the policy suggests just because they haven't been exposed to written assessments as you would think.

I: *So maybe that fifth year you talked about, he was dealt with appropriately considering that they don't write as much as…*

R: I think that case really he'd cut and pasted that, he should've been dealt better, but that other example where I said, you know, was it plagiarism or not? I think that was borderline judgment call. I don't think there would've been a whole segment that was cut and pasted, there were fragments of statements recycled but all the sentences were fashioned into her own text and she had referenced the things she was talking about. Someone looking at that strictly might think that that was too close paraphrasing but I think I would've tolerated that if the decision was up to me. But they'd had a word with the student about it and in part that's because I doubt that that student would've been intentionally doing anything wrong and probably wouldn't have been aware. Letting her know that that was sailing a bit close to the wind and seeing that behaviour change would probably be enough. But I imagine, I dunno, someone else could've called it plagiarism. If you'd done that because she was a fifth year the penalties might have been more substantial than might have been appropriate for the nature and intent of the events. I'm not sure. I'm being a bit vague.

Q.5 Other comments

I: *That's OK. Thank you. That's answered. Are there any other comments you'd like to make about your institution's academic integrity policy and procedures?*

R: ^ I found them clear when I read them. But I mean like any policy it can look really good on paper but in its implementation he didn't think of that when he wrote the policy. I'm sure this happens everywhere in politics and every other facet of human life. You can find a policy that's very clear and then along comes the real life situation that seems to have slipped through the cracks somewhere and caused confusion. But no, I'm very glad that the policy is there and I know where to find it and there's good resources…

I: *For lecturers?*

R: And for students. Apart from that academic conduct essentials unit there's also a plagiarism portal to do with student services which you can look up on the internet.

I: *Is that for students or lecturers?*

R: Both. It's mainly aimed for students but I think it might link to policy there and if I had to look up the policy, that's where I'd find it. And it's useful to see what students are told as well and also if we did have the student pushing the boundaries you could say 'well here's the policy but also here's some educational stuff about plagiarism, it's readable, it's got lots of examples of what to do, have a look at that, pretty accessible, I hope that will help'.

I: *OK thank you very much.*

R: That's alright.

END OF TRANSCRIPT

INTERVIEWEE 6

I: *Thank you for agreeing to be interviewed.*

R: No problem.

I: *My first question to you is, could you tell me about an incident of student plagiarism that you experienced that was memorable or frustrating?*

Q.1 Incident of plagiarism

R: Yes. In May last year it was drawn to my attention that an international student in our post-graduate course (Master of …) had submitted an assignment for one of the units which was in fact an assignment based on the previous year's instructions. It contained data sets that were no longer available, and it contained tools, operating tools that were no longer available.

This was brought to my attention and I went through the process of taking it to the Head of School, I volunteered to be the investigator which at that time was the procedure since it was one of the students in the course that I coordinated, and I followed through and found that it was in fact an exact copy of one submitted by another student about two years previously.

Now the frustration arose from the fact that I did the collection of data, passed it to the Head of School who then passed it on to the next stage. We finally got a solution to this, I believe it was last month, so it was significantly more than a year from the time it was put in. We didn't really know what to do about the student who was kind of just stranded. Turns out she had actually enrolled for a course in another faculty so we needn't have worried, but it actually caused both myself and the lady who coordinates the unit to which the thing applied that months and months and months went by and we heard nothing about it.

That's probably the greatest frustration I felt in the […] of plagiarism and it's kind of the wrong way round because it doesn't really reflect how I feel about the students being plagiarised but rather about the system which we have to pass it on and it then basically goes into a black hole, and we don't know what's going on, we get no feedback.

I: *You get no feedback as unit coordinator?*

R: I was the course coordinator. The unit coordinator also got no feedback.

I: *And you've only heard just now about the result?*

R: Within the last month or so we got an e-mail, I think, to say what the final outcome was…

I: *That student you said was a post-graduate, was that ...*

R: Post-graduate course, yes.

I: *But was that her first year or final year or was she stuck in limbo as well?*

R: She was stuck in limbo. We didn't hear from her and we had no information to give her.

I: *So she wasn't carrying on with the course?*

R: She didn't carry on with that, she stopped doing that course and has enrolled in a different course in a different faculty. That's my understanding.

I: *Okay. And they didn't, throughout those 18 months, e-mail you or you didn't ... were you curious?*

R: No. Well, yes, and I wrote and asked a few times, I forget whether it was twice or three times, asking was there any progress and one of the staff in the teaching and learning said they would look into it but I didn't hear any more back after that. That was the first time.

The second time I enquired, I got no response, and my impression was that there was such an enormous stockpile of plagiarism cases. That is just an impression, don't know that to be true. It created the impression that there was just so much going through that it was difficult for them to deal with, sort of […].

Q.2 Policies and procedures

I: *Okay, thank you for sharing that. I'll now give you the questions which you've probably addressed anyway. On Part B, what I've got, I've got pairs of statements that I have either obtained from my survey instrument, so if you could just look at each pair and give your comments as to whether you agree or disagree with each pair and why. You've sort of addressed one and two, in a way.*

R: Well, yes. The policies and procedures I think are fair because plagiarism, and in science perhaps a little more acutely than in other disciplines, plagiarism is really a very nasty offense. I don't know enough about other disciplines to know for sure.

'Implementation of policies and procedures on student plagiarism is a joke'. I wouldn't be that extreme. I would say that the implementation of policies and procedures is ... it's obscure to us. We don't know what's going on ... So I would say it's obscure and I would say that it's frustrating.

I: *Very frustrating from your personal experience.*

R: I don't personally find it funny.

I: *Okay. When you say student plagiarism is nasty in science, what do you mean?*

R: Well, this is the only area in which I've been involved in in dealing with plagiarism.

I: *You mean there's a lot of plagiarism or ... ?*

R: No, no, I mean that the occurrence of plagiarism is ... it's a fundamental form of dishonesty and one of the essential components of science is honesty. If scientists are not honest then they're useless, and sadly a proportion of people are not fundamentally honest.

I've had students sit in that chair in tears and tell me that this is the first time they've ever done anything like this, and then the next day I get a phone call from a staff member in another school saying, "I've got this problem with this student," and it turns out to be the same one. So there are ... People are very clever, they're very inventive in getting what they need, and unfortunately dishonesty falls into that, and I don't think anyone is completely immune from dishonesty. Just a basic human trait to do what's necessary.

But within science, dishonesty can result in a massive loss of effort which by definition means a massive loss of money as well, spent investigating things that aren't right because someone was basically given wrong […] information. So I personally feel it to be a very serious problem in science.

I: *Right. And then when you say that particular student that there was another school that he plagiarised, there's no way of you knowing, there's no centralised system where you can check on the student?*

R: Well, the person coordinating the unit involved contacted me because I'm the course coordinator, and that works… In the year, this year, for example, I'm coordinating five units and teaching five and a half. But I also coordinate the course, so I have other Unit Coordinators, if they have a problem with the post-graduate course work, let me know about it.

I: *Alright, and do all the plagiarism cases come to you then as course coordinator before they go ...*

R: No, depends on the level. Some staff members like to talk to me about it but I don't believe I see everything. The procedure is relatively straightforward for really mild low level ...

I: *So it's really the level twos and threes that come to you?*

R: Yeah. I do hear about the level ones if it's from certain staff members that I talk to…

Q.3 Responses to plagiarism

I: *Okay. Thank you. What about three and four? Statements three and four.*

R: I have not had my response overturned by anyone in higher authority. I haven't had a massive number that have gone to higher authority because I've been rather careful since the rules changed and the way I assess people in my units, and I tend to use assessments that are very difficult to plagiarise…I'm not sure it is well done because it doesn't teach them not to do it but for reasons of "I just don't have the time to […] if I can avoid it happening. It's […].

I: *Okay. And did you find changing the assessment has reduced the incidences of plagiarism?*

R: I think it's reduced the reporting […] Because of the complications […].

'I use my discretion when responding to incidences of student plagiarism'. In most cases not. Discretion is ... it's not ... strictly speaking it's either a sin or it's not to plagiarise. Among our post-graduate students there are some difficulties when they first arrive in that many of them come from cultures in which citing another person's words precisely is seen as a good thing, and it takes them a little while to learn that we're serious when we say don't do this. That's the other thing that seems to be an interesting, slightly disturbing thing is that students from some countries do not necessarily expect us to be honest with them.

I: *That's interesting.*

R: Yeah. There are things that you tell them that I think students from certain cultures go away and talk to each other about and basically decide they don't believe you. Now, I tend to exercise some discretion if I see students with very minor levels of plagiarism that I believe ... What am I trying to say here? Very minor levels of plagiarism that at most would be level one and depends on whether you take a part of the sentence or one sentence out of the paragraph as being a serious offence, I suppose, but inclined, when that happens, to stop reading, talk to the student and say, "This sentence is ... I suspect it is plagiarism and you need to check this and make sure that there is no material in there that can be seen as plagiarism." So rather than know about it and have to follow, because if I know that I have to follow the rules. Watch my back.

[Laughs] If I can catch it and make them fix it before I'm even confident what there is, yes, I have been guilty of doing that.

I: *Okay. But these would be, like you said, first time, fresh, like, fresh post-grad, fresh international, first time out or they've been here a while?*

R: Mostly they're international students who are here for the first year.

I: *Fairly new students.*

R: Yes, and they do get warned about plagiarism fairly repeatedly. In some ... I think it might be Indian students, some organisations, some institutions have actually encouraged them to use the words of the knowledgeable people, and on one or two occasions I had students not understand what I meant when I said they weren't allowed to […]. It's really strange. It's much easier to deal with Australian students.

I: *Okay, they understand.*

R: Yeah. They're never taught to do that in the first place.

Q.4 Students and penalties

R: What's NESB?

I: *Non-English speaking background, so another word for ... yeah, international.*

R: I think I'd say that on balance, it probably is, and for that same reason, that students coming in freshly from other cultures and don't actually understand what it means, and although every unit outline says go and study the policy on plagiarism, I suspect a very tiny percentage of students do that. We've got a lot more to think about than […].

I: *And in your school do you have a balance of international and local students or would you have more local students than international?*

R: In under-graduate units, there's some under-graduate courses here, the majority will be Australian students. In the post-graduate course the majority are international students. A large majority.

I: *And do you think that's where the problem lies?*

R: That's where I've seen it.

I: *And the last one?*

R: 'Penalties handed out to students who plagiarise are too lenient'. Um, I don't think I'd agree with that. I think the penalties are fairly serious.

I: *Okay. So, for example, your example, your anecdote that you gave me about that student going ... it took 18 months to resolve ...*

R: Actually May to ... what month is this, this is ...

I: *September.*

R: Sixteen.

I: *Sixteen months. Then the decision was the unit, that unit was annulled for that student. Would that have been your suggestion or your penalty?*

R: I think that's appropriate. Given the rather deliberate and obvious, I mean, it was a very serious crime. I had one previous one that was just as blatant which I have a unit, used to have a unit for the post-grads in which they had to write a patent specification, and I received a patent specification from one student which was ...

Well, it was […] process, and I'm a […] and I read this and it was complex, it was intricate, I had to read it three times to fully understand what it was about. And I knew that this student did not have the background of […] to have done that, so I put in a search and sure enough it came up. It was an online document which had had the evidence of it being an online document, so it was quite deliberate. And that unit was annulled for that student. I'm not sure what that student did afterwards because I don't think I actually …I think he may have realised that this was not ...

I: *Was that a level three …*?

R: Oh yeah. Level four and a half it was around […]. I mean, that was blatant and deliberate and this is the guy who sat there with tears streaming down his face telling me he'd never done anything like this before.

Q.5 Other comments

I: *Okay. Are there any other comments you wish to make about policies and procedures that relate to student plagiarism?*

R: I'm a little ... what's the word? I'm a little frustrated by the fact that the handling of anything above level one is basically taken away from us. Not that I want the work, I'm already over the hundred percent workload so I'm happy with what I've got [laughs]. But it does sort of slow everything down and it ... I'm not sure it teaches the students anything that's useful to them. I believe that it may create, because of the delays involved, I think it may actually create resentment rather than guilt among the students, and once you start feeling resentful about someone's handling of stuff, it becomes much easier to overlook your own […] in the process. It would be much better if it could be handled very quickly so that the offence and the consequences were much more closely linked.

I: *So would you say within the semester would be a reasonable time?*

R: I would have said within a month…I just don't think you can separate an action and its consequences by more than a month, and have people really seriously connect the two. Yes, there's an undeniable connection but what I'm saying is within the psyche of the person, the longer it goes they don't hear about it, the more tension is created, the more resentful they are, ..when it's picked up in the first place, and there's a kind of an anger response rather than a damn-I-got-caught guilt response. Now, this is hypothetical and I have no great experience in dealing with things like this. I would have no basis on which to think that my view was any more sound than anyone else's. That's a personal view.

I: *Okay. Thank you very much.*

END OF TRANSCRIPT

INTERVIEWEE 7

Q.1 Incident of plagiarism

I: *Thank you for agreeing to be interviewed. My first question to you is, could you tell me about an incident of student plagiarism that you experienced that you found either memorable or frustrating?*

R: One of the most memorable ones was two years ago. I had a Russian student who submitted, who I'd never met … after six weeks, seven weeks, never been to class, submitted an assignment. I took one look at it, and went, 'that's plagiarised.' Ran it through Turnitin, 85 percent of it was cut and pasted. So I immediately prepared a level three plagiarism assessment, and pushed that through the system.Two weeks later the student came to see me. Asked what was happening with her assignment. Hadn't been contacted, I said to her, "That's because you've plagiarised your assignment."

I: *Was she … a first year or second year?*

R: No, it's a third year unit basically. She later lied by saying it was her final unit. So she'd been … she'd obviously undertaken a number of units. Suggested to me that if I'd spoken to her privately she might have been able to make arrangements so that this wasn't a problem.

I: *You didn't … she hadn't shown up at all until this time.*

R: No, until this time. I had no idea what she looked like.

I: *Week eight, week nine you met her.*

R: Yeah. Suggested to me that if I'd raised this with her before, she might have been able to make arrangements where this wasn't a problem, and then promptly burst into tears and left. So what was memorable was just … I think she then undertook some things to try and get out of it…

I: *Okay, not through you?*

R: No, but kind of like "I've got mental problems", and stuff like that. What's memorable was it was just so blatant, and then not willing to take any responsibility.

I: *Why did you decide that it was level three, straight away?*

R: It was 85 percent.

I: *Okay. You didn't want to meet with the student. You just want to send it through to the unit coordinator?*

R: Yep.

I: *Okay. And you don't know the outcome?*

R: Yeah. She got a level three.

I: *She got a level three, and she failed the unit?*

R: Yeah. So, I'm not sure whether it was annulled but she definitely failed.

I: *And how long from when you put it in till you found out? The process, would you know? Because this was 2009.*

R: Eight to ten weeks.

I: *Eight to ten weeks, so quite short.*

R: No, that's not exactly right, maybe ten weeks, yeah.

I: *Okay. Were you the unit coordinator at the time?*

R: Yep.

I: *Okay, alright. So … and were you teaching as well? Were you tutor and teacher for this particular student?*

R: I was it.

I: *Oh, you were everything. Okay. So as unit coordinator you put it forward.*

R: I got my Head of School to sign off on it and it went straight through central admin … to [X] admin.

I: *And is this typical, this particular incident, would that be typical of what you've seen?*

R: Not to the degree.

I: *Right. It was memorable because it was so blatant and copied.*

R: Blatant. Yeah. Generally, I would … so I've been teaching full-time since '98. I had an example in 2000, I think it was of someone who cut and pasted a speech by Bill Clinton, and submitted that as their assignment. But 85 percent is quite high, so I've only had two or three examples of that level.

I: *Right, would they all be like level three and straight on?*

R: I believe so.

Q.2 Policies and procedures

I: *Thanks for that. Now I'll give you the paper. So, what I've got here is I've got pairs of statements that have been taken from my survey. And what I'd like you to do, if you don't mind, is to look at each pair and say whether you agree or disagree with each pair and why. So make comments for each pair.*

R: Okay. So pair one and two, 'policies and procedures for responding to student plagiarism are fair', I would completely agree with. They've done a good job in making the process more efficient, allowing us more discretion, particularly with level one. Previously level one required higher level authorisation. For level one you want to get it into the system. And you want to go back to the student usually you give them an opportunity to either redo the assignment or some other kind of change. So, I find those …

I: *Are you talking about the new … the most recent change, 2010 or … the more recent?*

R: Yeah, well, my understanding of the 2010, yeah. But we can make a determination on level one and input that into the system and deal with the student.

I: *As unit coordinator, you say, as you deal with everyone?*

R: Yeah. Yeah, I'm not at all familiar with the idea of a lecturer not being the unit coordinator.

I: *Okay, alright. It happens.*

R: Yeah. It would be almost unheard of in this school. You know, when you're employed you are employed as the unit coordinator.

I: *And lecturer? And you have other tutors?*

R: And the lecturer and unit coordinator, that's the same person.

I: *And you have other tutors?*

R: For me, very rarely. And then 'implementation of policies and procedures on student plagiarism is a joke', I would … you know, if it was a Likeirt scale I'd be a five out of seven, a six out of seven in agreement. I don't know if it's necessarily a joke. But there's two things, one is … it's not … I don't believe that it's handled efficiently within X because there are a lot now that have been long turnaround times. Secondly …

I: *Are you talking about the eight to ten weeks, in terms of from detection to imposition of penalty?*

R: Yeah.

I've also had a … I've got another memorable case, which I'll tell you after this, which would be interesting for you I think. But certainly when I look at the penalties that people have got I'm like, that's not about … that's about getting too much into the individual circumstances of students and not enough about an actual implementation of a policy. So policies are designed to encompass all of us.

But the implementation of the policies are then about specific instances from individual students that might make a … so it becomes, it's no longer a policy it's something in the background that has … bares little relationship to what's actually occurring.

The other thing is that with the changes with the … previously we had a level three, the student had the opportunity to sit in front of the panel of people, and the panel made a decision. Now it goes to a committee.

There's a huge power and equality because there's only three of them. They're basically left to the personal discretion of the Dean of teaching and learning. I had no faith in the previous Dean of teaching and learning. I've got even less faith in the current Dean of teaching and learning of X, because she's a […]. She's an ex-colleague and I tutored for her. She couldn't teach to save her life, has absolutely no interest in academic standards. So it's the ultimate irony for me that she's now Dean of teaching and learning.

I: *And do know this from experience?*

R: Yeah…Well, I've been in her office going, "Will you be a stand for academic standards?" And she would go, "Look, don't bother me anymore." So I've been her tutor. I don't know how the

hell the students are going to get from here to here. And then I've had to teach those students in other classes where they don't know the material of that class. So, yeah.

I: *So you know that you're thinking right, the policies are fair, but once they get to the top, the implementation, then it becomes a bit … unfair?*

R: It doesn't engender my … No, it doesn't engender my respect or a belief that you're being supported in your initial action.

Q.3 Responses to plagiarism

I: *Okay. She's probably looking at three and four then, perhaps? Statement three?*

R: My responses aren't overturned.

I: Okay. So if you put up a level three would you suggest a penalty, or would you leave it?...And that penalty would be likely followed?

R: More recently, since 2010, it would be ignored.

I: *Why would that be?*

R: I don't know. I can …

I: *You said, like for example the Russian student, level three, did you suggest that she be …*

R: I would have expected that she would be annulled…But according to the policies, I mean the guidelines. And I think what she got was zero for that assignment.

I: *Okay. I understand. So she could've still passed the unit?*

R: Theoretically. She would have needed to get 50 out of 70, which was possible, but then generally those students that plagiarise are weak students anyway. So, that's usually a fatal blow to their chances. So particularly with the previous Dean of teaching and learning, who once took over that responsibility, on a number of occasions I made my unhappiness with his decisions explicit by sending him an e-mail. And one of which said this decision is a joke. But I can't remember which particular case.

Yeah, and I agree with number four. I use my discretion when responding to incidences of student plagiarism.

I: *In what way … in what way do you use your discretion?*

R: In the level in which I would …Determining it. Now when I say I'm using my discretion, I've got the discretion to go through the procedures and make an assessment based on the procedures and the policies… As unit coordinator to assign that particular level. And then end the paperwork. Complete the paperwork appropriate to that level. So if I determine that it's a level one, then I will enter it into the system and deal with the student level twos and threes, I would then send up through my Head of School. So, but in terms of that pair … yeah and pair one and two, I've been disappointed with the decisions that were made by X.

I: *Right, at a higher level?*

R: Yeah.

I: *And so in terms of your student plagiarism, what would you say is your percentage level one, level two, level three? If you break them down? Because you're unit coordinator, so you'd see all the three. What …?*

R: I'd say … 70 to 80 percent are level ones, 10 percent level twos, 10 percent level threes.

I: *Right. So it's more like the 20 percent that go up? 20 percent go up, level two and level three go up?*

R: Well, most of them are level ones. And then … yeah, it would probably be something like 70 percent are ones, 10 percent are twos, 20 percent are threes. We don't get that many level twos. So either do it a bit or go hell for leather.

I: *A bit or a lot. Okay. So you've been disappointed with, in terms of only level two and three that go up?*

R: Yeah.

I: *Because for level one you are unit coordinator, so you have the say.*

R: And generally with level one, it's a clear case and you're suggesting something that's not too onerous on the student like they redo their assignment. So the Head of School will go yeah, yeah, that's fine.

I: *Alright. And for the level one are they mainly first year? First years, or it could be any …? You don't teach first years?*

R: Yeah, basically my units are done by second or third year students, mostly third year students.

I: *Okay. So 70 percent of those that plagiarise in third year would be level one? Even at that year you would still say it was a level one?*

R: Yeah. No, there's a clerk there. A lot of our students don't do any written work until they get to my units. So, I'm not sure why. The obvious reason is that we do some technical units. The other element is … I give the students meaty assignments where other lecturers, you know … they make it …

I: *When you say meaty you mean essays? You mean essays?*

R: Yeah, or reports. So currently they're submitting a literature review…Even with postgrad students in our school, they get to my unit and it's the first time they've ever done a literature review in their entire university career. They've never had any acquaintance with journal articles. Don't know the difference between conference proceedings and journal articles. So synthesising something in a new communication is kind of new for them.

I: *Are you talking about local and international, when they come to you?*

R: Yeah.

Q.4 Students and penalties

I: *All kinds, okay. What about five and six?*

R: Yeah, five is absolutely true.

I: *You believe that's true?*

R: No, I know it's true. Yep.

I: *You know it's true? Is that from your experience?*

R: Yeah. So over the 15 years that I've taught here, my plagiarism has been 10 to 15 percent of students in my classes plagiarise. The worst case was I taught a unit in a Masters level unit in […]. And I had 80 students and 16 of them plagiarised, relatively heavily.

I: *Okay. So when you say 10 to 15 percent …*

R: Sorry, five to ten percent.

I: *Five to ten percent of your students, but what's the percentage of international students that you would teach?*

R: 70 to 80. Yep.

I: *Now when you talk about the Singapore experience, it's offshore?*

R: Mmm.

I: *Offshore. Okay. What about onshore? Still get a huge amount of international NESB … what about on campus? Would you get mostly … still 70 percent NESB?*

R: Yeah. I tend to think of them as international students. So, I can't … the only Australian student that I've ever had who plagiarised was actually a […] guy at post-grad level, who plagiarised, cut and pasted about 50 or 60 percent of his assignment without referencing them. Whose father then rang me to tell me that what I'd done was unacceptable because he'd done that for his entire degree at […]. Everyone else has been … yeah, international students. With the predominant number of … I'd even go so far to say that it's predominantly Chinese students. Now I want to be clear in my definition of that. So if you live in Asia, you know, you live in Malaysia or Singapore, or places like that, you live in Singapore but you're Chinese…So what I'm saying is that most students have a Chinese background, which is not the same as where they're located.

I: *No, that's right. Okay. So what about six then? Do you agree with that? From your experience?*

R: Historically, initially at X, absolutely. There is a historical perspective in that when I first arrived, the advice was don't bother reporting plagiarism, because they'll get off.

I: *And that was before ... in '98 you came so that was before policy anyway, wasn't it?*

R: No, policy was quite clear. No, I looked it up, policy was quite clear, they just didn't do anything about it. And you can ask people about this but there was a bloke called […], and so he was the Dean of students for X, and every case … so I tested it out. And sure enough I put up three cases and the students all got off. Since I think about 2004, […] has been the Dean of students. He would be the convenor of the panel for serious cases and he did a great job. And then the new policies took that role off him …took that role off him and he and his office became a post box, and it was elevated up and again the penalties got quite lenient, in my opinion.

Q.5 Other comments

I: *Okay. Was anything ... are there any other comments that you'd like to make about policies and procedures in general? So how plagiarism policies and procedures?*

R: They are not implemented by staff. They're ignored to a large degree.

I: *That's your experience in your school?*

R: And in other schools…And so the other memorable moment …So I had a PHD student. Wasn't going well. Wasn't going at all well. He could not distinguish between dependent and independent variables.

I: *Was he an international?*

R: Yep. He was an […] scholarship student. He could not understand how factors might contribute to an outcome. So, he wasn't going badly, he wasn't going well and his level one supervisor suggested that he be terminated. So I spoke with him and … coming from a background of being a political representative on behalf of post-grad students I thought, alright, I thought, what else can we do for him. So had taken on his supervision. Very slow work. He couldn't read journal articles, he couldn't synthesise them. He couldn't say ... you'd give him an article and say, "Tell me what the theme of this article is," and as part of his, you know, trying to get him up to level we put him into the research methods unit, …He got over 80 percent for his first assignment. And I was a bit sceptical. And then he got over 70 percent for his second assignment. The first assignment was a lit review, the second assignment was a research proposal. I ran them through Turnitin. Something like 55 percent of his first assignment was cut and pasted, which probably explained why it wasn't particularly coherent. About 45 percent of his second assignment was cut and pasted.

So I brought that to the attention of the Head of School. I think that was so she could kind of control the process a bit.

I: *Okay. You weren't in charge of that unit?*

R: No.

I: *But you were his supervisor?*

R: Yes. So we brought it to the attention of the unit coordinator. So they submitted a level two and a level three plagiarism charge. Level three for the first one, and level two for the second offence. It turned out that in the research methods unit she had not put any of the assignments through Turnitin.

I: *The unit coordinator, you mean?*

R: Yep.

I: *Is that compulsory, to put it through Turnitin?*

R: No. But it would seem like a sensible way of ensuring … so in my experience is five to ten percent. So if you've got 50 students, you're likely to ping anywhere up to five of them with plagiarism.

I: *Right ... but you're relying on Turnitin to do that?*

R: No, I didn't always rely on Turnitin. Sometimes I rely on Google. Turnitin just makes it easier…so you're able to interpret the results and you can start to see … sometimes someone will have 35 percent. But it will be 35 quotes and one percent. Typically when I ping someone it's like … you know, it will be like 15 percent of their assignment is from a single source. You know, they've got over 50 percent from like only three or four sources. So they've not done any research. This was the case with this guy. But what became clear was a, that she hadn't bothered to put it through Turnitin, and that was their policy. As advised to me. So the School of […]who was responsible for the unit didn't typically check things in Turnitin. Similarly, with my colleagues, even when they do have written assignments they don't put it through Turnitin so they never find any plagiarism.

I: *It's not compulsory. It's not compulsory to do it.*

R: No, so that's what I mean by the policy is there, but unless you …

I: *Yeah, but how it's implemented or how people interpret it, perhaps?*

R: Yeah. Well, it would only be … unless you use Turnitin or you actively seek to check assignments you'll never find plagiarism. Which is great because you can probably save yourself a fair bit of time. And then you don't upset anyone.

I: *Right, so you feel like there's inconsistency within the school as to how people determine whether there's plagiarism or not?*

R: No, I don't feel I know that there are lecturers within my school who do not bother checking for plagiarism. And there are others who do. And I suspect, based on this experience with this research student, that other schools potentially don't bother checking either.

I: *So what happened to this student? Did he … because he was your research student but he'd done like an external course with another unit. He'd done another unit? What happened?*

R: There are two elements. One was his continued enrolment in the PHD was put conditional on his achieving 70 percent or higher in the research methods unit. Initially they annulled him. Then they stuffed up the appeal process.

I: *So he appealed?The student appealed?*

R: Well, no. What they did was they sent out a letter and gave him no period of appeal. So he appealed back, as far as I remember. And then he appealed the decision. So then they decided to award him zero.

I: *And when you say they them, talking about the committee?*

R: Yeah. Which I then said that's a travesty. But because I'd sent previous e-mails going this is a joke. I just went there … I just said, "Oh come on, zero. He still won't be able to achieve 70 percent in that unit." And then he appealed again…So he then appealed but didn't get anywhere.

I: *So he's gone? This student … you don't know what happened?*

R: No, I don't. We had a breakdown in our relationship.

I: *Okay. Was this recently?*

R: Yeah. It all happened over September October, November, December, January. So it's hard to know what was going on for him. You know, not being able to know the relationship between a dependent and an independent variable. Yeah, it would indicate that there were some serious issues with him. He had a Masters degree from a Hawaiian university apparently. He worked as an academic in Indonesia, but yeah … couldn't … yeah. I don't want to say odd because he was lovely in his own way until he turned on you. So like, he was a research student and he plagiarised and he couldn't understand. He said, but nobody told me.

I: *Which could be true, because if he'd just come straight out of Indonesia.*

R: Yep. Except, you know, we don't accept at the research student level, we don't accept that you don't understand plagiarism. So as a research student, at a PhD level, you're expected to know that. And if you don't know it, you are expected to go and familiarise yourself with it. In the unit outline for that unit, there were instructions, it was discussed. Similarly I sat down with him for an hour and explained why he should not continue on with his PhD. That he was not likely to achieve success. That he had not demonstrated the capacity to complete. And then wrote in, put in writing to my Head of School that no one had explained to him why he should be terminated. So when I said no, and that was fully explained to you, he then blamed me for him failing.

I: *Quite frustrating. Quite frustrating.*

R: So that was the end of the relationship. Oh, I just felt sorry for him. He had a wife and two kids. Yeah.

I: *Okay. Thanks. So your experience, like the two cases that you gave me has been frustrating because you feel that when it goes up there it's not dealt with adequately, with these two cases that went up there. Would you say that to be true?*

R: Now I'm going to articulate it very carefully is the confidence with which plagiarism is managed by senior management levels at X adds to the frustration that you feel due to their lack of competence at being able to manage anything. So to paraphrase that I believe that they are not good at managing that, but it's only part of a bigger picture at being able to manage anything appropriately. And I believe that is consistently reflected in your voice surveys.

I: *Okay. But you feel personally yourself that you do what you can. You personally follow the policies, follow the procedures, you do what you can as unit coordinator?*

R: Yep. I'm committed to ensuring the academic integrity of my units, because I want to honour the effort and the contribution made by students who do the right thing. Part of that is because I've had student complain to me about students plagiarising in other units and not getting caught. So, yeah I'm committed to that. It sounds very righteous, doesn't it!

I: *Thank you.*

END OF TRANSCRIPT.

INTERVIEWEE 8

Q.1 Incident of plagiarism

I: *Thank you for agreeing to be interviewed.*

R: You're welcome.

I: *My first question to you is, could you tell me about an incident of student plagiarism that you've experienced that you found memorable or frustrating?*

R: It's not a single episode. It is multiple episodes of undergraduate students who don't really understand what plagiarism is. And when you actually bring them in to explain that their work … most often it's they haven't referenced properly, or they think they've paraphrased when in actual fact it's almost verbatim out of the original document. So they haven't referenced properly, and on occasion they haven't referenced at all. And they don't seem to understand that they can't do that despite it being clearly explained to them and we all give them the referencing guide and we all say we must reference anything that's not your work.

The frustration is when you get two students who almost colluded. Their work is almost exactly the same, and trying to get an honest answer out of whether they colluded deliberately together or whether someone has copied the other one's work with or without their permission. And what do we do? We have 600, between 400 and 600 students in a semester in a unit. So, the concept for the university process that all plagiarism goes to the Head of School is non-functional.

So how do we develop a process? And what we did was we have process for first years and a process for second and third years. That doesn't always work because some of our second years are enrolled nurses who don't do first year. So second year is actually their first involvement with the university. So we can't always treat people … you can't treat people the same. There is the equity issue that gets very blurry.

I: *So when you say you have your own process for first years and second years, what do you mean? Do you have your own procedure for dealing with plagiarism?*

R: There's a devolved process where the Head of School's permitted that students in first year can resubmit.

I: *Oh, alright. Okay. When you say first year, you mean the plagiarism is low level? Can they re-submit any sort of plagiarism because they're first years?*

R: Deliberate copying? No. No, it's a zero. But where it's referencing inaccurately or in error. The biggest concern has to be the international student who has chunks of … there's almost no joining words in between this paragraph that may well be referenced, this paragraph that's not referenced at all, this paragraph that's paraphrased and they've bastardised the referencing, and then the fourth or fifth paragraph that's another chunk that they've referenced, and then they will have a conclusion. And you can tell ….

I: *It's just like cut and paste.*

R: It is. And there's actually none of their own work in there.

I: *Okay. And when you say … are you a unit coordinator or are you a lecturer, tutor? What's you role in this?*

R: My role at the moment, and when I answered this I was a tutor in an undergraduate unit. This year I've stopped teaching undergraduate because I'm postgrad coordinator, so that's half-time. And I also run 13 post-grad online units.

I: *Oh, right. So you do mainly online now?*

R: So, I don't deal so much with the face-to-face, but of course we have got a whole lot of different issues because they're post-grads who are starting online. They may not have ever been to university before. Or they may not have been to university for a long time, or they may have been to a different university. So ensuring academic rigour, ensuring academic writing skills … where you can teach that in classroom is quite a bit different to teaching online.

And I am a voracious marker. I mean, there's an example of my marking up there. People say, oh, you shouldn't use red pen because that might offend the student. So I say, well fine, I'll use a green pen, or a purple pen, or an orange or a yellow pen or a blue pen. I don't care … I won't use black because they can't see it, and I won't use pencil because they can't see it. A lot of my colleagues use pencil because then if they write something they think they probably shouldn't have written they can rub it out. But because I'm scanning all of these and sending them back to the students, I choose to use pen rather than track changes, because students can always go back in and accept the track changes but they don't learn anything. So this way they're almost forced to read what's been written so that they can … and I use a lot of written feedback so that it's formative. So that in their next paper, if they've done the next thing in the second paper that they did in the first paper in the first semester, I'm much more likely to be harsher with the penalty in terms of my comments, I would say. You are only allowed to give so many points for failure to spell, punctuate or reference. And I don't know that students understand that failing to reference properly is actually plagiarism.

I: *So when you did the survey you were teaching undergrads and now you are teaching postgrads?*

R: Well, I was teaching both before but now I'm primarily in postgrad.

I: *Do you deal with them differently?*

R: Yes. We do. Undergraduates are expected to not have … so a first year undergraduate student is expected to have no skill. And if you expect them to have no skill, then you're not disappointed when they have actually got some. Whereas a second year student, they're expected to have … you know, you've had this explained to you previously. By third year … I used to teach up at law which was a second year, second semester unit. And it used to irritate me a great deal when they used to say "I have never heard of that before". And I would say "But I used to teach first semester second year in a different unit, and I told you this then, you can't say that you haven't learnt it because I've taught it to you last semester. You haven't learnt anything, you haven't developed your skill."

I: *So when you say that skill you mean like in terms of plagiarism? They're still plagiarising?*

R: Yep. And they've made no effort to change their writing style. I mean, in a writing style I mean cut and paste, poor paraphrasing, failure to reference.

I: *So if you see that again would you then go through and make it a high-level plagiarism and send it through to the Head of School?*

R: Yep. And she gets a lot of them. We're talking in a student body of 450 students, she'd get 100, 150 students all plagiarising.

I: *They'd go to her. When you … I just want to go back to when you said first years, you have your own process for them? What do you mean?*

R: Well, we've used the university policy that says that they can be offered the opportunity…So we get them in, we counsel them, so it's one-on-one counselling. They are shown "this is the referencing guide; this is what plagiarism is; this is the academic penalty that can be applied for it; this is your first occasion. You are being given the opportunity to re-submit with no plagiarism". And the maximum that they're allowed to get is a conceded pass for that paper.

I: *Okay. So that particular instance that doesn't go to the Head of School. So she deals with the others …*

R: Well, she doesn't always deal with them. She usually delegates that to somebody because of the sheer numbers.

I: *Right. That's amazing.*

R: … if you think 100, 150 students per unit, per semester … we have four units per year group per semester. That's 12 units per semester times a hundred students. That's 1200 students, she would be …It's hard enough to do it for a unit coordinator. For one of our unit coordinators who does it in first year, she spends between a week and two weeks just back-to-back interviews with students.

I: *Why do you think there's such a high number in your particular school?*

R: Because we actually do it properly. I have read work from other faculties and other schools and they are riddled with plagiarism. I don't know what their processes are for managing it. The university process is … as I'm aware of the sheer volume, teaching would probably be the similar sorts of numbers. Even without stretch teaching numbers, but when we're talking … if you talk about academic promotion, is a good example. When I'm up for academic promotion I've got nine courses, 76 units that I'm responsible for. I might not be the unit coordinator for them. I'm unit coordinator for say, 15. Or I might have one undergraduate unit this semester and one undergraduate unit next semester. If you have got an undergraduate unit that you're a coordinator for, it can be as I said, 500 students, and you're competing with somebody who has got 100 students. One-quarter of 10 is 25; one-quarter of 400 or 500, you're talking a hundred students, so it's a different volume. And so the school of nursing has to develop some sort of formalised process that's going to … and I know this is something that is being pushed up through faculty and through the academic board about how do schools that have large volumes manage this process and this problem, that could be managed in a school with smaller numbers by the Head of School. It's inappropriate and impossible for a head of school to do. Twelve hundred students, per semester.

I: *And the process that you follow, because it looks like you have a lot of instances of plagiarism or everyone's careful in detecting them. Is that process in any way different from the university process?*

R: It … we have to be very careful that we are following university protocol. So it's exactly what the university protocol has but in first year it's the individual unit coordinator manages it. And then reports it to the Head of School, so the Head of School, and quite often if there's a large volume … so if you've got 150 out of your 500 student body that are plagiarising, it then becomes a part of your lecture that you bring it back. So it's the whole student body in that semester. So in that lecture are being advised that there is … and these are the types of problems

that people are developing in their writing and that we need to nip it in the bud as a first year unit.

So rather than the individuals still have their meeting with their unit coordinator. But then it's also brought to the wider student, you know, the entire student body rather than individuals being penalised. It's how do we make sure that we're providing the best quality education process to teach the student. Well, there are some students who are going to get missed. And as I said, the enrolled nurses are probably one of our biggest risks because they're coming in second year.

I: *Second year but they're first year experience*.

R: That's right.

Q.2 Policies and procedures

I: *Okay. I'm going to … thank for that. I'm going to give you this form now. I've got a spare copy. So, if you don't mind, we'll go to part (b). I've got pairs of statements that I've obtained from my survey, so if you could look at each pair and just give your comments. Say if you agree or disagree and why? So take your time.*

R: 'Policies and procedures for responding to student plagiarism at ECU are fair'. And I'll give the caveat that they are unmanageable within the volume. And I think that the university needs to look at how to address that in an appropriate and manageable way.

I: *Right, and do you think that what you're doing here would be an option?*

R: We hope so. We've tried to do it so that it's as fair as possible but we've also had a rather high level complaint that it was not done according to policy and procedure and … The risk is that if the university doesn't come on board and the faculty don't come on board, what will happen at school level is that the academics will say … Well, you know, we can't set it up to die. We can't send it to the Head of School because we've got too many of them. So, is it in my … do I award anything? Do I award any … is there any penalty for plagiarism? We can't award it because technically the Head of School is the only person who can award a penalty to plagiarism. So do we say at first year, oh never mind … never mind, this is what you've done. And then make it very softly, softly, and then they don't learn anything. Or do we develop a working policy that's sanctioned by … you know, it follows the university policy, but is devolved from the Head of School to …

I: *Okay, so you're giving somebody else the power to … as Head of School to deal with it?*

R: Well, either someone else or each unit coordinator reports to the Head of School, that 'this is the penalty suggested for these students, do you agree?'

I: *Okay. Rather than she deal with them.*

R: For goodness sake, that would be like every time somebody makes a spelling mistake sending it to the Head of School. That would be … that is not the purpose of the Head of School. And so we're hoping that the development of some sort of devolution of responsibility is done in a practical and manageable way. Rather than … the risk is, people will start saying that the implementation of policies is a joke because it's unmanageable. That's the risk. And now I've got a head space from risk management. I see some things very differently than my colleagues.

I: *Okay. So do you think in terms of point two, at the moment, you'd say it's not a joke but unmanageable? Would that be your …?*

R: Look, I definitely … I mean, number one I'd agree with …that if you don't manage it well …it becomes … if something is unmanageable people won't do it. I wouldn't use the work a joke. I actually think it's a risk management issue that needs to be dealt with.

Q.3 Responses to plagiarism

I: *Yeah. Okay. Thanks. Three and four?*

R: My responses to incidences of student plagiarism have never been overturned by anybody. And I think that's because we apply the university policy to be fair to the students. Especially in post graduate. I don't award … I don't beat them over the head with a large stick. But I do go back to them and say, it's like if you all pay to have spelling errors and punctuation errors and poor grammar, this is not academic writing. And plagiarism is not academic writing. What we can do is if we have people who are plagiarising and we notify the Head of School, they of course, two episodes of academic plagiarism, a third one can constitute exclusion from the course.

If I had a Masters student, who was consistently plagiarised, then that person would be, that their work and what I wanted to do with it would be escalated to the Head of School and she would come back and say, well, the letter, this will be your first episode. Then the university policy would be kicked in for … because these are writing at a higher level.

I: *Yes, you'd expect more. You'd expect it not to happen.*

R: Indeed. And I'd expect them to respond to it, to the direction or the indication that they are plagiarising. They always get an e-mail from me, sometimes a follow-up phone call if they haven't responded to their e-mail; an invitation to discuss it with me. They can discuss it either via e-mail or they can discuss by phone or they can make an appointment to come and see me. We have students who are overseas and …interstate, so it's not always appropriate. I also use Skype. So we can actually go through and I can hold up the books and 'this is what I'm talking about. And you've got your copy there, yes, and you go to the same page,' and so we use as much media as we can for our interstate and international students and online students. Some of the online students are in Kalgoorlie or Newman. We've got one student who's at a mine site and he only has SAT phone contact for two hours a day, so it is not always a simple matter or practicable. And his stuff comes by the pouch, the mail pouch that gets flown down and then gets flown back. That's … you have to manage.

I: *So you're saying with your ... post grads now ... and even at Masters level, would you say you'd give everybody a chance?*

R: Everybody is treated exactly the same.

I: *So everybody gets like a chance. So that particular incident, whether it's minor or major, doesn't get reported up?*

R: No.

I: *But second time?*

R: It's the … I'd have to say it's the depth of the … If it's basic failure to recognise the difference between paraphrase and direct quote, I'll remind them again. Reminding you again that … and

sometimes they mix it up. That's actually the interesting thing. Sometimes they'll put a page number on a paraphrase and they'll put no page number on a direct quote. Or they'll use the wrong brackets. Now, I don't consider that to be plagiarism, because they've tried to reference, they've just stuffed the referencing up. So there is a difference between referencing error and deliberate plagiarism.

And there is also a third group, which is I don't actually understand what referencing is, so I don't know when I'm doing it wrong. Our referencing guide is pretty good. But there are some times that I really don't think the students understand the difference between changing two words out of the sentence and saying, oh look, I paraphrased it.

I: *So these … you could give … depending on what it is that's gone on and happened, you could see them two or three times before it …*

R: Indeed. And quite often if … because I often single sheet my stuff when I'm writing it, so instead of back-to-back pages … so if they've provided it to me with double-sided I'll actually go and photocopy it because I'll write on the back of it. 'You've buggered up your referencing again. This is actually technical plagiarism. I refer you to the plagiarism rules of the university. It's three strikes, it's academic misconduct. You can be thrown out. This is how you should have referenced this particular paragraph', and I will rewrite it for them. So I do spend the effort.

I: *That's very time consuming.*

R: It is time consuming but you win because your students … 99 percent of the students don't do it again if you spend the time doing that. So if you spend ten minutes or half an hour on managing plagiarism in one paper, you don't have to do it …in every paper that you get from them.

I: *Okay, right. So that saves time and also it …*

R: Stops the..the same thing from undergrads, as I actually had a student who was drowning in academic misconduct. His referencing was appalling; he just couldn't get it. He was quite aggressive and he didn't have the chip on his shoulder, I think he had the entire forest. So I got him in and we worked through it and then he came back two weeks later and actually rang and made another appointment - this is an undergrad student - he said, "Can I see you again because I have a paper that I'm doing for another?" And I said, "Well, actually you should be seeing the learning advisors." And he said, "I've made appointments to see the learning advisors, they're not direct enough." And I said, "What do you mean?" He said, "You tell me I'm being a goose. You say no, you're not listening. I need to do this and I like your teaching style." So sometimes …

I: *It's a lot of work for you but … it's very onerous for you.*

R: If we want our students to pass then sometimes we have to suck it up. And plagiarism, managing plagiarism is an onerous task. It is an onerous task.

Marking is not simple. I mean, somebody said to me, you know, "You should be able to manage this many assignments." And I said, "Oh, that's really nice." Oh yes, I was told to get someone to … we can pay someone to do your marking. But I said I can manage, you know, for the Masters stuff, but … Masters course work assignments. I can probably do conservative one an hour, maybe one every 40 minutes. I don't need somebody to do it. It's going to take them two

hours to mark the damn thing. And it's only a 1500, 2000 word assignment. Because they actually have to go through with some depth and you have to not only be able to read the academic writing, you've got to understand the content. And when we are talking about critical care, it's a specialist field and you can't get anyone. You can get a critical care nurse to mark, so they can talk about the technical content, or you can get an academic who can talk about the writing style. But to get the people who can do both … It's like everybody else who's got a speciality. You have to be careful about the content. So … so that answers three and four.

So, yeah that probably answers number four as well. I do use my discretion, but I think that it also has to come with the territory of being not only a unit coordinator, a course coordinator, and a postgraduate coordinator. If one of the staff who was a tutor in one of my units was escalating it, they'd escalate it to the unit coordinator. If the unit coordinator was escalating it they'd be escalating it to the course coordinator. The course coordinator escalates it to the post-graduate coordinator. That's me.

So I'm sort of escalating it to myself. So when do I need to tell the head of school? When it's a problem. So it's almost like, okay, in this hat I'm the unit coordinator and I'm answering the questions. Oh, no, no, no, now I'm answering it as course coordinator and I have to wear this hat and …

I: *Do you see conflict there?*

R: No.

I: *Can you manage that?.*

R: You compartmentalise yourself sometimes. Literally I've got a diary out there, this part of my day is post-grad coordination, this part of my day is post-grad teaching. Don't ask me for coordination stuff in the afternoon, I'm not doing it. I won't even answer emails.

Q.4 Students and penalties

I: *So five and six, from your experience.*

R: No. Five, it's mostly NESB and international … See, we don't actually call them non-English speaking background, we call them culturally and linguistically diverse, is the technical term. CALD. Culturally and linguistically diverse. The first time I heard it I said, what, do they need another blanket? I think they have different needs. And okay, the international students are taught in a different way and I use the Asian students…they are used to didactic learning where I stand there and I tell you, feed you the information and you write it down and you rote learn it and you regurgitate it. Ask them to analyse, critically analyse, apply, they struggle. Ask them to share their experience, they're embarrassed at that; it's outside their cultural appropriateness. But this is Australian nursing; you have to do it. If you don't want to do it, perhaps this isn't the right course for you.

I: *So at the beginning you were saying that you have a lot of international students? What would the percentage be in terms of …*

R: At least a quarter, probably a third. And in post-grad we actually … post-grad is different. Post-grad we've got a bunch of students who might have done their original education in another country and have come to Australia. So they're NESB students. And they might have a Masters from Singapore, which is taught in English. But their Singaporean/English and Australian/English are extremely different. And quite often they're technically correct but they

cannot get that grasp from writing poor English into writing at a significantly high enough standard for it to be the equivalency of Masters work. And you have to be very careful about not picking on their language. But it's how they … it's grammar, it's flow, it's … and they are notoriously unable to grasp the concept that you can't write a little bit of a sentence in their own words, which is bad English, and then chuck in some poorly referenced blob of perfect English, and then finish off the paragraph or join the paragraphs. They don't join the paragraphs, or they join them badly. And, I mean, it stands out.

I: *Despite that … because that's picking up possible plagiarism, but despite that, you don't think they would plagiarise more than the local students?*

R: It's different plagiarism. One lot is, as I said, they're trying to determine didactically what I want as an answer. And they're trying to feed me and a lot of them try and they'll overwrite, they'll provide too many words. And that's something that I'm fairly strict about. If it's a 2000 word assignment, plus or minus … I learnt plus or minus ten percent in my university, plus or minus 20 percent here for some reason. So at 2200 words I stop. I put a line; stop reading. So if their conclusion is written in that or their findings are written in that, they get no marks….they get no marks, because I've stopped reading at 2200. You, you … that's where I read to. If the good stuff, for those … if you've done well, well, that's nice.

I: *So their plagiarism is more like unintentional…*

R: Absolutely.

I: *And then you get the other type…*

R: Yes. Which is people trying to pass off other people's work. I mean, it's really embarrassing when you've got an intensive care nurse whose trying to pass off you know, it's a very, very famous intensive care manual that has been around for thirty years, and they are trying to pass off his work as theirs. And I mean, that blue book up here, the one that health professional, nursing …You want to try and plagiarise something out of that? Go for it, because I'll know it! And sometimes you'll read something and, oh, that looks vaguely familiar. And you'll type the words into Turn It In and it will pop up where it's come from and you'll recognise where you've read it from.

I: *And that could be local or international?*

R: Yeah. Our Asian students have a different learning style, so if you provide that type of learning, they're okay. […] generally have a different learning style because they are so focussed on clinical. It's got to be applied; it's got to be practical. So, if you're trying to get them to do a critical analysis, critiquing an article, they don't get it… until you actually make the link between why do you have to critically analyse journal articles so that it becomes applied into your evidence base of your practice.

I: *Will that explain why you have such a high incidence of plagiarism? Is it because of the type of course this is? That they're not able to synthesis all this information?*

R: That's why we say first year it's stepping-stones. So in first year it's here's the information. Second year, it's learning how to critique and in third year it's learning how to apply. So you actually do building blocks. Masters, we are expecting them to be able … we're expecting them to be able to critique and apply. So what I do in our first year is that I actually give them something that they've got to critique and then the second one is a case study. So they actually

then have to apply other people's literature to the case to say whether or not what happened in that case was done according to best practice or how it should be done differently, or could have been done differently. What did they learn from it? Then we chuck in clinical reflection, which is a high level learning as well. They're what they're supposed to get out of Masters. Nursing is incredibly applied. I was talking to one of the guys in teaching … they basically struggle with the same issues is that if the students can't see how it's going to be relevant to their teaching, they don't want to know about it.

I: *They don't do it. Okay. And number six?*

R: 'Penalties handed out to students who plagiarise are too lenient'. Well … I don't know that that's a question that's easy to answer because we are hamstrung by, once again, going back to the whole issue of volume. If you're talking about first year undergraduate registered nursing students, I think we are incredibly motherhoody. I don't know that leniency is the right word. Rather than beating them up about cocking it up, we try and teach them how.

I: *It's educative, not punitive.*

R: Indeed. Well, it's more than educative. It's educative and there, there, there, don't worry, you didn't mean to do it. We know that, or we're accepting … we're presuming that you didn't mean to do it. Let's show you a different way. And do you require some remediation? Do you need to go to the learning advisors? Do you need to go the library? Do you need to … all these possible things that you could put in place for them. But they are horses. And you can lead a horse to water but you cannot make it drink.

So, in terms of the penalties, most of us apply a referencing … as part of the marking criteria. So, and we actually put in there … one of my colleagues puts in, 'references according to APA Style Guide (ECU Referencing Guide) or does not'. And you get a tick in the box if you do and if you … and he also breaks it up into in text referencing correct, in text referencing errors, you get a cross there, you don't get any marks. End-text referencing errors … so it could be just one or two errors, or it could be the whole thing.

I: *Right. So, how do you teach that then after say they fail that part, failed to reference, would you then ...*

R: You remediate … the obligation under the university policy is that you get them in and have a chat about it. But I get students in who've missed a couple of commas. Sorry, but that's just … I mean, et al, for goodness sake. Most students, every student I think under the sun has buggered up et al. So if you've got 17 authors, the first occasion you've got to stick the first six in and then et al, so it's after the sixth author you put a comma et al dot comma, year.

If they've missed a dot or a comma, what I'll do is circle it and say you've made this same error all throughout your assignment, please sort out your el als and how you do them. And for the next time, they do exactly the same thing again … because I keep a little spreadsheet about, you know, with all the students and if they plagiarise or referencing error, I might put in a little note, 'you didn't understand when to use page numbers; didn't understand the appropriate use of et al.' I'll stick all that sort of stuff, I stick it all up on their discussion board.

I: *Oh, okay, because you're online.*

R: Feedback form… so I've got assignments that I'm marking at the moment for post-grad … I'll whack up on there, hi everyone, the majority of your assignments are really, really good.

Content was fantastic. The constant things that I'm seeing that you could all improve on are …whether or not they read it? Grown-ups. One of my colleagues came around yesterday and said, "It's a 13 week course, there's 12 modules. In the modules it has, here's the module work, here's the activity, here's the required reading. Here is the additional reading. I've had a student actually send an e-mail and ask "how much of this stuff do I have to learn in order to pass the exam?" And so, this particular academic wrote back, 'I'll refer you back to the learning outcomes that state all work within these may be used for an examination. Therefore it's entirely up to you as to whether you read any or all of it.' We have become so pernickety with our unit plans. So some, I understand from some schools, they just provide them with a CMS page. You know the basic …template...ours have … some of us have developed an idiot's guide to writing an academic paper. So it's an essay. So, this is what an introduction should have in it. This is what the first paragraph … and you should blend them through … and this is what a conclusion should have in it, and this is how the referencing … And we have actually put that up as a template that our students can use. They can cut and paste and move … and if they just filled in, it's good. But they still don't use it. We've developed ways of providing feedback.

I: *Do you include plagiarism ... you mentioned policy there.*

R: Oh, there's the policy there. There's the academic misconduct. We put in … these are the assignments … so on your Blackboard site, whether it's online or on campus, we provide exactly the same information.

So we put, here's your assignment stuff. But in the unit plan it will also have the assignment details. So it will have here's the assignment dates, and these are the three pieces of assessment that's going to happen. And this might be, this might be a presentation, this might be an assignment. And then you've got an exam. The exam will be about X, and it will have this many multiple choice and this many short answers. And, you know, you have to pass these two before you can … I mean, you have to submit all pieces or you have to attend all pieces, or you have to have passed the practical component before you can do the theoretical exam or whatever it is that you've got in it. The same thing about plagiarism.

I: *So it's all clear. It's all written.*

R: Some of our unit plans are ten and 15 pages long. Do the students read it? Absolutely not. But if you provide them with enough information, if you provide them with Wikis, we provide them with uplinks, we provide them with links to the library.

I: *My ... my query ... I'm confused, because you're doing so much and you've also got a process where you educate, you take them in, you're almost, like you said, mother them. Why is this level, the level so high?*

R: Especially in under-grad, because in first year they have no clue. In second year you've got some students who are new. By third year the numbers have dropped right down. So it gets better.

I: *So it gets better?*

R: Sorry, the numbers get less.

I: *The numbers get less so there's less plagiarism*.

R: By the time they get to third year, yes. But you still get some who think ...

I: *Is it because … would you be the only one doing this educated mothering or do you think everybody in the school is?*

R: There are some that do …consistently. I mean, I have colleagues who work across undergraduate and postgraduate and they adapt or adopt the same level because we've discovered that it's not limited to undergraduate students. And you're going to have a percentage of students who are either as dumb as a box of hammers and cannot understand, or you're going to have students who think they can get away with it. And I don't know whether you consider that arrogance or cultural appropriateness or whether they're just arseholes. I don't know what the technical word you're going to put in there.

But you are going to have a percentage of people, and that's the same in every profession. You're going to have people who when you work with them work really well and work hard and have a good professional ethical, you know, workplace environment. And you are going to have people who are not. And that's the same with students. I say to students, "When you're a student you're a professional student, you have to do, it's not I'm a student until the end of third year and then I'm going to be a professional. Whilst you're here you have to conduct yourself in a professional manner."

And plagiarism is just as much as stealing drugs or lying at work or turning up at work late or not doing your job. So, and I would say, "I don't think there's anyone who teaches it in any different way once again because we use it as an applied process." There are some people who are a bit soft. And some people go, "Oh, it doesn't matter." And you think, yes, it does, because if you don't teach it then I've got to. But that's the same thing. It's their professionalism. I try and give my students … there are students who think that I'm hard, but that same student will say she's fair. And I can live with that.

Q.5 Other comments

I: *Yeah. Thank you. Are there any other comments about academic integrity policies and procedures that you wish to make?*

R: We are trying to look at how we are going to … I mean, we have a unit called Professional practice … Professional issues. So it's a third year unit and our third year students spend half the semester on campus and half the semester out on clinical practical. Obviously, we are trying to prepare them as best we can for them to go out and be a nurse. As a part of that, we are actually looking at how do we explain to them from first year that you're a professional? Professionalism doesn't start the day you become a registered … the day you register. Professionalism is how you speak to people, how you speak amongst yourselves. How much effort do you put when you do group work? You don't leave one person to do everything and you sit and bludge on your laurels. You wear appropriate clothing. So you'll see a lot of our students walking around in uniform. But when they come to a clinical theory unit … we do those in the prac rooms, and sometimes you see these little girls dressed in summer frocks where you can see what they had for lunch because they're so short. And we try and advise them that you … whilst it's a very open and engaging learning environment, you can't come to university in my class and look like a prostitute. If your skirt is so short that when I'm standing in front of a lecture theatre I can see the fact that you're not wearing underpants, it's probably inappropriate. And I will actually … I won't point out a person, I'll just sort of say, "There are some ladies in the room who have chosen to come to the university today sitting in this lecture theatre at eye level without underwear. I'm going to have a five-minute opportunity for people to change seats."

The word integrity … I didn't come to all of my tuts, but I had to because my Grandmother died. I mean, when you go back into their e-mails and they've had their Grandmother die five times over the last two years. It's a little …So don't lie! So plagiarism is just another form of lying. And people ... see, is it okay to tell a white lie?

And I'm happy to have somebody to say that back to me as well. I think integrity is not just about … academic integrity is not just about plagiarism. Academic integrity has to come from the top down. So it has to be lead by example; not do as I say and not as I do. There has to be equity in everything from, you know, why does one level C not have to have a PhD and another school demands that their level Cs have to have a PhD? How do you … that's not equitious. And if the students see that at the academic teaching level, then they will see … and why does one student …

One of the things about it being an academic teacher is that you have a student who always wants to answer. How do you say to them, "Thanks, it's been great. Can we let somebody else have a turn? I know you've got the answer. Can we let somebody else have a go?" And the students who don't speak – "I haven't heard from you today, Gina? No … what do you think?" Drawing them out. So it's the skill of getting everybody the opportunity without picking on them. Because sometimes if you ask a student to speak up they think they're being picked on. But it is a skill, and that's a part of our integrity.

If you can't get those basic really personal professional … the only thing that you've got left intact is your integrity. If you walk out … if you look at yourself in the mirror today… people might not like you, you might not be popular, or that its far more important than being the most popular or liked lecturer who lets everything slide. So yeah, academic integrity begins at the VC … actually no, it's even higher than the VC. It has to be the Federal Government's education policies, because if they're not equitious and people don't conduct themselves at a political or department level with integrity and honesty, then why would the universities and why would the high schools, and why would the primary schools and why would the kindys do it? You need to have good leadership. And it's more than just lip service. So, our school is trying to use the policy in a way that doesn't drown our poor Head of School in ridiculous paperwork, but provides equity to students. And I think that the idea that we're trying to be able to devolve it or give it to an appropriate person, or manage the rules within a different way, is sensible.

I: *Okay and practical.*

R: Well, yeah. We're a practical school; we're a practical staff. We're going to be a practical profession. We are all practical professionals, it kind of goes with the business.

I: *Yeah. Thank you very much.*

R: You're welcome.

END OF TRANSCRIPT

INTERVIEWEE 9

Q.1 Incident of plagiarism

I: *Thank you for agreeing to be interviewed. ^ my first question to you is could you tell me about an incident of student plagiarism that you experienced, that you found ^ frustrating or memorable?*

R: Okay, and do you wanna focus just on plagiarism or any form of academic dishonesty?

I: *I wanna focus just on student plagiarism.*

R: Okay. ^, the one that comes to mind first which I think legitimately would be considered plagiarism was ^ a pretty broad ^ situation. I had five ^ students who essentially copied each other's work on an exam ...

I: *On an exam, okay*.

R: ^ and it just so happened that this particular exam then also had another group of two students who copied each other's work separate and this was a group of students who had been caught cheating ^ in other avenues throughout that ...

I: *Other units?*

R: Yeah, well, no, in this particular unit that I was teaching, other times that, so this is where it had gotten to be the extreme ... extreme part. ^so I was very, very frustrated with it, I was very frustrated with the students, partially because ^ I knew that they actually ... they may not have done as spectacularly well as the one that they chose to copy off of but they were all students that had more than ample potential to have done well on their own.

I: *Was this like an essay that the exam was writing or short answers?*

R: It was more of a short answer, it was a mathematics exam on differential equations, ^ which I don't think they realise is what ... I mean, the fact that their work was so similar for these problems is what gave them away. ^ ...

I: *Okay, and what happ ... what did you do about this when you found out that they had plagiarised from each other? Copied from each other?*

R: ^, because there had been a number of other incidences of this case, ^ I was actually not present at the time for the actual exam, so the invigilator ^ let me know what had happened. I, after reviewing the exams, knew that the invigilator had said that there had been cheating incidences but she didn't tell me who it was. I looked at the exams, I drew up a seating chart based on where I knew these people generally sat, and I said, "Okay, here's ..." ... I didn't show her the chart, I said, "So where were the people sitting who were cheating", and she picked the exact spots where they were and I showed her then that those were the students that I thought had cheated and that was more than ample enough evidence. So she was pretty much telling me the people were sitting ...

I: *Who were there, yeah. And they failed? All five failed?*

R: I, in this case, ^ I believe, if I remember correctly, I failed the students for the exam and for the unit. So I actually gave them a failing grade for the unit.

I: *You said that they'd done this in the past, you suspected the students had done ... what did you mean by that?*

R: They had copied from each other's homework assignments prior to that.

I: *Okay, so it was like continuous; same students doing lots of copying from each other?*

R: Yep. And I had actually had students then come up to me, other students outside the cla ... other students in the class but not in the cheating situation who then came up to me and said they were cheating rampantly in all of their classes, and they were rightfully upset, and then by chance, this was just one of those strange karma moments, the next term, the next academic term, I was sitting in ... I was watching an exam for a colleague who had stepped ... who had some leave from the school, and wouldn't you know it, they were sitting there in the class, and I had been ...

I: *All five of them?*

R: ^ I don't know it was all five of them but I know that of this group of seven ... Actually it was actually about seven to 11, I believe, total, but the ...

I: *Quite a bit.*

R: It was very rampant in this particular situation. I came into the class and I just said, "Well, it's pretty clear everyone's going to get out of their seats and move to somewhere else, and you know who you are if you don't think", and they did. ^, so they were not happy to find out that I was watching that exam for them.

I: *And since you said they're rampant plagiarisers, copiers, ^ you became aware of it in your unit but how did you know about ... what was happening in the other units? How were they being dealt with? Would you know?*

R: Unfortunately, I think it was more a matter of the other instructors and the other ^professors weren't paying careful enough attention. And it was actually the students, and of course the students are reluctant to go up and tattle and say, "That person was cheating and I saw them". Technically it's their responsibility to do that but I can appreciate their reluctance to do that. ^, but they did ... I did have ^ pretty sure it was a different pair of students, but I think it was the next term, one of my students who had been a student of mine for about two or three units already, he approached me and said, "I have seen these other students cheat to the point of actually taking out notes during exams when the Professor's not looking ..." ...

I: *The same group?*

R: ^, no, this was a different group of students but that was the one incident where the one student actually came up and told me. It wasn't after it had happened, so he was telling me in that very ^ non-threatening, non-accusatory way, he was telling me what had happened in a previous unit without giving me the details. But letting me know and be aware of it. He did know because of previous incidents, how much difficulty I'd been having with cheating. ^, to their ... I gained a reputation for being the little dictator at this particular campus because I came down so hard on that group of students but then there was another even more extreme situation the next semester. Technically wasn't plagiarism but ...

I: *Okay, and when you say this group were rampant, constant copiers, ^ you were informed by other students, what about other lecturers, did they say to you ... ?*

R: I did bring it to the attention of other lecturers ...

I: *Did they tell you about them or they weren't aware?*

R: Most of them weren't aware. I was hearing it from the other students in their classes ^ but this last institution was at the ^ upper level math courses were set up so you could take ^ two ... take one or two each term, in fact in some cases it was actually possible to take three of the upper level math classes. So it was not uncommon to have a lot of the students in that cohort who were either all taking physics and two math classes or chemistry and two math classes. So they were ^ there was a cohort that followed each other and had at least shared two or three classes. So I think that's how the students themselves ... and generally speaking, the students that were

working very hard and diligently I think were getting put off by the fact these other students were cheating and taking advantage of the situation.

I: *Do you know what happened to these group of five or seven, like, they failed your unit?*

R: There's the group of five that failed my unit, and ...

I: *And do you know if they carried on with other units or ... ?*

R: I know they deliberately ... I know they specifically switched to ^ they specifically switched to a ... from my course, differential equations course was offered the next semester. This may not have been the most ideal situation but it was offered the next semester though I wasn't teaching it, another colleague was doing a grant related version and the students who were in my class kept pestering me because they didn't really believe I was actually going to fail them and they continued attending the course thinking that if they did well enough the next time around but the damage was done and I had made my decision, I was pretty upset, I had the support of the Dean and the administration. They kept pushing.

I: *So it did go up, you did report them and it went up?*

R: I did. But because they kept lingering, they didn't enrol in enough time and then they approached my colleague and he knew of my situation and he called me on the phone or grabbed me in the hallway and said, "I have this group of three or four students who want into my differential equations class and I found it curious that they hadn't enrolled first through so I put two and two together. Can you let me know if these are the students?", and I said yes.

I: *Right, so they were trying to get in through the back door*.

R: Well, the enrolment had closed, they had just ... the courses filled up so quickly that they had lost any spots available. So he then ... which was completely within his right to say I haven't got room in the spaces, you can't take my class". Though we often overload nonetheless he because of that decided no, you're not actually coming to my classes, you'll have to wait 'til you can enrol another time. And then they went to another university well I should say another ^ the school where this happened was part of a district so I was in one of the ... teaching in one of the institutions in the district and they actually went to the other.

I: *So it wasn't at […]? It's not here?*

R: No, no, this was actually ...

I: *Oh, you're talking about the States?*

R: This is actually in the States. It was last year. ^, fresh enough in my mind. ^ ...

I: *What about here? So you've only been here a year, is that right?*

R: Not even, so I'm halfway through my second semester.

I: *At the moment here, you've not experienced anything similar?*

R: No. Nothing, nothing. Well, first of all the courses that I'm teaching ^ I had ^ the ... the first unit that I had last semester there was ^ there were for some actual plagiarism situations but the type of plagiarism issues I would expect to see in a ... a ... someone who's just starting to understand how to do research ...

I: *Like a first year undergraduate?*

R: No, no, this was ... these were fourth year students but it was more of a citation error issue than a ... is what I attributed it to instead of ...

I: *Referencing ...*

R: Yeah. ^, by all formal means it would have been considered plagiarism, ^ but it was a situation where I was able to explain to the students and they saw and then I could see then in the future they ... they'd addressed it accordingly.

I: *So that one you dealt with yourself, you did put it through the Unit Coordinator?*

R: I think I may have just put up ... I was the Unit Coordinator actually ...

I: *Oh, so you were the Unit Coordinator.*

R: ^, I think I actually ... I don't think I needed to do things individually, I think I put up a ^ statement on LMS indicating what these things were and enough students either looked at it or I think I ... I think what I did was I directed students on their papers, I said, "Please, make sure you look at this in the future", ^ ...

I: *And that seemed to ...*

R: That took care of it all.

I: *Is it still maths you're teaching here?*

R: No, that was actually a lifelong learning unit, an adult education unit, ^ tertiary and adult, I should say.

I: *And that was writing? Essay? That was an essay?*

R: That was all ... all the work there was submitted as essay work.

I: *Okay.*

R: ^, my other unit, the other unit I have right now is a statistics unit and there's only five students, I don't even know if they could even find people to plagiarise from.

I: *Not enough. So you haven't noticed anything?*

R: No, nothing there ^ my colleagues have said that it is an issue, ^, and I'm sure I'll encounter it but ... yeah. Now, the ... again, the most extreme situation I encountered was when I actually had one student attempting to attend class ...

I: *Here?*

R: This was at the other ...

I: *Oh, the States.*

R: ... attend class as a different student, and I don't think ... I don't think contributing their work that way would be considered plagiarism, so ...

I: *It's more like identity theft, probably.*

R: Yeah, so ...

I: *That's a bit different.*

R: ... and in ... in that rare case, that was the only two students I successfully had expelled from school, so ... But again, that doesnt' ... technically I don't think it would be considered plagiarism, so ...

Q.2 Policies and procedures

I: *No, that's something different, that's different. Okay, thanks for that. Now, I'll give you ... if I can give you this form, so if we look at Part B, what I've got here, I've got pairs of statements*

that I've taken from my survey, so if you could just look at each pair and give your comments and say whether you agree or disagree with each statement and why. So take your time.

R: ^, policies and procedures for responding to student plagiarism are fair, meaning here at […]?

I: *Yes. I know you haven't been here a long time, but ...*

R: Focus on that, yeah.

I: *Even focus on ... yeah, just focus on […].*

R: Implementation of policies and procedures on student plagiarism is a joke. ^, I am going to have to say that I believe the ... as I've read the policies and procedures they seem perfectly fair to me. ^, it seems that there's a num ... that there's a number of tiers that we as the coordinators and the Professors can look at and say, "I think this was a mild situation", and approach it from this direction or to the more extreme.

I: *Okay, so fair and easy to understand? Fairly?*

R: ^From my very brief review of what was there. ^, so I would agree with the first part – fair in the sense that everyone's not punished the exact same way for doing the ... technically ...

I: *Different things.*

R: Yeah. Technically the same thing by definition but different ... at different levels. The second statement, policies and procedures, ^ are a joke ...

I: *Implementation.*

R: Implementation of those. ^, I can't speak to that. I just haven't had enough experience here.

I: *Okay, alright.*

R: I can share what I've heard from other faculty and that is they've not encountered any resistance, for example, when I always think of it as being a joke, it's when the ^ ... it's something that appears on paper but then enough people say, "Well, you know, technically that's a full fee paying student and we don't want to upset them", so ... something along those lines. I haven't heard of that here, so ...

I: *Okay, that's good.*

R: Yep.

I: *What about ^ ...*

R: The next part?

Q.3 Responses to plagiarism

I: *Three and four. Just in your limited experience because you did say there was a fourth year undergraduate that you ... that was your encounter of plagiarism here. So I know that's limited but we could focus on that. Although it didn't go higher, did it? You dealt with it at your level.*

R: Yeah, because again, I think it was more a matter of ^ ... Actually, I truly didn't believe it was something that had been done ... done deliberately so ... My response to an incident of student plagiarism are overturned by those higher in authority. There have not been here, and in my experience, ^, my experience is that I have actually never experienced that. I've heard people mention this, I've heard others talk about it ...

I: *Here?*

R: Here, and ... but it's not ... I haven't ... oh no, sorry, I haven't heard anyone mention it being overturned here ...

I: *Not here, okay, so in the States ...*

R: In the past, in other places I'd heard it been overturned.

I: *But not here, okay, good.*

R: Not here, and ^ it's not happened to me here, or other places. I use my discretion when responding to incidences of student plagiarism. Definitely, because, again, the plagiarism, I mean, a specific definition, ^ ...

I: *So you use your discretion in identifying it saying whether you think it is or isn't?*

R: I'm ... I'm pretty quick at picking it up when it's there. Even if it's pretty minimal things. ^, I'm not quite as ... my partner found a phrase referring to a video about a fox decomposing in reverse and that phrase which describes the video, he essentially said that's plagiarism because the others were using it and not citing the source and I just thought, wow, four words and you caught it and he raised that issue with them. So I don't know that I could find four words ...

I: *Right, so accurate.*

R: ... but, ^, that was one of those strange moments and it was a strange video on top of that, but ...

I: *But you would use your discretion in, like, dealing with it?*

R: Yes, yeah, if I saw ...

I: *Right, like the student you had?*

R: If I had a first year student come in copying three paragraphs from Wikipedia in an entry I would deal with that differently than I would if I had a post-graduate student do something similar. ^, I would definitely ... I would not respond the same way, I believe I would be responding fairly in both cases but I wouldn't respond the same. ^, so I definitely would say I use my discretion, ^ ...

I: *Okay, for different students, different levels?*

R: Yep.

Q.4 Students and penalties

I: *And five and six?*

R: Okay, it's mostly NESB international students that plagiarise – NESB?

I: ^ *non-English speaking background, so basically international students*.

R: Penalties handed out to students who plagiarise are too lenient. ^, number five, ^, I'm going to ... no, my experience with the students that ... that the extreme cases that I've had for plagiarism and such were ... they did happen to be international students ...

I: *These are the seven you're talking about, okay.*

R: The group from ... that I experienced before.

I: *Yeah.*

R: And ...

I: *And here, the one ... the fourth year?*

R: ^, no. They were not actually international students. But what I know is ^ I'm not going to fall into the stereotypes or the generalisations. I know that the international students, the current local ones, are doing it as well, but they're ^ they're probably a little ^ ... I think they may be tagged less or caught less because they're a little better at manipulating the system. If I were to make a guess I would not say that it's actually ... that the percentages are that drastically different.

I: *Right, so you wouldn't agree with it that it's always ... that it's mostly the NESB, you wouldn't agree with it?*

R: Correct, and I think unfortunately to their disadvantage, part of the ^ part of the copying that does happen with the NESB students is that the errors that one might make have a tendency ... it's the propagation of the same error that actually clues others into the fact that it's there. So, ^, so with regards to that, ^ I would actually disagree with that. I would say it's not been my experience, but I would disagree with the statement overall. ^, six, the penalties handed out to students who plagiarise are too lenient. ^, for what I know the spectrum is here, ^ I wouldn't think so, however, I don't know how many people are actually expelled or actually removed from the program for it. ^, I do know at a number of institutions in the States, if a graduate student is caught plagiarising in any of their course work, that ... ^, it's pretty much the warning is ... it's supposed to be a warning and out and it's made quite clear to them that the warning means you failed and no one else will pass you from this point forward, so it's kind of a once a done deal ^, because I do know a number of places in the States where it's ^ ...

I: *So it's like one strike and you're out?*

R: It's technically on books it's two strikes ...

I: *Oh right, okay.*

R: ... but it's enacted as a one strike. ^, so I do know that ... and again, I do hold higher standards for the higher level for the graduate and post-graduate level students. ^, I actually cannot tell you right now, I'd have to look at the policies and procedures to see if someone can be expelled for plagiarism. I'd be shocked if they couldn't, but again, I don't know if it's on the books and I don't know how frequently it occurs.

Q.5 Other comments

I: *Alright, that's okay. Okay, is there anything else ... I know you've been here a short time but is there anything ^ else you'd like to say about this institution's academic policies and procedures or student plagiarism in general?*

R: It seems to be ... it seems to have been an issue that's been well thought out. I like the ^ ... I can actually probably give you a copy of the ... the ...

I: *The guidelines?*

R: ... the guidelines that are printed and the ^, they do a really nice job of actually breaking down the distinction. ^ which is one of those things where I've thought about it, I've heard the words before but in my previous ... in my previous situations it was always generally referred to as 'academic dishonesty'. I didn't actually ... in fact, I even have it here, I think I even changed the name. What it was here I changed to 'academic ...' ...

I: *This is in the Unit Guide? This is your Unit Plan?*

R: This is the Unit Guide and this is pretty much the draft that's provided to all the unit coordinators and the Unit Guide template that's given to everyone ...

I: *Right, okay, so you put this into your Unit Plans?*

R: Yep. So it puts down the plagiarism, ghost writing, collusion and purloining. See, that's why ... technically that the two students would have pretty much have fallen under the ghost writing as a strange ... so although a weird collection of ghost writing and collusion in that case but, ^, so, this is there and then we have ... we provide the links to it so ^ ...

I: *So it's clear to everybody.*

R: ... the fact that this is in ... this is the guide that's disseminated to <u>all</u> faculty here so I'm pretty sure that it's ...

I: *So everybody's got it, everybody's put it in their Unit Plan?*

R: Yeah, so it's not this type of thing where a student can have ... even if they only skim through their Unit Guides, after three or four units they'll have seen it at some point. I'm sure it will have caught their attention. And I've not seen a Unit Guide that doesn't have it. So, I mean, because we obviously can take and cut things out of the template but I haven't seen anyone who has.

I: *Yeah, but it's always there, okay*.

R: ^, I would say it's a serious ... I would say it's something that's treated seriously here, ^, based on the evidence I've seen so far. Limited as it is but ...

I: *Okay, good. Thank you very much. Thank you.*

[Tape restarted at request of interviewee]

I: *Okay, resuming recording.*

R: Yeah, so the one instance that ... the one thing that I observed that struck me that people are diligent about preventing, the issues of plagiarism and cheating in general is ^ the tests are essentially ... every test now is essentially made public, so even the final exams for the units, because the external students, we're required to provide them a copy which they then do not need to return because first of all, we wouldn't even know if they copied it or not, whereas ...previously I think the faculty for the internal courses, the internal units could say you can come and look at the final exam but you can't take it with you, so there was essentially the ability to retain tasks and use them again.

I: *That's very generous.*

R: Because now all external students are ... they essentially can say, "I want a copy of it", we've said, Well, we can't then not give it ..." ...

I: *You can't keep it.*

R: ... "not give a copy to the internal students as well". So the general sense seems to be, well, we'll just make a copy and provided it in the library so they can go look at any test ...

I: *Are you talking about past exam papers?*

R: Past exam papers.

I: *Okay.*

R: So I remember ...

I: *Not the actual exam that's happening ...*

R: Right, not the current one, yeah ...

I: *Okay, so make is accessible so ... right.*

R: Yeah, but I do know other faculty who've taken the lazy route – not here – faculty ...

I: *To reuse, to reuse*.

R: ... and reuse the tests, and some who have reused the tests despite the fact they've actually distributed them. I had a pretty heated argument with a colleague a number of years ago about ^ her mindset was it's the responsibility of the faculty member to prevent cheating from happening and I went ballistic ^ and her argument was, "Well, if you just reuse tests then you're promoting this", and I thought to myself, okay, you have a point but that's not ... it's not my responsibility to ensure that I'm dealing with an honest human being. So that was one thing that did come to mind. I know that, because this was actually a conversation we had at either school board or one of the meetings where a bunch of the faculty here from the school were together ...[…]'s School of […] and they said, they said what they do, they said, "I just started doing ... putting all the tests there so they can go back and use them". Means I have to change each test from ...

I: *So you change your assessment to reduce perhaps, reduce the cheating, copying, plagiarism?*

R: And I think it's ... something that's going to help them.and it was mentioned that that ... people saw that benefit from it as well. So in ... when one person said this is what they did pretty much there was a ... chiming in unison ... in unison course.

I: *All the faculty supported ... good, that's good to hear. Okay, thank you.*

END OF TRANSCRIPT

INTERVIEWEE 10

I: *Thank you for agreeing to be interviewed.*

R: My pleasure.

Q.1 Incident of plagiarism

I: *My first question to you is, could you tell me about an incident of student plagiarism that you experienced that you found either memorable or frustrating?*

R: Mmm. There's been so many. I guess the one that immediately leaps to mind was a few semesters ago, probably three or four semesters ago. Was in a post grad unit but it was a particular post grad unit where these students ... it was a grad certificate where they had not necessarily done … ^studied before, previously. The student submitted the paper, we put it through Turnitin and it came up as 75% exactly the same as another paper that had been submitted previously. To another unit at this university. ^So we were able to follow up with the tutor and they said, "Yes, they had the original," and they gave me the original. And yes, it was word for word.

I: *The same.*

R: Word for word 75%. And when I spoke to the guy, so he was a mature age student, he was online so I don't know how old he was. My impression was that he was in his thirties.

I: *Okay, so it was an online unit?*

R: Yes. And we talked quite a bit and he just said, "I do not know, I don't know, I don't know, I don't know. I gave it to my boss to have a look at. Maybe he changed something". He just … I wasn't …

I: *You were not unit coordinator?*

R: I was the unit coordinator.

I: *Oh, you were, yes.*

R: I wasn't trying to nab him or anything because these are new students. So it's about education rather than trying to pin him.

I: *All right, first time, first time.*

R: Absolutely. But we couldn't get past the …

I: *He couldn't admit …*

R: No, wouldn't admit, couldn't admit. And I said, "Well, how do you explain that, 75% of this has come straight from another," …

I: *And that other paper, was it … you said it was a different unit.*

R: It was a different unit.

I: *Was that, like, a post grad unit or …*

R: No, it was an undergraduate. The one that I had was a grad certificate management unit and the original one was from an undergraduate HRM unit, human resource management unit.

I: *A face-to-face unit as compared to online?*

R: Yes, to memory it was face-to-face. Now later on I thought maybe they were both taken from somewhere else. But certainly, what I perceived to be the original one, had also gone through

Turnitin and that hadn't identified as …come through anything else. Wherever it was, it had come word for word from somewhere.

I: *From somewhere. And what happened to that particular student?*

R: Well, ^I offered to meet with him. Because he was online student but he lived locally. As I said I wasn't … I just wanted to sort of work out and help him understand what was happening and that type of thing. ^And to go through things. And he was obviously quite embarrassed and quite mortified but still said, "No, no, no," …

I: *You never met him then?*

R: So, no, I never met him. And then he withdrew.

I: *He withdrew on his own volition?*

R: Yeah. And I don't know if he ever ^started again.

I: *Okay. So when you detected that did you put it through? You said you showed someone, you showed your boss, but did it go through the channels?*

R: No, not after that because he had been withdrawn.

I: *Okay. So you didn't have to go through it, form fill in …*

R: We didn't end up doing it. And that was a few … probably about two or three years ago. Yeah, so it was quite disappointing to me because I sort of sent him an email to give him the heads up and then rang him. And as I say I tried to talk very, you know, positively and not trying to, you know, say you've cheated and all these things. And just tried to work out and tried to talk with him about what was going on. And then he withdrew.

I: *So it was frustrating more because … was it frustrating because you were trying to get to help him and he wouldn't accept the help?*

R: I suppose, I suppose. And I was disappointed that, you know, then perhaps as somebody who had started a degree later in life and had put this effort in and had done whatever and had obviously come across a stumbling block and that was the end of that. Whether he's then started again, I don't …

I: *You don't know what happened to him?*

R: Know what happened to him, no.

I: *So was it also frustrating because he wouldn't admit when you felt it was clear or was that just more …*

R: I guess so. But not so much admit but wouldn't conceive that it had come from somewhere else.

I: *And the two students didn't know each other or you didn't get that …*

R: Not to my knowledge. Not to my knowledge. I did end up saying that it had come from an undergraduate student in another course. He, you know, "I don't know, I don't know, I don't know how this could possibly have happened. This is my work," blah, blah, blah.

I: *Right, OK, frustrating.*

R: Yeah. And disappointing.

I: *Disappointing, more disappointing.*

R: Because we lose a student who potentially could have a good future because they're doing something maybe kind of unknowingly. I don't know. I don't want to presuppose what the circumstances were. Yeah.

Q.2 Policies and procedures

I: *Okay, thank you for that. I've got … if I can give you this now. What I've got is part B. I've got pairs of statements that I've taken from my survey. So if you don't mind, to go through each pair and give your comments or say whether you agree or disagree with each and why.*

R: Okay.

I: *So just take your time. It's, like, … so we'll do one or two.*

R: So one and two.

I: *Or you can do in any order.*

R: Okay.

I: *But we'll try and keep them in pairs.*

R: We'll keep them in pairs. So policies and procedures for responding to student plagiarisms are fair, implementations of policies and procedures on student plagiarism is a joke. So you just want my thoughts?

I: *Your comments, your thoughts, yeah. Whether you agree or disagree with one or two.*

R: I think … with the first one, policies and procedures responding to student plagiarism are fair, I think they are fair. I think we've given it a reasonable amount of consideration into how to go about addressing these things. I teach primarily first year students so there's a difference between first years, second years, third years, post grads, etcetera. And I have taught the whole lot, first years, third years, post grads, everything. So we very much emphasise on education rather than punitive measures. And I think the policies at the university support that. And I don't really care if students mess up, just not knowingly. It's about how they'll then turn that around further on, what they'll do with that. Implementation of policies of plagiarism's a joke. I don't know that I'd go so far as to say it's a joke. I think that's harsh. But I think it is a bit all over the place. I think it's inconsistent.

I: *In what way?*

R: ^I think sometimes sometimes it can be such a long tedious process. I was talking to a colleague the other day and particularly with regards to an off-shore campus. I don't know if that's sort of getting out of the realms of what you're looking at. But picking up on some plagiarism there which is quite common. But also there's a whole different range of reasons why that happens. And because we're removed from it. You know, and she's been spending six, eight months trying to follow that through and get that … anyway, it was just keeps getting against a brick wall. So, you know, when you think of the hours that are spent often trying to follow these things through it can be very difficult. So sometimes it's easier to just go, oh, what the heck, let it go. Especially if it's not a major …

I: *Not a major ...*

R: Yeah, so implementation is hard and inconsistent, and I don't know quite how to fix that.

I: *Is that from your experience with or from talking to others, you feel?*

R: Both, both my own experience … and I would admit to be inconsistent with the way that I would do it, as well. I have to say that it's pretty much a case-by-case basis.

I: *All right, so you look at each case and work it out?*

R: Yeah, I do. I do try. And there's a lot of trial and error in that.

I: *Okay, all right. Good, okay.*

Q.3 Responses to plagiarism

R: Okay, three, four.

I: *So just sort of like what ... you've sort of done a bit of four there but if we can do three and four.*

R: Okay, yep. My responses to instances of student plagiarism are overturned by those in higher authority and number four says I use my discretion when responding to instances of plagiarism. As I said I do probably more four, which is … I don't know if that's good or bad. Because we do have policies and sometimes you can't go with them. ^The third one, I don't think that's ever been the case. I can't ever think of a situation.

I: *So as unit coordinator you would make a decision, that would go up and it would be ...*

R: Yep. Yep, and I can't honestly ever remember …

I: *Because you would determine the penalty ... you would suggest the penalty to them.*

R: Yeah, and in line with the sort of recommendations of the school and of the faculty. ^And I can honestly never remember, you know, … my recommendations have always been supported. I've never been frustrated with somebody turning around and saying no, either higher or lower or anything else. No, so …

I: *Okay. And when you use your discretion, what do you mean by that? Would you still ... is there discretion allowed in the policy that you can sort of say, well, I could give this ... do you use it in terms of penalty or determining the plagiarism?*

R: I think it's more determining the plagiarism. Which is in part of the process and things that we go through. And it is …

I: *So it's more the first part?*

R: More so, yeah. We try and be consistent in terms of the penalties that are applied. As much as possible. But it does come in in trying to ascertain the reasons behind it and that type of thing. So was it, you know, their level of intent and the amount and the severity. Because as you know, there are so many types of plagiarism. And even, you know, having … now that we use Turnitin more and more to read the assignments. You know, each one of those has to be looked at quite thoroughly and just … I know I've had instances where something comes up at 60% and it's not nearly as bad as one that may be 20%. So they really have to be quite carefully considered.

I: *And you look at those as unit coordinator even though they're not your own students?*

R: Yes, yes. So I'll look over them.

I: *They're everybody's.*

R: Absolutely. So all the tutors will do it. But I will look over it and I will usually highlight to the tutors "this person I'm concerned about this". The first port of call, can they have a chat with them. The tutors. And then after that it would then … depending on what the outcomes of that were, they would come to me and then we'd take it from there.

I: *Okay, all right. So you sort of allow them ... you give them discretion or you advise them before it goes through the formal channels?*

R: Absolutely, absolutely. And because I think they know their students better and the students know them. So I don't want the students who don't know me as well to come and be saying, oh, but this, this, this and this happened and the tutor said I could do this and blah, blah, blah. So they know them quite well. So they are informed … and most of them have been quite good. There is always the exception where somebody may go off on their high horse and say, no, this is, you know, we won't allow any discretion in these things, and that can be problematic. So we're quite lucky in the staff that we have who are fairly careful and fairly considerate of the students. Which I think they have to be.

I: *Okay, all right.*

Q.4 Students and penalties

R: Okay, and the last one. It's mostly NESB international students that plagiarise, penalties handed out to students who plagiarise are too lenient. Huh. It's mostly international students …

I: *In your experience.*

R: In my experience. I would say yes, but I don't think it's so overwhelming that I could answer that outright, but I would say, yes, it would tend to be.

I: *Because you have a high proportion in your units?*

R: And we do. And we have traditionally had a high proportion. And they struggle and we try and talk about the reasons that they would plagiarise. And, you know, it's quite easy to see why they would do the things that they do. And that we would technically call plagiarism but really it's just them being worried about their English often. That's the most common that I would come across. And also as with first years they will look at it and say, I honestly didn't know that I had to sort of say that it was coming from somewhere. So certainly their first assignment, which is what we're marking now, we're quite … you know, we wouldn't take a lot of marks off or we wouldn't … we'd have a discussion about it. But if their next assignment comes in still showing the same sorts of things that's when we would start.

I: *So they sort of get a chance?*

R: Absolutely.

I: *First time is a chance before it goes …*

R: Absolutely.

I: *If second time then it's going to go through.*

R: Absolutely. Particularly people that have come from other sorts of learning environments. Penalties handed out to … are too lenient. No.

I: *No, okay.*

R: My honest feeling is that more often than not it's not done with the intent of cheating.

I: *Okay. And so most is unintentional plagiarism.*

R: Mostly I would say.

I: *For all levels? First, second, third, fourth?*

R: Pretty much. I think once they get to third year they're a bit smarter about the whole thing and they're sick of it and they … and now we do use Turnitin more often, they're getting a bit more used to what we're looking for.

I: *Right. So they're more careful.*

R: They are more careful, yeah. I've had some interesting … I had one third year paper a while ago where all his … he had in-text references all through but they were just made up. And when I said, "This is all made up," and he said, "Well, you're the first person that's ever noticed." And he said, "And I'm about to graduate."

I: *Would that worry you? That would be a worry?*

R: That worried me a lot. That worried me a lot. And I said, "What do you mean?", and he said, "I always do that. They just want names, you know, they just want an author and a year in there." But it was so stupid that it was easy to pick up. He was talking about 'and Woolworths did this last year', you know, 'this is Woolworths did this last year' and then he'd, say, Smith 1967 or something. Clearly that hasn't come from there. So he was too stupid to even do it smart.

I: *But he graduated because of his …*

R: But he graduated.

I: *He passed under the radar.*

R: He did. (Sighs) And he only just passed that unit because that was quite substantial. But he managed to just scrape through. And we eye-balled each other at graduation. But, you know, he said, he said, "No-one's ever picked me up on it."

I: *It's too late, isn't it?*

R: Yeah. Yeah. It was.

Q.5 Other comments

I: *Okay. Are there any other comments you'd like to make about Academic Integrity Policies and Procedures here or in student plagiarism in general?*

R: (Sighs). It's just such a complex … the only thing … it's just so complex, you know. It just makes me want to sigh. And we do spend so much time trying to police these sorts of areas.

I: *Okay. So it does take up a lot of your time?*

R: It is a lot of time.

I: *Especially as unit coordinator it can be more?*

R: Absolutely. And it can be and I've got hundreds of students. And at the end of the day you want to be fair and that's one of the areas that you want to be fair in. And ^I think the level of students we have are not always that confident. I think some of the other universities may have more competent and confident students. And I think our student cohort is reflective of a lot of students who aren't necessarily. So their crutch is to you know cut and paste and to take …

I: *So it's more work because of the type of student that comes through?*

R: I think so. I'm not saying there's not plagiarism at other universities. I know there is. But I think, you know, we have to work at it at a holistic level with developing the students' critical thinking and being able to understand and then turn that into a written piece of work and all that sort of thing. ^And that's quite a process for a lot of our students.

I: *And you do that, you want to be fair, so it does take up a lot of your time.*

R: Yeah, it does.

I: *Teaching and … but do you think others would … would you know if others would be as thorough?*

R: Some some yes, some no.

I: *Okay, all right.*

R: I did get, you know, frustrated with another third year student once and he sort of has all these poor referencing and not so much plagiarism but just really lazy, and I said, "Well how have you got here?" I said, "You were in my class in first year." And I asked him to bring all his assignments in and show me the comments that had been made and was he just ignoring them. And a lot of the things were not picked up ever.

I: *Okay. Through the other units through the years?*

R: Through other units and other years and things. So that was frustrating because we all sit around and say that we do those things…second year, third year. And somewhere in the middle there was a whole lot of assignments that he just had back with a tick and, you know, 65. And clearly even just looking at them …they weren't done well. And that frustrated me because, as I say, we sit around at meetings and talk about it all the time that we're all doing those things. But clearly that's not happening. Yeah, and I don't know where that is and …I certainly didn't go into it in detail to find out, you know, to finger point or anything like that. But also we have a lot of sessional staff. that come and go. And whilst most of them are absolutely fantastic and they're certainly fantastic with teaching and things, that's where a lot of the discrepancies come in. Because they hold different values and views as to what is okay and what's not. So some of them are tough as nails and they won't let anything through. But you've got to let something through. And others are just, like, oh well, you know, wouldn't even occur to them that some things had been plagiarised.

I: *They'd come to you, wouldn't they?*

R: Well, only if they have identified it. Or if it had been identified by the unit coordinator. And as I say, now that we do it through Turnitin that is easier.

I: *Right. And what about when you say some don't bother, would you go and check other people's...*

R: Yeah, we certainly moderate. We'd certainly moderate. But you don't necessarily catch everything. And then often if somebody's only working for you for six months, you know, for one semester, then they've come, they've done, they're gone and …

I: *Right. So there's inconsistency around that issue, yep.*

R: Yeah, and that's very hard. And the only way to get through that is to have a really tight policy, and then that is difficult to enforce all the time.

I: *Because you've got changes in staffing, yeah.*

R: Absolutely. And I think, you know, so we have to have some, you know, balance between, yes, we've got good staff coming and going who are sessional and then we've got, you know, these things that aren't necessarily consistent because of that. And this is one of the things. One of the issues. Yeah, I think so. But I do think most students are just … sometimes they're lazy. Often they're lazy. But very often they just don't …They just don't get it. And they just don't know. And they think of this term of referencing and they use that as an overarching term which catches them out. We try and move away from that and just say, "No, you tell me where you get stuff from. That's all".

I: *Okay. Thank you very much, thank you.*

R: My pleasure.

END OF TRANSCRIPT

INTERVIEWEE 11

Q.1 Incident of plagiarism

I: *Thank you for agreeing to be interviewed. My first question to you is could you tell me about an incident of student plagiarism that you experienced that you found memorable or frustrating?*

R: A very recent one I found both memorable and frustrating. This student had written a fairly, I hate to say it, but not particularly literate first sentence. And then suddenly the grammar, the style, everything changed, and of course I thought, oh dear. I Googled an arbitrary line and there it was, and then a line at the end where he concluded with his own work. I drew his attention to it, and wanted me to give him the benefit of every doubt, and he withdrew from the unit.

I: *Oh, was he a first year?*

R: A first year.

I: *A first year. And was he a local kid?*

R: Yep.

I: *And he just … after you talked to him he decided to give …*

R: I said, resubmit. I gave him a chance. I said, "You realise that you cannot do this. I'll give you another week to resubmit," and he agreed to that and just disappeared. So frustrating because I felt that I'd bent over backwards to …be supportive rather than punitive. I just find it frustrating that he didn't take that on. But that's alright.

I: *And is that in your capacity as lecturer or unit coordinator of this particular unit? That you approached him and had a chat.*

R: That particular unit I was joint unit coordinator. But also tutor for that particular unit.

I: *Alright, so you knew the student but you're also responsible … Right. So he withdrew so there was no formal process? Did you start it? Nothing?*

R: No. No, no. If I … if I come across plagiarism for the first time, particularly with a first year I will never make it a formal process. I will talk to the student first. Mainly because, I'm sure you know, that a lot of Asian students see plagiarism not as we see plagiarism, at all. And also in the name of equity, I cannot treat them differently. And so I treat all students the same.

I: *So you give everybody a chance*.

R: They all get a chance. Yeah.

I: *That's good. Would you know if they would do it a second time? When you say your first time …*

R: Well what I do, I give them an unofficial warning. I tell them and I e-mail them to say that this incident has been noted. So I rather hope that I'm putting the wind up them and that they won't do it again. But obviously I have no …

I: *You haven't noted it but you remember in case they …*

R: And I might keep the e-mails. So I keep a record of a particular student, so if it does come up again and questions are asked, then I can say yes, it has happened.

I: *Okay. Good. So it was probably frustrating because he left so you a bit like … he couldn't finish …*

R: Frustrating … purely ego for me. Putting my ego … I thought okay, perhaps you didn't understand the seriousness, I was willing to talk to you about it, assist you in any way. Give you time to submit and he just said … oh, he didn't say no … he just said yes and then disappeared.

I: *Disappeared. Okay. Thank you. Thank you for sharing that.*

R: That's alright.

Q.2 Policies and procedures

I: *I'm going to give you now part (b). If you could have a look at part (b). What I have is pairs of statements that have been taken from the survey. So if you could just look at each pair and make your comments and say whether you agree or disagree, or any comments that you wish to make about each pair. And you can do in any order. You don't have to follow the order.*

R: 'Policies and procedures for responding to student plagiarism are fair'. I think policies are fair. I think the procedures are fair, however, the implementation of policies and procedures for student plagiarism is to a certain extent a joke. But links much more to my responses of student plagiarism being overturned by those higher in authority.

Q.3 Responses to plagiarism

R: Now if I have come across student plagiarism for a second time, or I'm aware of a second or third time, and have built a sort of dossier, I have found, not often, but it has happened, that a student has appealed, and won the appeal, despite the fact that it's all there in black and white, and even e-mail conversations between the student and I. So …

I: *Right. So the student has appealed, but initially when you prepare your documentation and take it to the next level …*

R: The next level, I've never known what happens exactly at that level, but obviously the student has at some point along the line appealed and won the appeal, and I it, well, why bother. So I do use my discretion when responding to incidences of student plagiarism if, to my knowledge, it's first time and first year.

I: *Okay. So you would just give them some sort of … you have a chat with them? And give them another chance?*

R: Yes.

I: *Okay. And that would not be in accordance with policy? Do you feel that that's against …*

R: I think it's slightly, well … here policy, the decision, the ultimate decision is made by the coordinator. I will chat with the coordinator and usually if I say that I think it's worth talking to the student, the coordinator is not going to say, oh yes, my is policy is, you know…I think coordinators and tutors, to a great extent, work as a team here rather than … although the coordinator obviously has the ultimate responsibility.

I: *But when the student … like you say the students appeal and that's frustrating for you. Does that happen often?*

R: Not … I can think of it having happened twice, when it's got that far, when the evidence is very clear. I assume that somewhere along the line when it's got as far as the Dean or whoever it's got as far as, something has happened and it's quietly forgotten about. I mean, I would have thought at the very least the student should fail the unit, and that doesn't happen.

I: *And that doesn't happen. They just carry on.*

R: Well, when I say that it doesn't happen, in my experience it has not happened on two occasions.

I: *Okay. And despite that not having your decision or what you feel is right being overturned, you would still carry on doing what you're doing? Like advising?*

R: Absolutely.

I: *It's not disheartened you?*

R: No.

I: *Disillusioned you?*

R: Sometimes it's very, very hard not to plagiarise. Particularly now with the Internet, it's so easy to just copy and paste. Some students aren't very good at it because they will be typing in 12 point and they will copy and paste something in 11 point. I can spot the difference, you know! So, I mean, that has to be a bit, I don't know, I mean, sometimes I find it quite laughable. But I don't … Sorry?

I: *So, and for two … sorry … so you say there were two particular incidences where the students appealed and your decision was overturned.*

R: Look, well … the fact that I had allowed or I had … or the process had gone to the next level, means at the very least the student should have to resubmit or possibly fail the unit.

I: *Okay. And that hadn't happened?*

R: And that hadn't happened.

I: *And you don't know the reason?*

R: No, I don't know the reason. I just thought because I'm in a vulnerable position. I don't have tenure. I don't want to put my own … I suppose my own job in any sort of jeopardy by getting on the wrong side of anybody. So I suppose I play in a way both ends meets the middle. I'm sympathetic to the student. But I'm also sympathetic towards to my own survivability.

I: *Okay. So in those two cases it was a bit of a joke? That the implementation was a joke?*

R: Mmm.

Q.4 Students and penalties

R: 'It's mostly NESB international students that plagiarise'. No, it isn't. No, it isn't.

I: *From your experience?*

R: From my experience it's often students who think they'll get away with it. I'm a linguist, I can spot plagiarism at five hundred metres. All it needs is one word out of place that I just know a student wouldn't know to use. And I actually say at the beginning I really do know language. I know if, you know … all you have to do is take a little phrase and you change one word using the thesaurus. I know that that won't fit. And they still try it on. And invariably I will use the thesaurus backwards and say I wonder what word probably would and then I can Google it and then I can present the student with it.

I: *Oh, I see. Okay.*

R: It's a bit time consuming.

I: *Very time consuming.*

R: But I think it's actually more reliable than Turnitin. And I think my gut …

I: *Right. Your instinct, your feeling.*

R: Yes, because with Turnitin we've got … we're talking about percentages. And they don't take into account, you know, two or three words that you really can't put in any other way. It would be nice if they referenced them but sometimes there will be a reference somewhere in there. So I don't count that really as plagiarism.

I: *And in your unit, particular unit, you're saying that, no, you don't think it's the mostly NESB plagiarised. But in your unit would you have an equal amount of NESB and local students? Or more local students in your particular unit?*

R: God. This is confidential, isn't it?

I: *Yes. I just want to see if your perception is based on your experience.*

R: My perception is based on experience of the double degree that we do in education and sport science. And quite a lot of the sport science students come in on what is essentially a sports scholarship. And they can be the elite athletes and they do the double degree. Often they're … their essay writing skills are not that crash hot. So I find that a few of them, particularly the young men, are a bit likely to just copy and paste.

I: *And these are not NESB, these are local? So your experience is maybe perhaps local than not?*

R: Perhaps more local.

I: *Only because of numbers, because you have more local students.*

R: Yeah, possibly, possibly. Yep, yes. We certainly don't have the number of international students that University X does, for example. And because it's teaching, we're possibly even less likely. So … actually I found that the NESB students that I've got are … they work so hard in order to not plagiarise. Yes.

I: *Okay. That's interesting. And what about statement six?*

R: 'Penalties handed out to students who plagiarise are too lenient'. Well, since I'm guilty of that ... [pause]

I: *Well, you're not guilty because you haven't really ... you don't consider, you give them a chance the first time. So you don't really consider that plagiarism but ...*

R: I have heard … I have had complaints from students who've had other students boast to them that they've managed to get through their entire university career without actually having written an essay because they've got it from somebody else. And of course there's nothing that you can do about that. There is no proof and word of mouth doesn't count. And retrospective, nothing works. Well, all I can think of is when that happens, karma. When they get into the classroom not actually having done any work, they're probably the ones that won't survive. So they've wasted an awful lot of their own time. And money.

Q.5 Other comments

I: *And money. Okay. Are there any other comments ... any other comments about the six statements or any other comments in general that you'd like to make about academic integrity policies and procedures? At your institution?*

R: At my institution. I've been obliged to use Turnitin and I haven't really seen very much point to it.

I: *It's compulsory?*

R: In some units it's compulsory. In some units it's compulsory. Some students have volunteered to use Turnitin. I'm almost always asked at the beginning of every unit if they do have to use Turnitin. And unless they're units I teach or am responsible for, there is no point in using Turnitin because it's not … we're not looking at essays … there is nothing that they could really plagiarise because most of it's journal writing.

I: *Oh, it's journal writing, reflective journals. Okay. So when you picked up the plagiarism that was an essay? That wasn't a … particular journal.*

R: That was an essay. Yeah. I'm coming at it from a very specialist place because I deal with language. So I can only speak for my … I can't even speak for my colleagues or my department. I just know how I deal with it. And I think I deal with it in a fair and equitable way. And I hope that's, I don't know, it's possibly naïve hope … I hope that by picking it up really early, and also warning them that it's a lot easier to spot than they think it is, that it might stop them…It might stop them or at least it might make them think twice about it. But I have no idea really.

I: *Okay. What happens, what actually happens in the end. Okay. Okay. Thank you very much!*

R: Okay.

END OF TRANSCRIPT.

INTERVIEWEE 12

Q.1 Incident of plagiarism

I: *Thank you for agreeing to be interviewed. My first question to you is could you tell me about an incident of student plagiarism that you experienced that you found memorable, or frustrating?*

R: Umm. Specifically here at this university?

I: *Yes, please.*

R: Probably one where the student ... just let me think for a minute.

I: *That's okay. Take your time.*

R: I mean, I've just had one now, that a student's turned her work in by Turnitin, a very high score, which I know doesn't always indicate plagiarism, but looking at it, all the way through it is really just words missing out of direct quotes, but obviously not shown as direct quotes, so really just copying text books and removing a few words, and articles from ... sorry, umm documents from the Internet, like reports, and I found that one frustrating, because I teach the third years, and I want them to know by now ...

I: *And that was a third year?*

R: Yeah. That they need to ... why don't they know, and then it makes me think, "Have they been doing this all through the three years, and no-one's picked it up, because they haven't used Turnitin perhaps?" So I looked back through her scores and found she'd got in with a distinction, high distinction, all the way across, and you just think, "Well, has she done this all the way across?"

I: *Is anything ... what do you do about ... for that particular assignment?*

R: For that particular student, she's put it in through Turnitin, and I tell them, "You can put it in as many times as you want." It's for them to look at to see, this is a bit you know word for word, "I need to paraphrase more," or whatever. Now she's put it in. She's left it there for a week, so I've emailed her and said, "Your work has shown high levels of similarity. You need to look at plagiarism rules and maybe see the Learning Support ...and re-submit."

I: *So there is ... it's like test run, when you're talking about she's submitted this, like test run. So it's not actually ...*

R: Yeah. They can submit as many times as ... they're using Turnitin to see themselves.

I: *Right, as a learning tool.*

R: And for me as well.

I: *So you haven't marked this one?*

R: Not yet.

I: *But if it stays as it is, would you ... what are your options?*

R: You see, this is the thing with our options; we are only just looking at what our options are. I'm not the course coordinator, and we have looked at having some kind of flow chart where we all follow it. I mean, we were going to have a meeting on it, but it got put off, and put off, and we still haven't, ^and so what I would do is, I'd mark it, put comments, and then I'd go and see the course coordinator, because we're trying to have some flow chart - Is it the first time they've done it? Are they in the first year? - that kind of stuff. And then some people will fail, or some people will say ... it depends. We all do different things.

I: *You all do differently?*

R: I think we do. Yeah.

I: *All right.*

R: So there's no standardisation, which leaves us wide open if they appeal, so we are trying to put something together, and the university has regulations, and so I'd have to ...

I: *Would you follow those?*

R: I'd have to have a look.

I: *Oh right. Have you been here long?*

R: Well, at least you've got an honest person.

I: *All right. Have you been here long?*

R: Yeah. I've been here a year and a half.

I: *Not so long.*

R: So I do look at the policy, if and when it arises, this issue, but I have four to 500 students each semester, and I've got so much in my brain going on that I won't remember policies. I know where to find them and refer to them.

I: *But not to remember them. So would this case, this student, be your first, or one of the ...*

R: I think I've had two or three, and in the past I think I've referred it on to the Head of School. But things sort of get lost. They sort of disappear in the wash, you know, and people get let off with a warning, or ...

I: *So you yourself did the investigation for this student, found out that she's received a high distinction, so you're ...*

R: In previous work.

I: *So you're concerned that she's done it before, but there's no ... what would you do about that? Can you do anything about that?*

R: We do have ... no I don't think so. What get things re-marked by other people? I don't think you can.

I: *No.*

R: But our admin lady keeps a list of people we know who've plagiarised in the past.

I: *Oh that's good.*

R: I don't know if you're allowed to do that, data protection wise, but she keeps a list, and ^we go and see her, "Has this person done this kind of thing before?"

I: *You say an admin lady, or is it a particular ... is it just admin, not a ...*

R: She's like a PA to the Head of School. I can't remember her title, but that's what she does here. So she holds that list for us.

I: *So you can, you've got like a depository where you can check?*

R: Yeah. Just give her the name and she'll say whether anyone's picked anything up before.

I: *But people will ... you don't know what everybody else does, and you're not sure, but ...*

R: No. That's why we need this meeting to standardise what we're doing, and get everyone on board.

I: *Within the school. Okay. Thank you for that.*

R: That's okay.

Q.2 Policies and procedures

I: *I'll give you Part B now. So what I've got in Part B, I've got pairs of statements that I've obtained from my survey. So if you don't mind, to go through each pair, and just comment on them. Say whether you agree, or disagree, with each pair and why. So take your time. You can go in any order.*

R: ^ umm. So the first pair. I think the policies are fair, but umm the implementation ...is a joke. It needs reviewing, because ...

I: *Because of your experience?*

R: Because we don't have standardisation. So if the Head of School dealt with it she'd do it differently to the course coordinator, maybe. So it depends who's dealing with it and...

I: *But why ... how do you know that? Is that you've heard that? Or from your experience?*

R: Yeah. Yeah.

I: *Okay. When you say they deal with it differently, is that because of their role, or do you think it's because they're actually doing, they're not following the procedures?*

R: ^I think because our course coordinator is now trying to bring in some new policy, and a flow chart for us here. ^So if I went to her, it would be looking at the new stuff we're bringing in, that hasn't been formalised yet, and then sometimes you get the reply, "Well, just bounce it off to the Head of School, and leave it with her." So there doesn't seem to be a standard response.

I: *So you're not sure within the school whether the university's are being followed?*

R: Yeah.

I: *You're not sure?*

R: Equally with everybody. Yeah.

I: *So you're going to have a meeting with everybody in the school to try to sort things out.*

R: Mhm.

I: *All right.*

R: My response to that...

I: *So for ... well, for this particular student, the one you mentioned, you haven't done anything, because it's still a test in its trial stage, but was there any other ... the other cases that you dealt with here, do you feel that when they went ... if they went up, were they overturned? You said you had two or three others.*

R: I don't know if they ever go any higher than Head of School really. We've had one cheating in an exam using a dictionary, and ...we tend to sort of give them a warning rather than anything else.

I: *So you said one case went to Head of School, one of your cases went to course coordinator?*

R: Yeah.

I: *When you send them up to those two different people, do you say you think the student should get this?*

R: Yeah. I have done.

I: *But you wouldn't know what they've decided? Would you know what they've decided?*

R: Ahm, if they fail them, then I would know, because they would do a ... it depends what they decide, do they have to do a repeat exam, do they have to do a supp exam, do we just give them 50%? And I can't remember in which incidents we've done what, to be honest.

I: *But you find out?*

R: Yeah.

I: *Okay.*

Q.3 Responses to plagiarism

R: I do use my discretion when responding to incidences of student plagiarism, because ^I do think sometimes, you know, if they're new students, umm...or if there's a language difficulty. I think just going straight down the, we do A, B and C, doesn't always work for everybody. You know, have they done it before? So I have a look at ... see what they say about whether they're on the list of people.

I: *On that list. So... you use your discretion in responding to it?*

R: Yeah.

I: *But when you see something you wouldn't ... you'd know straight away that's plagiarism? So you wouldn't use your discretion there?*

R: Yeah. If I'm marking some work and it looks ... you know, it's obviously cut and paste from a website, ^I mean, that's sort of quite clear cut, but sometimes I think it's because they haven't learnt how to paraphrase properly, or how to direct quote properly, and so we need to have those systems in place first so that students know what plagiarism ... sometimes I don't think it's intentional.

I: *Okay. All right.*

R: It's just poor academic ability.

I: *Okay. With the new students?*

R: Yeah.

I: *You're talking about mainly new students?*

R: Mainly, yes. But you see we get people in year three, from other countries who have had advanced standing, so they don't have to complete, you know, so we get ENs in, people from international, who are already nurses, but doing a few of our units.

I: *So they could come in at third year?*

R: Mmm.

I: *So it's quite difficult?*

R: Mmm. But it's very subjective, isn't it? In my opinion.

I: *That's okay. So when you say 'new students' it doesn't mean they're first years?*

R: No.

I: *They could be third years.*

R: But they haven't had an induction into.... When you're new, in the first week, they talk about plagiarism, and all the rules and everything.

I: *And they missed that.*

R: So I don't think they get that ...in their third year. I think we have an assumption that they understand it, because they've got advanced standing on other work.

I: *Right. So you sort of use your discretion in their favour?*

R: Yeah. ^I mean, I try and talk to them as well, and have a think about it.

I: *Is that your job, as a lecturer, do you feel? Are you doing more than you have to? Or ...*

R: Yeah. I do actually. I do think that part of my job is student welfare, and I do sometimes think that we jump straight on the rules without considering mitigating circumstances. So sometimes we have rules about late assessment, and if they haven't got their sick note on the exact time, but sometimes I do think that there are mitigating .... so I like to treat people as individuals, and ...

I: *On a case-by-case basis?*

R: Yeah. And I do think as a professional you do have some right to use your experience, and stuff, otherwise we just end up being, follow, press this.

I: *Robots.*

R: Yeah. But I can see the criticism of that, you know, that it could be unfair, because my opinion is not, you know?

Q.4 Students and penalties

I: *All right. What about five and six?*

R: What's NESB?

I: *Non-English Speaking Background. ... sounds like you have quite a few international students.*

R: We do. I would disagree with this, because the four that spring to mind, none of them have been.

I: *Okay. They were local students?*

R: Yeah. Australian.

I: *And they had gone through this system? That they were third years?*

R: Yes. They have.

I: *They've gone through the university, first, second, third?*

R: Yeah. They have.

I: *So the issue is with the local students, rather than the international students?*

R: It has been in my experience, but haven't had ... you know the four that I can remember.

I: *Right. And would you get an equal amount of NESB and locals?*

R: No. Probably about 60% local.... 'Penalties handed out...' You see, it depends. Sometimes they're too harsh. Sometimes they're too lenient. I would have it on some kind of sliding scale of their academic ability. What they've been taught before. So we have to have some system

that proves that we've explained to them about plagiarism. And you know, that they've turned up. That they've completed a little session on it. That they understand, because English isn't their first language. If we let someone on a course, to do our degree, and their English isn't strong enough, then why are we letting them on the course? So we let them on the course, their English isn't strong enough, and then we slam them for not following plagiarism rules. So ...it can be too lenient. It can be too harsh.

And I do think money comes into it. If we've got an international student, they don't want to kick them out, because of all the money we're getting from them. So an automatic, "You're out" isn't going to benefit the university, is it?

I: *So it's a bigger issue?*

R: Yeah.

I: *So with the four that you've experienced, the non-NESB students, do you think their penalties were too lenient, or you don't know what they received?*

R: None of them were suspended, or kicked out, or anything like that.

I: *They were just ... did they fail the unit? Or, did they fail the assessment?*

R: No. They were all ... I think three of them were asked to repeat, re-hand in the assignment, and the other one I think just had a warning, and had a lower mark, because it's this kind of stuff of, "This is not your work, therefore we can't mark it." So we've had this thing of, you know, "If this isn't your work then it's not showing ...independent thought, so we can't mark stuff that's copied from somewhere else."

I: *Okay. So you don't fail them. You don't award them a mark and ask them to re-submit, in general, for ...*

R: Mmm. See this is where it's all ...so maybe with a few I've said, like with this last one, I've said, "Do it again before the hand in date." I'll give them that opportunity. If it's after the hand in date ...

I: *Then it's submitted.*

R: It's already been submitted. So I'll mark it, show them where the problems are, and then either mark them down, and say, "This is not ... this could be seen as plagiarism, you need to be careful." And show where work has not been carefully paraphrased, you know. That would be in situations of new students, or students I believed haven't done it on purpose.

I: *All right.*

R: And when it's just obvious, blatant, cutting and pasting of other people's work, of more experienced students, or you know, English students, English speaking, I will hand it on to Head of School, or course coordinator, and talk to her.

I: *Because you assume that they should know? You expect that they should know?*

R: Yeah.

Q.5 Other comments

I: Are *there any other comments you'd like to make about this institution's academic integrity policies and procedures, or about student plagiarism in general?*

R: I think universities are full of individual academics, who all want to do their own thing. I don't think […] is as bad as a lot of the universities, because it's a newer university, so I think in terms of policies, and things, I think we're quite strong, but I think our school needs to work

more closer together. I don't think we have ... you know you always get this academic who refuses to tow the line, or update, or change practice. I don't think we've got a lot of that here, because we're new and, you know, but I do think that we need to tighten ... make sure we're all doing the same thing anyway.

I: *You mean the school is new, and the lecturers ...*

R: The […].

I: *The institution's new.*

R: I just think it's […] is non-elitist. You do concentrate more on teaching, and sort of more collegial approach, rather than elitist approach. So we don't have all these elitist individuals who think they've got their own right to do whatever they want, and not tow the line. Do you see what I mean?

R: Sometimes you can have ... when I've worked before, you'll have professor so and so, who's researched for years, and they're eminent, and when we say we're bringing a new marking rubric, or we're bringing in ... they'll say, "No. This is the way I've done it. This is the way I've always done it." We don't have that kind of ...

I: *They're not flexible, but here ...*

R: No. It's about not sharing teamwork. It's about individual career. Whereas here we do get more people team-working together, and there's not that ... ^we have shared drives, so we share our ... we're not precious about what we do. So we're more likely to take on board new messages, and have an opinion, and share.

I: *And do you share talking about plagiarism, and things like that?*

R: Yeah. And we have had a couple of meetings talking about, we're doing different things, and that's when sometimes thing go to appeal, we don't win, because we haven't all followed procedures properly, so we're talking about we need to have a standard procedure, but it's not commonplace yet.

I: *Not yet. So early days.*

R: Even if the procedure completely reflects the policy, if we could just have it in a simple flow chart. What do we feel this part of the policy actually means, you know. Like discretion, what does that mean?

I: *But you would follow the policy? Your flow chart would ... your school would follow the policy of the institution, but simplify it perhaps?Make it easier to follow.*

R: Because the trouble with policies is that they're quite black and white, so if it's something like, "Is it a third year student?" Well, yes, it might be, but it might be a third year student who's never been in Australia before. Never studied in ... So you have to put your discretions, and what bits mean.

I: *Determining ... Right. Thank you very much. Thank you.*

END OF TRANSCRIPT

INTERVIEWEE 13

I: *Thank you for agreeing to be interviewed.*

R: My pleasure.

Q.1 Incident of plagiarism

I: *My first question to you is could you tell me about an incident of student plagiarism that you've experienced that you found either memorable or frustrating?*

R: ...I've had one recently that was memorable in that I had two students who recognised instantly that they'd done something wrong in that they'd collaborated on a couple of sections of their assignment and recognised when they submitted their work to Turnitin that they'd quite innocently done this and it wasn't until they went to Turnitin that they'd recognised that they'd done something wrong, shall we say. And they quite professionally came and saw me about it as soon as they recognised that they'd done something. I keep saying wrong but they'd recognised they'd plagiarised. They came and saw me…

I: *From each other, they'd plagiarised from each other?*

R: They came and saw me about it and sort of owned up to it, shall we say, and so I talked to them about, you know, what they'd recognised was the wrong thing and how we'd deal with it. So I was impressed with their professionalism there.

I: *Good. Were they first years or…*

R: Third years.

I: *Third years, okay. And were they local students or international?*

R: Both of them were international students.

I: *And what was the result after that discussion, what was the outcome?*

R: I asked them to bring me their reference lists, so I could have a look and verify that they had got the stuff, the information where they'd said they'd sourced them. And originally those ^pieces of work were to be marked by ^casual markers.

I: *Okay.*

R: But I elected to mark those pieces of work myself and said that ^I'd give them two-thirds of whatever I would have given originally for those particular paragraphs. Because I felt that they'd learnt what they needed to learn.

I: S*o you weren't the actual lecturer for these students?*

R: I was the coordinator for the unit.

I: *Oh right, so they didn't go to their lecturer, they came straight to you?*

R: They came to me as the coordinator.

I: *Oh right, okay. Would you know why they would…*

R: No, I didn't know.

I: *Don't know, okay. Is that unusual? They usually don't come up, do they, they usually wouldn't?*

R: I don't know, it's just probably my first, I see more often doing lecturers than anything. And I don't know if it's a usual practice across the University but in this school it's the coordinator

they communicate with with respect to administrative issues so I think that's probably why they came to me straight away.

I: *Oh right. And in your role as coordinator do you see a lot of students coming through to you for plagiarism?*

R: Not a lot...Which is nice…although, shall we say at the beginning of the semester, I've only recently come to this University at the beginning of this year and another colleague who came to a more senior position also recently came and ^Turnitin was not used a great deal until we came and there was a flurry, shall we say, of people recognising plagiarism...and

I: *Right. And through to you?*

R: And through to us, yeah.

I: *But not an overwhelming amount for you in your role as Unit Coordinator?*

R: No, indeed.

I: *Right, and as lecturer? Do you still lecture?*

R: Oh, yes.

I: *Would you see ... have you had a case as a lecturer yourself which you found memorable or frustrating?*

R: No, not at this University. Do you want to talk about this University only?

I: *Yes, please.*

R: Yes, so not at this University.

I: *All right. So that was particularly, probably lucky, fortunate case for you. Memorable in that it was different.*

R: Yes, and in that I was impressed with the professionalism of those two students. Shall we say I prefer to see it as professionalism?

Q.2 Policy and procedures

I: *Right, okay, thank you. Now I'm going to give you the sheet. So if we look at part B, what I've got in part B, I've got pairs of statements that I've obtained from my survey. So if you could just look at each pair, in any order you like and just give your comments. Say whether you agree or disagree and say why. So take your time.*

R: So this one about policies and procedures responding to student plagiarism are fair, or implementation of policies on student plagiarism is a joke. ^I would say in this school here at the moment, they're quite fair.

I: *Right, the policies and procedures?*

R: Yeah.

I: *Okay.*

R: That's what you're looking for from me?

I: *When you say the policies and procedures at this school, are they different from the policies and procedures at the University.*

R: Well, I couldn't speak to the policies and procedures around the University; I've only been here for six months or so^

I: *Oh right. So does the school have its own policies and procedures for academic misconduct?*

R: Yeah. As far as I know.

I: *Okay, I didn't know. And these policies and procedures…*

R: They may well mirror the University.

I: *Okay. And implementation is fair? So when…*

R: Essentially, ^a student comes to ... if a student is picked up as plagiarising something, the student comes to the lecturer for guidance and counselling about whatever has occurred. ^If the plagiarism is of a minor level then counselling is all that is necessary. If it's of a higher level, then they get referred up to the coordinator.

I: *Comes to you?*

R: Yeah. And maybe some sort of penalty is required, but that is discussed with the Head of the School before it's implemented.

I: *So it comes to you, so you only get the more serious levels, cases, and do you meet with the student as well?*

R: Yeah, absolutely.

I: *Right, and then you go ... can you deal with some or do you send them all up to Head of School?*

R: Well, not send them up to Head of School, but discuss with the Head of School whether such and such a penalty that I've suggested is appropriate. If it's a much more serious one, shall we say, 50% or higher, it goes to the Head of School.

I: *So from you it goes to her?*

R: Yeah.

I: *So implementation seems fair and the policies and procedures seem fair in the short time you've been here, in your experience?*

R: Yep.

Q.3 Responses to plagiarism

I: *Okay. What about three and four?*

R: My responses to incidents of student plagiarism are no, haven't been overturned as yet.

I: *Oh right.*

R: Use my discretion when responding, yes, I do I use my discretion.

I: *In what way?*

R: ^As I say, if it's a clear, a low level of plagiarism, for example, I look at the Turnitin reports whenever I get assignments in. And first of all we doubt whether they are, no doubt you look at a Turnitin report and ^matches absolutely everything like the cover sheets, and the marking criteria match we weed those out.

I: *That goes out.*

R: If it's poor referencing ^then I'll sit the student down and talk about that. If it's a straight copy and paste, outright plagiarism then I will sit down and counsel the student about, ^you know, this is just not on ^and clearly some penalty needs to be applied.And then depending upon how

much plagiarism has occurred it may be redo the assignment for a capped amount and then that's the sort of thing they need to talk to the Head of School about and get her okay for it.

I: *When you say you look at the Turnitin assignments, are they your students or are they your units, the students in your unit that you coordinate?*

R: No, my unit.

I: *Right, so you do that of your own ...?*

R: Off my own bat.

I: *Off your own bat?*

R: Yeah, essentially, yeah.

I: *For all the students or just…*

R: Well, because it's my unit I like to know that there's some control. I like to check the whole thing.

I: Y*ou don't leave it up to the individual lecturers to come to you and say, here's a Turnitin report and it shows this? Would they come to you or would you, if you see something, would you go to them or how does it work?*

R: Well, shall we say I know that they're there and I'll wait to see if the lecturer comes to me. If they don't then I'll give them an email and say have you noticed?

I: *Oh okay. So you're not…*

R: I'm a bit of a control freak, I'm sorry.

I: *You're unit coordinator.*

R: Yeah.

I: *So you would take your extra time and resources to check all the students in your unit?*

R: It's not hard because you look down the Turnitin you can see quickly that there's something there that's of concern.

I: *Right, and how many students would you have in your unit?*

R: I've got several; one of them is about 40 students, one's about 60 and the other one's about 150 or so. I don't have a whole heap.

I: *Oh right, and the level, first, second, third years, post grads?*

R: One's a first year and the other two are ...third year, and I have four post-grad students.

I: *Diverse students? Okay, and do you find similarities or the level, the amount of plagiarism is higher for a particular cohort?*

R: Not really, no.

I: *It could be anywhere in any of those units for any of those students?*

R: Yeah, absolutely.

I: *Okay.*

Q.4 Students and penalties

R: ...The only thing that stands out is that the international students tend to have higher levels at times until they ... Their culture, understanding of plagiarism is completely different to ours and until they learn that copying someone's work is not a form of praise, then that's, yeah, that's high.

I: *So you'd agree with number five then? If we look at the statements would you say that it's mostly, in the units you coordinate, is it mostly international students that plagiarise?*

R: They're the ones that tend to plagiarise until they learn the cultural difference.

I: *Oh right.*

R: Yeah.

I: *But it's that sort of cut and paste, it's minimal or it's serious?*

R: No, no, it's serious to start with.

I: *It's serious, okay.*

R: It's a learning process; yeah, I don't think they do it because they're lazy on the whole, I think it's because they don't know and that's ... it's a diverse thing as an international student, on the whole, one does not question one's teachers. ^So you've got them in a classroom just sitting there not saying a thing and ^cutting and pasting from a textbook by a venerable teacher and putting it in the assignment is ^acceptable. Yeah, so they have got to learn.

I: *So they do plagiarise more and they could be first year, third year, at any level?*

R: Yeah.

I: *Because of the culture?*

R: And they haven't, sometimes if they're in third year so they've slipped through because people haven't picked them up or they've come in late.

I: *Or slipped through.*

R: And penalties handed out to students who plagiarise are sometimes too lenient, in my opinion. ^But on the whole I think here they're fairly appropriate.

I: *And most of those penalties would be given by you? In terms of the plagiarism cases that have come to you, you said some you deal with and some you send up to Head of School. How many would you ... would it be like you'd deal with half of them and half go to the Head of School? So that you're…*

R: Oh yeah, I see how many go up higher. Oh, I'd say ...a third and half I'd deal with and…

I: *And whether they go up or whether they stay with you, you feel that the penalties are ... would you know the penalties that when they go up?*

R: Oh yeah, because they come back to me for me to administer.

I: *Come back to you, okay. So you feel that they're not lenient?*

R: I think they're fair enough.

I: *And what would be an example of the penalties?*

R: Well, on the whole they'd go up because I recommend it and say, what do you think about. And generally the penalties, depending upon you know, we've had some extreme cases and the and the recommendations fail. But that's very extreme and very, very, very rare. But ^on the whole it's resubmit for 50%, a capped mark of 50%.

I: *Okay, so not many withdrawing or failing the unit or ... right, withdrawing.*

R: It's usually something really horrendous has happened.

I: *Right, okay. When you say you check all your students, you check for plagiarism and then you wait for the lecturer to advise you, what length of time would you expect was reasonable before you emailed them and said, hey ...?*

R: Have I noticed. ^Well, if an assignment comes in, I would. Assignments come in say on a Monday, I download them for marking for the group that I'm going to mark, I usually mark them or download them next morning. And so that's when I check, if I haven't heard, say, a couple of days later from the relevant lecturer, then I'd email them.

I: *Oh that's great, quite tight deadline?*

R: As I say, I'm a bit of a control freak.

I: *And how many times would you have to, in terms of proportion, how many times would you have to email the lecturer and say, hey, look at this? Would it be just rare?*

R: Rarely.

I: *Rarely, okay, so mostly they'll pick it up and deal with it or send it through to you?*

R: Yeah.

Q.5 Other comments

I: *Okay. Do you have any other comments you'd like to make? I know you've only been here a short time, do you have any comments you'd like to make about the institution's academic policies and procedures, or student plagiarism in general? From your experience, your short ...?*

R: Experience here?

I: *Here.*

R: Not really. ^...I think that the students need six of one, half a dozen of the other, I think they're a little bit too spoon-fed here but I've only just started. But then again they need a little bit more shoring up in first year with respect to what plagiarism is and how to use Turnitin. But on the other hand ...

I: *So more education so they can avoid it?*

R: Yeah.

I: *All right.*

R: But I know that we're starting to try and get that started next year so we are on top of that.

I: *So some sort of education in place for them?*

R: Hmm.

I: *Okay, all right, okay. Thank you very much.*

R: My pleasure.

I: *Thank you.*

R: I hope that helped.

END OF TRANSCRIPT

INTERVIEWEE 14

I: *Thank you for agreeing to be interviewed.*

R: That's fine.

Q.1 Incident of plagiarism

I: *My question to you is, could you tell me about an incident of student plagiarism that you've experienced that you found memorable or frustrating?*

R: Well, there's one I'm currently trying to deal with that is ^quite frustrating, in that it's a higher level overseas student and it's very obviously the work he submitted was … it came out when we checked it on Turnitin, which he knew we were going to do, ^that it came out something 70 odd percent plagiarised. ^But he''d obviously made no attempt to disguise the fact that the material had been simply imported. So we talked to him and he said, "Oh," and he's agreed that it's … he would like to write the way that it's required here. This was not taken as a punitive one in the first instance but formative because it was very obvious that it was not an attempt to mislead. It was just, yeah, it wasn't the appropriate approach. So we've sat down with him, or I've sat down with him and I've made sure that there's a thing set up on Turnitin so that he can keep submitting draft works to it over and over so he gets the feedback directly without us having to keep writing red stuff all over his thing. And he keeps trying. And he's got to the stage where he's tripled the number of sources he draws from and it's a much better quality, of source, but he's still …

I: *Still there.*

R: Simply imports it … no, we've got down to 40%, so we're winning. But he still just cannot understand what it is that he's doing inappropriately. He has actually passed the whole of, you know, the unit all students now have to do to do with academic conduct, misconduct. He passed that because he couldn't have gone onto his other units otherwise. But he obviously has not the faintest conception of what this thing plagiarism is, that he's not meant to be doing. (laughs) And I'm finding it very frustrating.

I: *And is he … you said he's a postgraduate.*

R: Yeah.

I: *International student?*

R: Yeah.

I: *And is this his first year here?*

R: Yes. It's his first semester here.

I: *Okay. So he's come from overseas?*

R: Yes. But obviously totally different cultural background and practices. What's been frustrating is I've now spent the last week attempting to get more individualised and help for him through the Guild Education Officer. She referred me on to post grad students, you know, education assistance people. And they all now only work non overlapping half weeks. So I haven't actually managed to get anyone. So I've … it's just … I really … he's a bright student otherwise. He's really keen, he's really keen to go onto the research part of his project but until we sort out writing for him it would be pointless him doing the research. And I'm finding it really frustrating. The frustrating bit is partly just that it's so hard for him to get the idea. But it's more that I'm having so much trouble getting assistance for him.

I: *Right. And actually that's your own time spending for this one student.*

R: Yes. But none of my time here is my own time so I'm owned entirely by the system.

I: *Okay. So it doesn't bother you that there's so much time ... that you're trying to help this student but you can't ...*

R: Yes, except this … it would be … ^there would be a return for us if we can get it sorted out. Because he really is keen. ^And it's … well, it enhances our, ^not only our reputation but our practice to be seen to look after our students appropriately and not to act in a mechanistic way towards them.

I: *But you'd act differently if he'd done it ... if this was his second time?*

R: Yes. Or if there was any indication at all that he was attempting to actually mislead. But since he knows that we look at it all the time through Turnitin, he's now starting to use it, so it's a very open thing he's doing but it's still what we would classify as plagiarism. I have had instances sort of like that before where one student very helpfully not only plagiarised an article largely but then clipped on the article onto the back of her own essay for us. So again it was no attempt to mislead.

I: *Unintentional, unintentional.*

R: But you think, no, we haven't got there yet. It's a very hard thing for … it takes a long time for students sometimes to grasp the idea … of an idea as a thing that can be owned by somebody or that someone can state a prime claim to or whatever.

Q.2 Policies and procedures

I: *Right, okay, thank you for that. Now if I can give you the guided questions. So if you look at Part B. What I've got is I've got pairs of statements that have been obtained from the survey. So if you could just look at each pair and give your comments, say whether you agree or disagree, to what extent and why, why not. And you can start in any order.*

R: You want comments there? Yeah, okay.

I: *Yeah, just comments.*

R: You want me to comment aloud or to write it in there?

I: *Yes, please. Yes, please, to comment aloud. So take your time.*

R: I think the policies and procedures for responding to student plagiarism we've got here now are fair. ^Although they're not … because they're fairly recent and informalised form with us, they're not uniform in their manner of practice or implementation yet. Because, you know, when you reach out into the far corners of the university universe there are people who just don't read the latest documents or anything else. But it's spreading and it's getting better.

I: *When you say it's they're new, how new would you say?*

R: Actually five years which is new in university time.

I: *Five years. Newish, yes.*

R: Yeah. And I know people went to a lot of trouble to make sure that they were … ^the procedures were not just punitive, that they were educational and teaching and formative. So, yeah, okay.

I: *So implementation, you don't think ...*

R: It's not a joke but it's not complete yet. It's not … well, I guess if you allow for the usual rate at which things happen in universities it's happening. But I wouldn't claim that it's …

I: *Has that been your experience when you're trying to get something through, that it's taking time or …*

R: Oh, it's going through the system fine. It's just that you keep getting comments from odd academics that have been hiding somewhere in the woodwork that they didn't know that that's what they were meant to do. And you keep thinking but you're besieged by emails and things telling you who to go and see and what should happen and not to exercise too much of your own discretion in deciding whether or not you know you would or you wouldn't, you know, deal with it. Just deal with it in the confidence that on the whole students aren't going to be heavily penalised if you say it's occurring. And they might actually be helped. So in that sense it's … it's a bit frustrating. It's not a joke, yeah.

I: *Frustrating, right, okay.*

R: And the university system is serious about getting something happening.

I: *And helping students.*

R: And helping, yes.

I: *Okay.*

Q.3 Responses to plagiarism

R: Do you want me to do three?

I: *Three and four together, yes, if you're ready.*

R: Okay. Oh, three is … no, they're not overturned by those higher in authority. ^That is incidences of student plagiarism or my responses to them. But then maybe my position is slightly odd in that I was for two years on the working party that helped put together the details of the system. ^So I'm more or less in accord with the procedures that were set up. Having said that, I still do use my discretion as in the example I gave, where it was very obviously not a case of attempting to mislead in any way. But otherwise routinely, you know, because in our really big classes you've got no chance of … except when it's very obvious, like when they attach their source. There's no chance of actually judging whether or not, you know, what it's about. But when it's in our very large classes they tend to be the early in the first year classes and there's essentially not a penalty associated then. There's an obligatory counselling and educational procedure that follows but no penalisation.

I: *Right, okay. But it's only when you get to the second, third year that …*

R: Well, even second and third year our classes are getting a bit big to tell. But on the whole it's easier at higher year levels to work out to know the particulars of a case. So I guess in that sense it's not a fair system in …

I: *Because there are fewer students?*

R: Yes, because there are fewer students. And because you tend to set … we set much more individual works at the higher level so that each student's work is different to others. So it's easier to tell.

I: *To see?*

R: Yeah.

I: *Okay. And so you would use your discretion for that particular case, you said?*

R: Yeah.

I: *Would you say that if you feel it's unintentional you use your discretion in their favour? And would you say if you feel it's intentional you'd put it through or not …*

R: If it's unintentional in the sense that it was very obvious that they weren't trying to conceal the fact that they used other material from us, ^we … it's a bit odd and circular. Because our first step is always that the coordinator of the unit documents fully that, and then it's passed on to the Head of School for an interview. But our Head of School is very much on the formative side but saying you really shouldn't do it. But you know it's not on the whole a punitive … even in terms of marks at that first stage. Although we do have a rule at the first year one that simply says that the plagiarised bit will just not be read. That is you read all the bits in between and …

I: *And don't count …*

R: Yeah. So that in effect does produce a penalty. But I think … I can't remember the first year one whether they're given an opportunity to resubmit without the … although they're told that they're … there's a double stakes. They're meant to submit their material to Turnitin, read all the report that comes back and then they can resubmit it as many times as they like up to the final date. We actually set a date where they're required to have checked it through once themselves with Turnitin. Don't care how many revisions in between. And then there's a final date where we just take whatever's left at the end.

I: *And your role now is lecturer, tutor or …*

R: I'm just a lecturer.

I: *Lecturer, okay.*

R: I'm just a lecturer now. And I'm not involved in our formal …

I: *Right. And you're not unit coordinator for this particular student that you … this particular case that you're talking about?*

R: No, because our Masters students are … we don't have a lot of them, it's not a big class. So in fact they're not owned by anybody. They, you know, bits … so I just ended up being his advisor on that particular unit, yeah. It was a work submitted for another unit but I was his writing advisor. ^So, yes, discretion but not in terms of whether it's … I don't make the judgement of whether it's, on the whole, whether it's understood or not but whether or not it's an attempt to conceal it or not I guess is the thing. And where it's blatantly obvious it's not. When they tell you (laughs).

I: *And you were saying before you feel that other lecturers use their discretion.*

R: I think some of our lecturers that don't tune in or read what they gather as the rubbish coming from central, which lots of it comes. Then they're the ones that are more likely to either get cross and angry and impose some penalty by themselves. Marks penalty, I mean.

I: *Marks.*

R: Yeah. Or to do the reverse and say, oh well, you know, they're a good student, they wouldn't have intended it and ignore it.

I: *And you know that from experience?*

R: Yes, yeah.

I: *Right, okay.*

R: We keep shouting at them, "No, no, you're meant to tell," (laughes) "Oh, I've never had to do this before." Yeah.

Q.4 Students and penalties

I: *Okay, thank you. And what about five and six?*

R: Yes, it does seem to be mostly our international students that plagiarise. So I think it really is partly … it's many things that bring this about. One is it is a cultural thing to be more precisely echoing, you know, the words. But it's also a pressure thing, as well. That is ^particularly when English is not the first language, you really are peddling at double speed just to, at least, to just keep up with what's going on. So your whole time and effort is under so much more pressure than it is for local students. So the need to do something that just … the investment of time in just borrowing chunks which you think is more or less okay anyway versus all the work of getting it into a form that that does this mysterious thing of not just paraphrasing, is really a hard thing …

I: *For them.*

R: Yeah, to fit it in. It's a hard thing to understand. And it's … I can understand … and because the penalties for them, for failing a unit, can be so much higher. Like, …

I: *They have to go home.*

R: They have to go home, yes. Or in the case of some of our students at the moment where going home is not really a very good option, they even get sent to a detention centre, which is even worse. Yeah, so I can understand why that happens more with overseas students.

I: *Right. And in your experience you feel that because you have more international students in your classes or …*

R: I don't know.

I: *All right. Or you just feel that from your experience …*

R: From my experience. Yeah. What is NESB?

I: *Non English speaking background.*

R: Okay. That's what used to be LOTE.

I: *Yeah, the LOTE and then there's other acronyms, as well… And what about six?*

R: I don't think the penalties are too lenient. I think the system when it mechanistically says that plagiarism shouldn't occur really underestimates how difficult an idea it is to grasp. Students can readily understand that it's bad to copy what other people have done but I think in many instances they simply can't grasp this very abstract thing of acknowledging an idea. They'll honestly say, "But I read it all and I understand it now so it's my idea now, isn't it?" I mean, equivalent to this. Or human movement students in particular will say, "But we worked on this together, you know, so why shouldn't we all write up the same thing?" And it's ...from my experience encountering students, I think it's quite rare that it's a deliberate attempt simply to cheat. It really is a really difficult and abstract idea. Beyond the very simple just don't copy, that sort of thing.

I: *Right, okay.*

R: Because I think there are many aspects of plagiarism apart from just copying and pasting.

Q.5 Other comments

I: *Right, yes, okay. Is there anything you'd like to say about your institution's Academic Integrity Policies and Procedures and student plagiarism in general? Are there any other comments you wish to make?*

R: I think one of the reasons that many … the sorts of staff I was talking about who don't go about reading it, don't, is because it's ended up looking amazingly complex. There are great big tables for working out whether or not a student's in which stage of their degree and what depth of ^plagiarism this is, that is 5% of the work or 50% or whatever. Interacting with, in a third dimension of this cube, whether it's the first or second time it's been brought to anyone's attention. And then the set of procedures to go through.

I: *To follow, right.*

R: I think because it's become just … you look at it, and read it, …it's pages and pages of these great big tables, I can understand why that's hindered the uptake.

I: *Okay. Do lecturers get any help? Because the students you said they have to do this unit, they need to pass this unit …*

R: No, the lecturers don't have to do an equivalent online unit, which is a really good idea actually. Although they would complain bitterly. Because we keep feeling at the moment that the degree of micromanagement of what we're doing academically is increasing hugely. I mean, every month we get yet another thing that's now been formulated and regulated and tick boxes and... But it would be, in some sense, a less painful way of getting around it.

I: *And understanding.*

R: Yeah.

I: *When you say you've got tables and three dimensional drawings, is that just on the website or do you get handbooks, do you get …*

R: It's on the website but it was also sent out to us as PDFs. But I don't know how many people opened and read the whole PDF.

I: *Oh, right. So no actual handbook or anything to …*

R: No, we don't tend to get handed paper for anything much, apart from my room which is sort of like [laughs] … but some of this paper is quite archaeological, I'll have you know.

I: *Okay. Okay.*

R: No, there's not a general unwillingness to comply but there is an unwillingness to invest the time in getting their heads around the ins and outs of the policy.

I: *Right, because it is time consuming.*

R: And because it's been made …complicated. Mmm. Which I think is a mistake.

I: *Okay, all right. Okay, thank you very much.*

R: That's it? That was very painless.

I: *Yeah, that's it.*

END OF TRANSCRIPT

INTERVIEWEE 15

I: *Thank you for agreeing to be interviewed.*

R: That's okay.

Q.1 Incident of plagiarism

I: *My first question to you is could you tell me about an incident of student plagiarism that you've experienced that you found memorable, or frustrating*.

R: Okay, this is quite some time ago, ^and it was in another university, and it was in relationship to an offshore partner. Is that a suitable ...

I: *Do you have any for this university that come to mind?*

R: Not really. No.

I: *All right. You can talk about that.*

R: Are you sure?

I: *Yes.*

R: It was a situation where a post-grad group of students had an assignment to do, and there were probably about 60 or so students in the unit. There was the full range of types of plagiarism across the group. Like people who had referenced really well, right the way through to the middle bit where they were inept, but it was okay, and then at the tail end there were three where it was ... I would consider to be significant plagiarism. One was lots of copying from sources in chunks, in quotes with the reference, but like just chunk after chunk after chunk and none of their own work. One where it was the referencing wasn't adequate, and what was their words, and what was not, wasn't indicated. And one where the person had gone online and extracted a whole article, taken the introduction and conclusion off, and written their own, and manufactured the references.

I: [laughs] *That's very clever.*

R: Very creative. And if they'd taken the time to do the work themselves, it probably would have taken them about the same amount of time. The thing that was most frustrating about it for me was that if the rules had been applied strictly to the letter of the law, that person would have got a zero, and been on a warning, the other two would have got re-submit, but still not get any marks, but get the benefit type, you know, or something along those ...

I: *A second chance.*

R: A second chance. Yeah. But I was kind of stuck when it got referred up the line, and someone higher up in the university ruled that I had to give the same chance to ...

I: *All three.*

R: ... well, to all the students to re-submit. So everybody who hadn't done their referencing correctly, including the one that had done this deliberate sort of process.

I: *And were you at that time - sorry, these were three post-graduate, international students?*

R: They were post-graduate students, international students, in an offshore location.

I: *So you were teaching offshore?*

R: Yes.

I: *And were you tutor, lecturer, or unit coordinator?*

R: I was the unit coordinator, and lecturer. I was a sessional at the time, and so there was a full-time staff member responsible for me ... and then the Head of School and so on. And it was a team teaching arrangement with the affiliate lecturer. What I wanted to do was ^follow the policy to the letter of the law, but it actually, in the end went right the way up to the faculty level where they decided that, no, all these students would be given a second chance, because there was a worry about offending or alienating the affiliate partner, rather than it being about ...

I: *Following the rules.*

R: ... the rules, yeah. In the end, being sessional, and needing the work, I elected not to jump up and down about it.

I: *Well, it was out of your hands, anyway.*

R: Once it had reached that ...

I: *When you gave it to the unit coordinator, did you?*

R: Well no, I was the unit coordinator, but there was another person, full-time person, but what I did when it went back to the affiliate college, they went to the full-time staff member, who referred up the line, you see.

I: *So you'd given your penalty, or you said, "You've got to do this."*

R: Yep. But I was over-ruled.

I: *But you were overruled because the college had complained to someone high up.*

R: Yes.

I: *I understand. It's very frustrating.*

R: So that was about the politics rather than the plagiarism by that stage.

I: *And that was frustrating for you?*

R: Oh it was frustrating, because what it meant was that in that unit, the next time round, when I came across plagiarism, the number of appeals went skyrocketed. I think because there was this perception that, "Well, all you need to do is complain, and you can get away with it."

I: *So you did teach it again after that?*

R: Yeah.

I: *And carried on, despite being frustrated?*

R: Oh yes. Well, I mean, you kind of deal with these things, you know, and perhaps if I had been a full-time staff member I would have been stronger about standing my ground, but ...

I: *And how long had you been there when this incident came up?*

R: ^Three or four years, probably.

I: *And was this fairly recent?*

R: No. It's a reasonable time ago. Yeah, so, but that's the one, when you say, "Which one?", that's the one that really sticks, and I think the reason that it keeps coming up is because now when someone comes to me for advice, or anything like that, I say, "What are the rules? Let's follow the rules exactly." So, you know, some of the rules say there's a discretion to the unit

coordinator, that is where the discretion should stay. No-one should overrule that. That sort of thing. So that's why it sticks, because it dictates the way I behave now.

I: OK. *That's very interesting. Thank you for that. Now I'm going to give you the question sheet.*

R: Sure.

Q.2 Policies and procedures

I: *So what I've got in Part B, I've got pairs of statements that I've obtained from the survey, so if you can look at each pair and give your comments, say to what extent you agree, or disagree, with each pair, and why. So take your time and you can go in any order.*

R: And you're talking about in this university?

I: *Yes, please. Have you been here long?*

R: Since the beginning of 2009.

I: *So, yes, this university if you can.*

R: Ok with the first two I'd probably go more towards one.

I: *So you believe they're fair?*

R: Yeah.

I: *And even for the other university, for the anecdote you gave me, would you still say ...*

R: The actual what was written down ...

I: *Was fair?*

R: Was fair. Yes. But then ...

I: *But implementation.*

R: ... the implementation in that case failed, because of it being overruled. So on that particular occasion. Yes. You could say it was a joke.

I: *Did you feel it was a joke?*

R: Yeah.

I: *And here?*

R: Here? Well, I've had bits and pieces here, but nothing that I've needed to escalate. Perhaps to put it in context, the unit that I teach is one of the first post grad units that many of the students do, and I actually have an exercise built in, or an assignment built in that is about building referencing skills. So it's built into the system, or to the assignment, that they get feedback on whether they're referencing correctly, or not. So even when one of the students got two out of ten for the first assignment, but it's part one of something that builds, and she had the opportunity to re-submit, not for a changed mark, but so that the feedback that she gets will help her with part two, and so the implementation is my unit, and I haven't had the opportunity to need to ...escalate it. So it's difficult for me to comment more about that, except that the policies and procedures make it easier for me to determine what happens with my students.

Q.3 Responses to plagiarism

I: *So that did happen. For number three, you can say that that's happened to you in that particular case.*

R: It has happened to me, in the past.

I: *But here?*

R: I haven't had any cause to worry about that. No. No.

I: *And what about number four, the discretion?*

R: I do use my discretion, and I have a tutor working with the external students in that particular unit with me, and most of the time I leave it to him to use his discretion. We've talked quite a lot about what I expect, but when he ... it feels like he wants to debate, and discuss, and he's not sure, then we talk. So I use mine, but I also give a certain amount of discretion to my tutor.

I: *Right, you give them power to decide at their level before they come to you?*

R: Yes. So that ... partly because they are dealing in the interaction day-to-day with the student and therefore ...they know, well, this student's trying to get away with something, or they're a newby and they really don't know, and they're trying to come to terms with it, or they've left it all to the last minute, and they don't care, you know, and so some of those things must come into your decision ...about whether it's inadvertent, or deliberate, or whatever.

I: *Intentional.*

R: Yeah.

I: *And in that particular anecdote that you used, you said that you used your discretion, but you, within the confines of the policy?*

R: Yes.

I: *Right. And you felt when it went up, and was overturned, that that discretion up there was ...*

R: Well, what that was doing was playing politics instead of looking at the policy. So it's then questionable, what's more important, and I guess if I was the person at the higher level, the relationship with the partner institution might be more important, but at the time, I felt undermined.

Q.4 Students and penalties

R: ^With number five, aah, I think that's an overgeneralisation, so the extent to which I agree ... a lot of people who come from non-English speaking backgrounds, come from backgrounds where there's no expectation that you plagiarise, and in fact to some degree if you can find the guru that says whatever it is and repeat it, that's what's expected.

I: *It's okay.*

R: So, yes. But it's a...

I: *But in your experience, it's been NESB, because you said you taught the offshore ...*

R: Sure. But I also have quite a ...

I: *But here?*

R: But here. I also find that there are Australian students who do, particularly students who came through school quite some time ago before it became so important, ^and people who work in business who say, "Well," ... because I'm teaching post-grads, they say, "Well, I don't have to reference everything I do in a report for business, for my employer. Why do I have to?" And there's that discussion about intellectual property actually being a commercial commodity these days, and businesses will also have to pay attention to that, but you kind of have to have that discussion to get anywhere with getting that message across, and that's not confined to NESB, and international students. So, yes, mostly ...but it's not at a completely agree end of the scale, if you know what I mean?

I: *And when you say 'local students, post grad', you teach local and NESB post-grads, yes, have they come straight from work, or straight from other countries, or ...*

R: There's a mix. So and the mix is straight from their undergraduate degree, keeping on going; no undergraduate degree, coming in with RPL; have studied, but a long time ago, so coming back to study; and ^then there's also those who have significant work experience, and sometimes even a doctorate, or something, from somewhere else; because it's an MBA and MHRM program there's that full range.

I: *And it could be any of those type of students that plagiarise? You can't pinpoint, say, "Oh, it's this particular type" or not?*

R: No. It tends to be, don't know the mechanics, or don't understand the why. There's a combination of those two things. Yeah.

^And penalties. They're too lenient only in one sense, and that is that if you under the policy, where there is a discretion given to the unit coordinator, if I let them off, and then the person in the office next door lets them off, and then the person in the office beyond that let's them off, and there's no record, they can keep getting away with it, and they never learn from it. So when there's a discretion exercised, in my view there needs to be some way of capturing that, so that if I find someone who's actually in their second, or third, semester, and I think, "Mmm. They should know by now." I should be able to go and find out if ...

I: *Like a central depository of warning. Are you talking about warnings?*

R: There's all sorts of issues, because when there's an official warning, that goes on their file, so you can look that up, but it's that where the discretion has been used to say, "Look. Don't do it again", that there's a really fine line between issuing a warning, which is a letter, and telling them, "Look, there's gong to be a note on your file, which will be erased before your record is closed when you graduate", but which to me is somehow available to the next unit coordinator, because sometimes you might find out by corridor conversation, by accident, but you don't talk to everybody about every student.

I: *So nobody knows? Would Student Central know?*

R: No. No.

I: *Nobody knows.*

R: So with the person that I gave two out of ten to just recently, I know it was complete misunderstanding of how it all should happen. But when I was marking it, I really, you know, "What do I do? What do I do?" And I spoke to a couple of colleagues. And a couple of them said, "Oh, she's in my class as well. I'll keep an eye out for it." So they now know that she's had an early alarm go off, and been told, "No. You've got to do it this way. Here you are." So if they now come across it with her, they're more likely to come and talk to me and say, "You talk to me about them, what's going on?" And get more information. But if someone in between, who I didn't speak to, has the situation they won't know that it's come up elsewhere.

I: *So there's no, yes, lack of communication, so perhaps inconsistencies with ...*

R: It's about our system of recording discretion being exercised. Does that make sense?

I: *Yes.*

R: Yes you would put a note on the file if there was an official warning, but you wouldn't put ... it's a bit like ... it's stupid really thing, but if someone's arrested, and then let off, there's still a record that they were arrested. If, sorry, if they were arrested, and then not charged, there's still a record that they were arrested, the record then says, they were let off.

I: *No charge. But you don't have that first record?*

R: But we don't have that. Yes. Yeah. ^So if you're looking whether to charge someone with something, or not, later on and you went in and, "Well, actually they've been arrested and let off three times. What's going on here? There's a pattern."

I: *And no-one would know? Not even people further up would know.*

R: No. Because I exercise my discretion in my unit and it doesn't get recorded anywhere. It would only be if I chose to raise it in a meeting, or somewhere like that. And I understand that's to do with keeping records about students, being a ... once you start …

I: *Like students at risk, sort of thing.*

R: Yeah.

I: *But you're not required to do that? It's just up to you.*

R: No. Yeah. So it's a bit of a ... it's not quite to do with penalties as such, but it's about how someone could continue to get away with it.

I: *Procedures.*

R: Yeah.

Q.5 Other comments

I: *Are there any other comments you'd like to make about Academic Integrity Policies and Procedures, and student plagiarism in general?*

R: ^Well, I have done a couple of things in my class where I've surveyed students at the beginning and end of semester to see what sorts of things work, and one of the things that surprised me, both times, is the number of students who ... because one of the questions I've had is please put, in your own words, what you think plagiarism is, and the number of students who've said, "No idea." So at the beginning of the semester they don't know, and I think that's what made me start thinking about who's in my units in terms of where have they come from, and of course, you don't know ... the no idea students, you don't know who they are, because you haven't collected names, but it's one of those things where you think, "Gee, how can, in this day and age, you're in a university, and not know what it means?"

I: *And to go through at post graduate level and not know.*

R: Yeah.

I: *Would you teach it in the first lesson? Do you do that?*

R: Well, you do. It is included in the unit guides, and there's all sorts of information available about it, but I think the problem is that when you first come in there's so much information.

I: *Overwhelmed.*

R: And particularly for those who come from cultures where plagiarism isn't seen in such a negative light, it's one of the foreign things they have to learn about how we do things in this university, and it's just one of those things. Most of them will get to the end of the semester, and be able to put down what they say it is, in their own words, but there's still one or two who you think, "Mmm. I'm not sure you got it." [laughs] But yeah that to me, actually asking at the beginning and asking them at the end is actually part of the process of awareness raising, because of course once they've thought, "Gee, I don't know what that is." When the word comes up in the semester, they go, "Oh, that's what it was." So it's a tool.

I: *Yes. To educate them. But for lecturers, there's nothing like that. There's no ... as a lecturer you don't have that luxury of having ... been taught or having a unit for lecturers?*

R: There is a tertiary teaching unit, and that sort of thing that covers all of those sorts of things. That didn't used to be obligatory. ^It has been for full-time staff since about 2008, I think. But it's more the fact that understandings of it differ. At undergraduate level here, all the students do a foundation unit, and the foundation units, all cover writing skills, plagiarism, those sorts of things.

I: *So they'd know.*

R: They should know. There's a difference between 'they do know and they should know'. But certainly it's that all the students should know.

I: *Unless they have come straight from another university overseas.*

R: Yeah, and sometimes they articulate in from other places to second year, and that sort of thing.

I: *So they missed that.*

R: Sometimes they do. ^I also think sometimes people learn the mechanics of what they're supposed to do, but they don't get the why.

I: *And just one more question because you've worked at two different universities, can you say anything like comparing the two policies and procedures?*

R: They're reasonably similar. ^On the whole the other university is far more bureaucratic in all its procedures anyway, and the school I was in there, the issue of plagiarism was a regular item on the school meeting agenda, and so whilst everybody was talking about the same things every time it came up, it kept it at the forefront of people's minds. There's less of a tendency for that here, but this is a less formal, bureaucratic sort of university anyway, and that has its pluses, definitely has its pluses, but I guess that one of the minuses might be that it's corridor conversation rather than in a meeting.

I: *I know what you mean. Good. Thank you very much.*

END OF TRANSCRIPT

INTERVIEWEE 16

I: *Thank you for agreeing to be interviewed.*

R: My pleasure.

Q.1 Incident of plagiarism

I: *My first question to you is, could you tell me about an incident of student plagiarism that you've experienced that was memorable or frustrating?*

R: (laughs). Yeah, I'm thinking of one that's kind of both. This was a fourth year student in a final, it was the final coursework unit that they do, it's in psychological assessment and they needed to write a… They were given like a case study, IQ assessment, basically they were given a case study then they had to write up a report. And this particular student, who is an international student and I dealt with her in the previous year, in third year in one of my units. And she'd had a plagiarism offence there, a level two ^and I'd got her in and I'd talked to her about that and she got really upset and said, "Oh, you're the first person that's ever tried to help me and thank you so much", and blah, blah, blah. And then she hands in this assignment to me the next year and it was basically off one of the test websites. They've got like a sample report and she'd just put, you know, like the client name into this sample report. So I was, I mean, we don't want to take these things personally as such, I mean, I wasn't think that she was doing it to me, but thought I was just so ... I was frustrated and disappointed that I'd made a personal connection with this woman, I'd spent time with her. I'd thought she'd understood what the issues were and I thought we'd gone through, you know, what some of her challenges and difficulties were. ^And then to have a plagiarism offence that was ...

I: *Do it again.*

R: Well ... and I think she'd actually ... in saying that, that I spoke to her in my unit, she'd had three at the same time across three units in third year.

I: *Oh, right, and how did you know that? It was on the record?*

R: Because we talk to each other.

I: *Oh, you talk.*

R: No, the staff do talk…to each other here.

I: *That's good. Was there a record of... because you said that was ... that previous one was level two?*

R: Yeah, so it would have been, assumedly... actually no, it was before the new system had…

I: *Oh, all right.*

R: Yeah, it was before the new student discipline panel.

I: *Right, so you'd sort of talked about it in the corridors and worked out that she'd done it, she was doing it?*

R: Yep, sorry, I'm kind of mixing terminology. But yeah, that was that and yeah, we do, I guess, in the school, ^do kind of flag students to each other a bit.

I: *Everybody or only a few of you in this school?*

R: Oh, the undergrad team. It's interesting, I've just put together ... I am kind of thinking about this plagiarism stuff because I might say something you'll have to take it out of your thing. But our school is, you might have seen the plagiarism report, the University one, so our school is the biggest detector of plagiarism in the entire University.

I: *Well done.*

R: I don't know if that's good or not. But I've just put together for C...P... a list of all our units and when we've used Turnitin and how else we can detect plagiarism. So yeah, we do tend to put people on people's radars a bit in the under-grad psych program.

I: *And this particular student, this fourth year when you said she'd copied the sample report and inserted different names, how did you know that? From knowing the report or from Turnitin?*

R: No, it wasn't from Turnitin. It was that, so the first bit of the report came from the particular case details that I'd given her and she'd have to try and paraphrase and whatever, terribly well written. Second part of the report, there was a difference in the writing style so I didn't immediately know that that's what it was but I did think, this is very good, it's very 'all by the book', if you like, and so then I just did a quick Google search…and just pulled up this whole report, yeah.

I: *And what happened to her?*

R: That's a very good question. Now, I'm thinking it's before the student discipline panel, I can't remember.

I: *This was a few years ago?*

R: Yeah, it would have been at least…

I: *Were you lecturer or unit coordinator?*

R: Both.

I: *Oh, you were both of them?*

R: Yeah, so, oh gosh, I'm sorry, I can't remember when it was. I don't think it was last year, so it might have been the previous year that I'd taken a unit. 2010, I didn't do it in 2009, it might have been 2008, that's a bit ... Was either 2008 or 2010, doesn't feel like it was last year. (laughs) So I don't know what happened.

I: *You don't know. Do you know what happened to her, did she finish her degree or ...?*

R: No, I don't know.

I: *But you put it through as a level three. Would you have put it through as a level three?*

R: Yeah, I would have done at the time.

I: *So why was that frustrating for you?*

R: It was frustrating because of my experience with the student.

I: *Oh, right, because of the previous chat.*

R: Yeah, and knowing that I'd had personal contact with her and knowing that she'd also ... and I'm sorry, I can't even remember the process that we used to have before that. Knowing that she'd had these three in the previous year, that she'd had three notifications of plagiarism, that she'd been educated. You know, she'd had this brought to her attention umm and that she did it again. That's why it was frustrating and doubly frustrating because I had sat down personally and her sitting there crying, saying, "oh, you know, thank you, you're so kind to help me and now I understand" and yeah, that's why it's frustrating.

Q.2 Policies and procedures

I: *Okay, thank you. Okay, I'll give you part B now. So what I've got is I've got pairs of statements that I've obtained from the survey. So if you could just look at each pair and give your comments and say whether you agree or disagree and to what extent and why. So you can take your time but if you can just address each pair in order.*

R: So the pairs?

I: *Yeah, pairs of statements.*

R: ^In terms of the first one, umm 'policies and procedures for responding to student plagiarism are fair'. I agree that they are fair, I think here at our University, ^and I do sit on our student discipline panel, in our faculties, so I've seen quite a few cases as well as being the Director of Teaching and Learning here so I deal with the school ones. I wasn't in that role at that time I was talking about that particular one, the others haven't been my students so they're not kind of as memorable somehow. So I deal with the school ones and at a facility level I deal with, you know, from a different school we kind of sit on the panel with. So, you know, I'm really impressed with our University policies around that, we've got our big document up there.

I: *You've got the flow chart.*

R: Yeah, with all the boxes. So I think they're well and truly fair, I think they're a bit confusing and they're very time consuming but...

I: *You said they're confusing, fair but confusing?*

R: Well, they have been confusing, yeah.

I: *When you come to implementing, you mean, or applying them, are they confusing or...?*

R: Yeah, what am I talking about? Well yeah, I think in terms of who's supposed to do what and that seemed to change a little bit recently. We weren't sure about who contacted the student, so you've got your Head of School and then you've got your Investigating Officer. And does the Head of School email the student to say, look, some of your unit coordinators picked this up and I'm going to be sending this to the Investigating Officer who's blah, blah. Who's going to do this, do I do that, does…

I: *Right, so the procedures have become a little bit complicated?*

R: A little bit, I think, yeah. But I think they're very fair but in terms of the second part... I'm kind of reflecting on this in terms of my knowledge mainly from our school and in relation to that policy and the new student discipline panel kind of thing. So implementations of policies and procedures is a joke. I wouldn't strongly agree with that but I think there's an element of that in that I talk to so many staff here. Our staff are good at picking up plagiarism and usually go that extra mile, it takes a long time.

So staff are penalised, if you like, you know, for being diligent at picking up plagiarism. So if they pick that up, you know, then they've got to fill out forms, then they've got to get all the evidence and staff with big units, I've had them say it's just not worth it. Well, there's that but there's also the fact, and people are really concerned from a student welfare progression kind of point of view, that this process takes a very long time, like, it can take two or three months easily and so if you're talking about an end of ... or towards the end of semester, you haven't got a grade for that student because you don't know the outcome of the case so you don't know whether they're going to get an annulment, you know, if they're going to get a zero mark, they're going to get a deduction. So you're sitting them on a GNS, they are going back to their coordinator saying what's happening. You know, they might be a student who's about to, or trying to graduate, you know, have they passed a prerequisite unit to get into you know follow

on for the next semester? So staff find that really, really stressful and on behalf of the students. And so you know there's been a number of occasions where staff have said to me, "I'm just not going to do it, it's too hard, it's not worth it and it takes too long".

I: *Right, so what would they do in that situation, just let it slide?*

R: They would either put it as a level one. Yeah, and so we had a bunch of fourth year students on an assignment and this person was saying ... and they put through plagiarism cases in other situations so it's not that they never do it. But she said "no, it's just not worth it, I'm not going to do this to the students in terms of picking them up at this stage. And also in terms of, yeah, you know, the time and work involved" and that worries me. Yeah, so in terms of that is it a joke, it's a joke, you know, there's an element of that if you've got staff saying, I know this is what I'm supposed to be doing but I'm just not going to do this because it takes too long, or that kind of thing.

I: *And you know this from experience within your school because they've told you that?*

R: Yeah, absolutely, and that means that students are then getting away with this, you know, and that's an equity issue. So we had this bunch of students, I think six of them in this fourth year unit, ^they had no penalty whatsoever for plagiarising quite significant amounts, reasonably significant amounts of material. I mean, we're not talking about like a whole assignment copied or whatever but, you know, sections of text - that's not acceptable for a fourth year at all.

I: *And they were not picked up anywhere from first to third year?*

R: No, seemingly not, no, no. But then some of the early ones, so we've got staff with big units where they're saying "this is going to take me ages to do this". You know, if we're talking about level ones where they have to meet with the students, "no way, you know, this is too hard, I'm not going to do this". So then we've got students that can be developing bad habits, you know, getting away with it, if you like, and then get to second and third year, fourth year and continue the behaviour and say, "no one's ever told me that this isn't right before". So I'm worried about the consequences of that, but I understand the staff position.

I: *The time issue?*

R: Yeah.

I: *How many of your, do you think roughly, your staff would go, I can't, I don't have the time? Would you say most or half?*

R: No, no, I wouldn't. Yeah, I would say it's a small percentage. What I've just been kind of thinking about in relation to having a look at all the different units and who uses Turnitin. And obviously Turnitin is not the only way of people detecting plagiarism, you know, that's not the point, but postgraduate students don't plagiarise clearly. So we wouldn't need to, you know, or it would stand out like a sore thumb. But, I mean, I've had postgraduate students not ... I haven't had an example of, like, a whole thing, but in reports where I've had recommendations that I know they come out of one of the books that I get them to look at. So again, around children's IQ assessment, you know, where you've got a certain pattern of results, your recommendation might be to do a certain thing and there's this certain passage that I see all the time. And, you know, it's pretty borderline, I think, so I think we're at risk in terms of not looking at postgrad students. Our PhDs, we don't get them to use Turnitin; our Masters dissertations, we don't get them to use Turnitin. Our fourth year dissertations we do, but I personally feel we're really at risk in terms of, you know, of sending out a PhD or a Masters dissertation if we don't really know, we haven't checked that.

I: *That's a worry.*

R: Yeah. So if you've got people, and I'm sure if we were talking about any policy, I'm sure it's probably the same thing. That some people are going to implement it absolutely by the letter; other people are going to choose not to for a range of different reasons.

I: *Right, that's right.*

R: Does that answer what you…

I: *Yeah, that's great.*

Q.3 Responses to plagiarism

I: *Three and four.*

R: Three, my response is I've never had that experience of the response being overturned. ^I can think of a couple of staff, or one staff member in particular who was one of these, you know, she had been extremely diligent in picking up a lot but was really concerned about the amount of time taken for her. And she would certainly talk about the being penalised herself because I've found this...There's so much work that I then have to do as unit coordinator because I'm trying to do the right thing. And it was really interesting, I wasn't on the student discipline panel, obviously, for those particular cases but these were second year students but came back with, like, a penalty of a ten per cent reduction. Which seems really minor and it seems really minor for all the work and time that went in…By the unit coordinator and then I had to investigate as the investigating officer and I had to look up the sources and talk to the students. Then it goes to the student discipline panel and you get three people there for a meeting and they discuss it and all of that kind of stuff. You know…

I: *So in that case you were, like, in the middle so it went up to the board, the committee, it was overturned?*

R: Well, so it wasn't overturned as such, but…

I: *They applied a different…*

R: A much lower penalty than what we'd kind of thought.

I: *Suggested.*

R: Yeah.

I: *And now that you're on the committee, when you have these come up to you, these cases, would you overturn anybody's suggestion for a penalty?*

R: I'm just trying to think. I don't think there's ... there's been a couple that we've had to send back and say, look, we don't have enough evidence here, there's not enough objective evidence to say that. Now I'm trying to think of what the example was with that, where people haven't been. Oh, they say it's the same as another student's assignment, for example, but they haven't got the other student's assignment. And so we're very mindful of that, which is we're supposed to be objective people making decisions on the evidence in front of us. If we don't have two assignments to be able to see or a Turnitin or something like that, we can't say that person's assignment is the same as that other person's. So we've had to send it back and say, look, or because we think ... well, the student can appeal that…

I: *Yes, that's right.*

R: Say on what basis did you make that decision, where's your evidence? So we have sent it back for a collection of evidence and it hasn't come back, so they haven't…

I: *But for most cases that come through to you, there's enough evidence and they suggest it's a level two, you would follow that? Because they've spent the time, haven't they, investigating?*

R: That's right. I can't personally think of a time where we would have made it lower than. It's not that many level threes, I can't think of a time when we've made it lower than that. So yeah, I would tend to disagree about the first one. ^Use my discretion.

I: *In your role. In your role as lecturer and unit coordinator.*

R: Yeah. I guess what I'm thinking about right now is in terms of that, you know, is this too hard, how big of a deal is this? I just had a bunch of ...I now coordinate our first year unit so it's happening this semester that these are students who are in their first semester, they're mid-year entry students. And so I've had a couple of examples where there's some very poor paraphrasing going on, but there's references in there, so you know, they'll be a chunk, a sentence or two sentences and there'll be a citation at the end of it, but it really is a quote.

I: *Right.*

R: I've really sat on those and thought, oh, do I, you know, do I put that through as a level one and I've chosen not to in that case. You know, I've written back to the student and saying this is a quote, this is what you need to do.

I: *Because it was a small percentage of the assignment?*

R: It was small and it did have a reference in there, it's just it was the paraphrasing issue…

I: *Poor paraphrasing.*

R: Given that they were first, well no, paraphrasing basically. Oh, well, I think words missed out kind of here and there. But it was a small section, they did have a reference list, they did have a citation. I'm still sitting on that really and I guess I'm thinking, you know, I've sent those assignments back to the students with a concern about that. And I am still just of this week sitting thinking should I have put it through as a level one because of those things, so then it will be on the system.

I: *It will be on the record.*

R: As a ...yeah. So I guess yes, we all, we all do. But at that kind of level I guess, yeah, and thinking very much about first year students and where those students gave me the impression they were giving it a really genuine good go.

I: *But if it was a fourth year, you wouldn't be worried or thinking…*

R: No doubt, yeah…Yeah, no. So normally I've got my chart out there and I'm trying to work out exactly what and the old checklist ... oh a different checklist thing that we had where you'd have the four different continuum of looking at where students were. My concern is around education for students and equity for other students, so I would tend to err on the side of reporting, you know, rather than not. But yeah, it was trying to work out what was the best way to give feedback to these students, just as a recent example.

I: *Because they're first years.*

R: Yeah.

I: *Okay.*

Q.4 Students and penalties

R: It's mostly, yeah, international students, it's not ... it's definitely not ... I think there's different kinds of things going on. Certainly I wouldn't say mostly.

I: *Okay, so for number five you disagree?*

R: Yeah, I would disagree with that. There's a high number of students that from their name appear to be international students, or non-English speaking students. Also I guess from then what students kind of write in in terms of their letter. You know, they are from non-English speaking backgrounds or they're international students but I wouldn't say. So I might say it's more than 50 per cent, might be 55 or 60 per cent but it's not 80 per cent or 90 per cent of students, in my experience.

I: *And in your school, do you have an equal number of local and international or would you have more local?*

R: No, we'd have much more…Much more local.

I: *Whereas the case you picked up was a fourth year international?*

R: Yes, that was an example of an international student, yeah.

I: *But not always?*

R: No, no, there's different issues. Well there's the same issues plus extra issues on top for those students, obviously language difficulties. I'm just thinking there was another young woman, not this particular one I was talking about, who ... yeah, no, no, no, that was an Asian student who said to me "I had to, I had to because I didn't understand it". You feel sympathy for these people to that extent but that kind of reasoning or their understanding about, well, I had to but there was no other choices available. So there's obviously a language issue there but also often the stress for these students and the support and things like that. You know, we've had some, oh, just kind of heartbreaking letters come through to the student discipline panel from students, some international, you know, some local students that, oh, you know, I'm trying to support my X number of children and my partner's back at home in our home country. Or I'm here and my children and my partner are back in my home country and I'm trying to work or I'm trying to do this, I'm trying to do all of this stuff or, you know, I've just lost a child or, you know, had a miscarriage or, you know, things like that.

I: *That comes out when they appeal is that ...?*

R: No. The student discipline panel, they can write a response. So kind of saying, yeah, you know, tell us your side, tell us what happened here. That's a whole interesting thing about then should that affect your penalty with students that kind of give you their sob story or not, but that's another issue. So I just see that for many, you know, the international students are then kind of grappling with those issues above and beyond kind of a simple language kind of thing. Plus the kind of cultural expectations around referencing and citing. We had a student whose father wrote from Malaysia, I think it was, supporting his son/daughter kind of saying, you know, look, we've saved up all of this money to, you know, send our child to this esteemed university, you know, they did some study at XYZ University and, you know, this is what they were taught, this is how, you know, they understood how to write, etc., etc. We've sent them here to C... and, you know, they value their education and, you know, we've put in a lot for their education. They don't want to do the wrong thing, they didn't think they were doing the wrong thing, they respect the system, they respect all the staff, you know, they really didn't know. Yeah, penalties handed out to some students who plagiarise. ...I mean, I can think of examples, like the examples that I gave earlier, those students that got a ten per cent penalty. So, you know, out of an assignment that was worth twenty marks, I mean, they had two marks taken off, off their assignment which I think is a lenient penalty. ...Uh... I would more disagree than agree with that, I'd be on the disagree side, I think there are some examples but overall, no, and my experience on the student discipline panel, which is…

I: *The penalty matches the level?*

R: I think so, and, you know, over time we've kind of accrued, okay, well, in this kind of situation I think this is a good penalty, or an appropriate penalty. That's the Dean of Teaching and Learning, a faculty staff member, there's a few of us that kind of rotate and a guild or a student guild member and it's really interesting I guess from an academic point of view, seeing the student perspective on that. And often the student is as hard or probably harder than us, where we might be a little bit like, oh, I really don't think the student deserves a mark for that. But oh gosh, is that too severe a penalty, should we give them a reduced mark and the student member will be saying, "no way, look, they don't deserve to get a mark for that piece of work. That wasn't their work".

I: *That's interesting.*

R: Yeah, yeah, so yeah, I tend to disagree.

Q.5 Other comments

I: *Are there any other ... is there anything else you'd like to say about your university's academic integrity policies and procedures and student plagiarism in general? Since you actually wear a few hats, lecturer, unit coordinator and then on the committee as well. So you have a nice broad picture of what's happening, is there any comments you want to make about...?*

R: I think there's some advantages since we brought in these new policies, so hopefully get some more consistency across the university. Because I think that's a real issue. I mean, obviously there's so much room for individual discretion and individual variation in terms of people detecting plagiarism or what people do with plagiarism. So, you know, education for staff about ways of detecting plagiarism, or you know, what it actually is, ways of detecting it and a very detailed process for what to do. I think that's a really good thing. I think our plagiarism report that shows there's many schools across the university that had no incidences of plagiarism, you know, in a year, you kind of wonder what's going on there, you know, I think there'd be some valid examples of units and maybe courses where, you know, there might be few opportunities. But yeah, you do wonder about.

I: *A bit suspicious.*

R: Yes, yes, well, I think that's what we were kind of told when we had a look at this report here where there'd be a whole faculty. There's a whole faculty here that doesn't have, this particular faculty 0.15% of their enrolments. This faculty 0.42%, this faculty 0.09% of enrolments in a faculty of humanities where students would kind of be doing a lot of written work I would only assume and another faculty there 0.12%.

I: *So that's a concern, the lack of consistency?*

R: Yeah. I think what they're trying to have a look at and I think we're being successful in terms of that with the recording system. So one thing about the recording system so we can actually monitor incidences of plagiarism. We've got that data at our university levels, a really good thing. What else was I going to say about that? Yeah, I think what they're looking for and we have this nicely in our school where hopefully you've got lots of level ones and then you don't have too many level twos and threes. Some areas have the opposite pattern, obviously not exactly sure what that might be about, whether they're really not reporting or picking up the lower level stuff, which then leads to, you know it being considered a higher level that it is picked up or that they are only picking up, you know, really, really quite severe things. So I think across the university they're saying, look, it's fine to have lots of level ones because then it's not academic misconduct, it's an educative kind of process....Is there anything else,.. I can't really think of anything else.

I: *That's all right, that's all right. Thank you very much.* **END OF TRANSCRIPT**

INTERVIEWEE 17

I: *Thank you for agreeing to be interviewed.*

R: My pleasure.

Q.1 Incident of plagiarism

I: *My first question to you is could you tell me about an incident of student plagiarism that you have experienced that you found frustrating or memorable?*

R: Oh well, I can think of several instances of frustrating.

I: *Okay, that's good.*

R: Because, you know, I think most academics sooner or later run up against an essay in which there is quite clearly either a passage that has been pinched from somewhere else, because you can tell that the prose is different. ^Or because the idea is much too sophisticated for the student at that particular level, ^and that may seem a bit prejudicial because that seems to imply that I don't expect students to have sophisticated minds, but in many cases it's a really complex philosophical or intellectual issue that you think, no, this is not likely to be within the student's ambit.

I: *Okay.*

R: ^So, those are the kind of irritating ones. ^Spectacular plagiarisms^… well, aside from essays that have been almost entirely taken from something else…

I: *Oh, okay.*

R: … cobbled together, I can't think of anything that has been particularly…you know...

I: *And how did you know that the essay was copied? How would you find out?*

R: Well, there are a number of ways. Firstly again, you know, do you mind if I drink while I ... ?

I: *No, that's okay.*

R: Well, an analysis… actually, what I want is a gin and tonic. An analysis of the prose style, particularly where the student has linked large slabs of lifted prose with his or her own prose, and you can see that those are…

I: *Alright, so from your experience you can work it out. Okay.*

R: ^Sometimes the student has gone to several sources, and again you can tell that there are differences in the prose style^.

I: *Okay. Do you use Turnitin or Google or anything?*

R: I have used Turnitin for one semester. ^I didn't find it terribly helpful, I have to say. I mean, I can imagine that it might be helpful for^ some disciplinary fields that allow for less of a margin of, or latitude of opinion or style or something, but in cultural studies it is…

I: *Difficult.*

R: Difficult. ^I have used Google.

I: *Okay.*

R: And in almost every case I think Google has come up with the same string. You know, so that kind of validated my initial impression that it had been lifted.

I: *Right, and what type of student would do this? When you say that you have had a few incidences, were they a particular type of student or a particular level of student?*

R: I think I've had them across the three levels of the undergraduate program. ^International students, you know, are particularly prone to it, and I've heard the various reasons for that ranging from a respect for the printed word to the overwhelming ambition to pass at all costs. And I'm sure you have heard those as well. But it's also been the case with domestic students, particularly the weaker ones.^ Now, why this might be the case I don't know. I mean, I've been thinking about it the last couple of days knowing that I was going to be talking to you.

I: *That's okay.*

R: And I think that there are a number of issues that come out of it. There is the moral or the ethical issue, which underlines the notion of plagiarism itself, but the question that I would then want to ask is, well, why isn't it a moral or ethical issue for the student? ^The student doesn't seem to think that there's a problem with it. I mean, there are two attitudes or two polarisations: one is that the student doesn't think that it is a problem or doesn't know it's a problem or the student is just flying a kite, and if he or she gets away with it, then that's good for the student, and if not, they just simply have to take the consequences. Although I have found that students sometimes become quite defensive about detected plagiarism.

I: *So when you see this happening to your students, to essays being copied at all levels, what do you do about it? What have you done? Have you…*

R: Well, until the recent policy that […] has come up with came out, I would, depending on the nature of the plagiarism, if it was just a word or a phrase that hadn't been quoted properly, I would say in my marginal notes, this isn't yours and you should quote properly.

I: *Okay.*

R: ^Or where it's been more serious than that, so that whole sections of the essay are not the student's own, I'd ask the student to come and see me and ask them to explain to me why, ^why this is here, why hasn't it been properly quoted or acknowledged in any way.

I: *Okay. So you sort of give them a chance to explain?*

R: Yes.

I: *And is that you as lecturer or as co-ordinator or both?*

R: Both.

I: *Both. Okay. And which would be your most frustrating incident, because you said you had a few? You've had one where the whole essay was copied. What happened in that case?*

R: That was an international student who at first protested that it was not copied. And then I showed her the pages from Google, and…

I: *Okay.*

R: And so then she was kind of was rather confounded and didn't know what to do and burst into tears, and I said to her, alright, I'll give you the opportunity to re-write the essay, but this time it's got to be your prose, your work. And what she did was to turn in the same essay but with quotation marks and references.

I: *Okay. Was she a first year or a second, third year?*

R: Well, that's interesting. She was actually in a third year unit but she shouldn't have been. I don't know how she was allowed to enrol in it. She was in fact a first year student.

I: *Okay. And how did she, what happened in the end when she re-submitted?*

R: Well, I asked her to come and see me again, and I said, this isn't actually any better. And so she promised to re-write it a second time properly, but then she just disappeared from the unit so I never saw anything.

I: *Oh, so she withdrew and you don't know what happened?*

R: I don't know that she actually formally withdrew, I think she just dropped out.

I: *So that would have been your most frustrating?*

R: Probably, yes.

Q.2 Policies and procedures

I: *Okay. Thank you. Okay, now I'll give you the sheet. So if we look at part B, what I've got is pairs of statements that I've obtained from the survey. So if you could look at each pair and give your comments and say whether you agree or disagree with each and why. So you can take any order.*

R: Okay.

I: *So just your comments on those statements.*

R: ...Okay, number one is a problematic one for me. Because on the one hand ^the argument that policies and procedures responding to student plagiarism are fair, on the face of it seems to be correct and it's certainly probably fair to the student, but it involves a lot of work on the academic's part.

I: *Yes.*

R: And this is work that is not calculated into our workloads.

I: *Yes, that's right. So fair to the student but not to the lecturer in terms of the workload?*

R: That's right.

I: *So would that be in that particular case, of the student that you asked her to do it twice, so that would be for you, that was unfair for you to go through…*

R: Well, it was additional work, you know.

I: *Right.*

R: And it was not an option that I gave to students who hadn't plagiarised.

I: *Right. But did you have to do that? Why did you do that? Give her two chances.*

R: To be fair to the student.

I: *Alright.*

R: I mean, because that was a particularly sensitive case. I did not want a young female Asian student accusing me of being sexist or racist or something like that you know so that that… I probably would not have been quite so liberal with a domestic student.

I: *Okay. So you would have put them through the system, in other words, but for this particular...*

R: Yes. Well, this was before the system actually existed as now.

I: *Okay, alright. So what about two then? Would you agree with two if you say the policies are unfair to lecturers two would follow?*

R: I'm trying to think that through... One of the problems with the current policy as I understand and remember it, because my memory is not that good, is that ^a distinction is made between first and subsequent plagiarism and there is, I mean, I can see the rationale for that, however, it can be interpreted by the students as they get one shot free. And that I think is a problem.

I: *Right.*

R: ^I really don't know how you deal with it because it seems to me that the problem of plagiarism has to be addressed at, ^in places and levels other than the university. For example, a lot of students are encouraged not directly to plagiarise but certainly to use a lot of material that isn't their own in the high schools.

I: *Okay.*

R: ^So I think to some degree initial plagiarism has to be addressed there as well.

I: *Right.*

R: ^Second, there are, ^...there is the ignorance argument, I didn't know what plagiarism was. ^And again it seems to me that that needs to be addressed at some level before students enter university. That they should know what plagiarism is.

I: *Right. Are they not taught that in first year? Some sort of course or as part of units taught to them?*

R: Well, it's required that the policy be put into each unit outline, but to be honest, these outlines that the university mandates are far too long and elaborate, and students just don't read them. You know, they just don't read them. I mean, they don't even read the… if they read anything it's the calendar at the back that tells them what…

I: *The assessments or something.*

R: Yeah, that's it.

I: *So when you say the policies, just going back to policies and implementing, so the problem is the students come without much knowledge, but we have the policies and they are supposed to know. But what about when it comes to actually implementing them as lecturers?*

R: Well.

I: *Assuming they know and you've gone through identifying it and talking to them. When you carry it through, is it a problem for you? Or is it farsical?*

R: Well, I have to say that I haven't really had any plagiarism problems with this current revised policy on plagiarism. And that is partly because I haven't been teaching full-time, I'm engaged in other things, devising new courses and so on. ^So, and I've been teaching chiefly at second and third year level, so when the students presumably already know something about it. But from what I've heard from colleagues, ^...one of the problems is that, well, one of the benefits is that the issue of dealing with a plagiarist is put into the hands of someone in higher authority, and I think that's important because I think the student needs to know that it isn't simply the, you know, the mania of a particular lecturer. ^But the difficulty with that is that you actually don't have any control over what that other person is going to do with the student...^ I think there's a confusion too in the policy. I may be wrong here but I think there's a confusion too in the policy about persistent plagiarists. That is they plagiarise across units. ^They will be pulled up if they plagiarise a second time in the same unit in which they are enrolled, but if they have plagiarised in the four units they're enrolled in…

I: *You don't know.*

R: You don't know and also that's still counted as a first offence. You know, so I do think there is a problem there. I mean, a student who persistently plagiarises I think knows what he or she is doing.

I: *Right. It's whether she's picked up by everybody in all the units.*

R: That's right. Yeah.

I: *That's right. So consistency is important.*

R: Yes. And I don't know if mandating the use of Turnitin would help that.

I: *Okay. Especially for your particular unit, it looks like it might not help?*

R: Well, it has helped but I mean to say that the frequency of this phrase occurs thirty-nine times, and it's a fairly common phrase in the literature is, you know, a problem. But I don't know whether Turnitin can actually be programmed to identify a single student that's having plagiarised in more than one unit.

I: *Probably not.*

R: No, and I think that is one of the problems, yeah.

I: *Right. It's up to us. It's up to the individual lecturer.*

R: Yes. But how many times a day can you engage in conversations with colleagues about students. Has this person plagiarised yet?

I: *Right. Okay.*

R: ^That's… so I think there is a problem about being in touch with policies and procedures. And I think one of the…the other problem too is in the issue of fairness... is that the policies on plagiarism are set up as punitive. ^What isn't being addressed is how do you encourage, not just encourage students but enthuse them about not plagiarising. What are the benefits to not plagiarising? That doesn't seem to be addressed at all.

I: *That's true.*

R: And, I mean, I don't know how you'd do that in the present degree structure. On sending out messages and giving them hand-outs, they are not going to read it. It has to be set in class.

I: *It has to be taught.*

R: ^And it also seems to me to be linked … I'm kind of ranging far and wide here, I don't know if this is what you want?

I: *I'll stop you if we are.*

R: It also seems to be linked to cultural issues, and by that I don't mean, you know, Western versus any non-Western culture we've talked about that anyway ^but I remember hearing a talk about plagiarism a few years ago in which ^an American woman who'd been working on some project in the States, and she said when you see respected leaders of corporations getting away with malfeasances, why should the student think that she or he has to be absolutely honest? So that may be the one issue that is going on. I think also the internet is another problem. ^Not only does it make a lot of information available, but the students firstly don't always know how to evaluate that information and indeed their reliance on Wikipedia, for example, is problematic. ^But it also has changed, I think, the student's idea about what knowledge is.

I: *Right. And who owns it perhaps.*

R: And who owns it. Oh, very definitely who owns it, because if it is there on the web it's anyone's ^despite the fact that it may belong to a particular site that's never brought into the calculation. But knowledge kind of shifts meaning semantically from ^understandings acquired by yourself to pieces of information that are in the public domain. And if they are in the public domain then why can't they be used you know willy-nilly?

I: *Right.*

R: So I think that those sorts of issues are not being addressed in policies.

I: *Right. They're the problems but it is not?*

R: Yes. Yeah.

Q.3 Responses to plagiarism

I: *Okay. I'm going to ask you what about three and four, because that's one and two. What about three and four?*

R: Well, I haven't, as I said, had much to do with the new policy, the revised policy. I have heard colleagues complaining about their decisions or their wishes being ignored or overturned.

I: *Oh, really?*

R: Yes.

I: *They as lecturers being ignored by the unit co-ordinator and further along?*

R: Further along mostly, I think.

I: *I see. Okay. But for you personally, you have never, as unit co-ordinator you make the decision. Have you had any… has it been overturned when it goes through to Head?*

R: No, no, because I haven't actually been a unit co-ordinator for a little while now.

I: *Oh, okay. So for you it is not a problem but you have heard others?*

R: Yes. But I know that is probably not helpful for the interview.

I: *That's okay. But it sounds like you do, in your particular faculty, that you do talk about it. You said initially that you are busy and you don't have time, but it sounds like as a group you do tend to…*

R: Oh yes you know I will get a colleague coming into my office saying, have you taught this student? Did he or she plagiarise in your unit?

I: *Okay, that's good. That's good. Okay. And does that happen often or quite consistently?*

R: Well, I mean, it doesn't happen every day, but it happens often enough, you know.

I: *Okay. So through the grapevine you hear but there is no record of it that you can check on the student?*

R: No, no. And that, you know, again to know whether you are dealing with a serial plagiariser or a singular one, would be very helpful.

I: *Yes. Yes. Good. Okay.*

R: To use my discretion in responding to incidents of student plagiarism, ^well, I used to but of course the policy now has in a sense taken that out of one's hands except that you still have the discretion to decide whether or not to report the student.

I: *Okay.*

R: Now, I'm sure that that's not what the policy intended.

I: *In what way is that… you mean as unit co-ordinator or as lecturer?*

R: Well, as both. ^You know, if the student has used four or five words and not quoted them, and not referenced them, I might either decide to overlook it or I might say to the student or write in the margin, 'this needs to be quoted'. I wouldn't see that as requiring the whole machinery.

I: *Okay, because it is not plagiarism or it is still plagiarism?*

R: Oh, it is still plagiarism.

I: *But it is minor.*

R: It is minor and it might be the result of ignorance or a lapse of attention, you know. I mean, for example, I recently had a look at a draft of a PhD student's thesis in which she had begun a quote with quotation marks but she had forgotten to put them in at the end. So it could be inattention.

I: *What about that particular international student that you gave her two chances to re-submit, would you say that actually that was a use of your discretion in that case?*

R: Discretion. Yeah, and that was prior to the new policy.

I: *Right. Okay. But you would have handled that differently now?*

R: I think so, I think so. But again, you know, with an international student who's female you've…

I: *You would think there are other issues that you were thinking of.*

R: Yeah.

Q.4 Students and penalties

I: *What about five and six then?*

R: I don't know if it's mostly NESB or international students that plagiarise. I mean, they are very often ^caught plagiarising ^but as I said, domestic students plagiarise too.

I: *You've had a bit of both, haven't you?*

R: Yeah.

I: *An equal amount of both.*

R: Yeah. And some of it has to do with the desire to pass the unit at all costs. ^And of course with international students there is sometimes also questions of honour or face involved, too, which makes it even more sensitive, you know.^

I: *Okay. And what about number six, then?*

R: Penalties handed out to students that plagiarise are too lenient. Well, I do have colleagues that feel that flogging and the stocks should be brought back into fashion!

I: *Right! Yes! Lock 'em up.*

R: Yes...Again, yes, I think that perhaps the policy errs on the side of leniency, and I can understand all the reasons for that, the issue of wanting to be seen to be fair and also the purely ^market driven principle that if the university is seen to be draconian in its policies - excuse me (phone ringing and phone conversation).

I: *So they are in your opinion too lenient because the policy makes them so?*

R: Oh and also because, well... I think the policy could be applied more rigidly but I don't think it is. I'm not sure that I would want it necessarily to be. ^But I think when someone in the faculty who's handling disciplinary matters, consults with an academic, and says, you know, I think this is a first offence and then the academic says, but it's funny that the first offence turns up in the final essay ^you know, and then the person says, yeah, but it is still a first offence, then there is a certain latitude there that seems to me to be problematic. ^And I think also that the kind of market driven thing, which the university just doesn't want to be seen as draconian and disciplined.

I: *Right, right, and lose students.*

R: Yeah. ^I really wish that there was a way in which one could get students in the first semester of their first year and talk to them about ^the notion which I think is actually anathema to […] at the moment, the notion that ^you've come here to study, ^be excited by it, engage in it, don't use other people's work as your own. Challenge it, question it, use it to support your own ideas but don't just parrot it. But, you know, a university can't show which thinks in terms of making students career ready... ^is not concerned with knowledge.

I: *Okay. More skills than knowledge.*

R: Yeah, it's vocational rather than…

I: *Right. So that there is not that feeling of any use of academic integrity or… or you don't need to teach it or ...?*

R: Well, academic integrity is still an issue because clearly if, you know, […] would suffer if there was a public scandal about plagiarism, ^as there was actually a few years ago.

I: *So the focus is not on integrity, on this issue, but rather…*

R: It's not on education in a philosophical sense and therefore integrity. It's on vocationalism and the integrity. Yeah.

Q.5 Other comments

I: *Right. Okay. Is there anything else? Any other comments you'd like to make about academic integrity policies and procedures and student plagiarism? Anything that's…*

R: I'm not sure how much consultation went on or how broad the consultation was in the devising of the policy.

I: *Okay.*

R: It just seemed to appear out of nowhere. ^And it seems to me that actually talking to academics, not just in a sort of perfunctory way, but really, you know, engaging with academics who have opinions about plagiarism and about how to counter it might in fact have been quite productive.

I: *Right. So more input from the people that actually teach the students? Yes.*

R: Yes. And this is a problem I think with almost every policy that has come out from the university, is that it's devised by people in offices in central admin who do not teach and do not research, and may not ever have taught or researched. ^And then the people at the chalk face who have to actually implement it and so on. And it runs counter to some of our professional instincts and our intuitions and so on quite often.

I: *Are you talking in your view as a humanities lecturer or in general, lecturers in general?*

R: Yes. No, I think particularly as a humanities lecturer. I can't speak for, you know, all the lecturers. And that of course raises another issue too, which is that plagiarism might mean different things in different disciplines.

I: *Right, right.*

R: And what constitutes plagiarism, you know. It might be rather different. I can understand the university's difficulty. It doesn't want to create a multiple, many faceted policy that is going to be difficult to implement and to maintain. On the other hand, the one size fits all model ^may not be appropriate.

I: *Do you feel a bit powerless with the new policy? Because you were saying that the lecturers find it may be frustrating that it's made by people over there to be implemented by people over here, that find it difficult to do. Do you feel that you are frustrated?*

R: Well, in part. But I think many of us actually are grateful that we don't have to confront the student. You know, that's…because that can be very difficult because students can be extremely upset. ^Some of them, of course, we know, have psycho-emotional problems and you don't want to precipitate some sort of crisis. Some students become very aggressive, you know...That part is good. ^I think...I think also if we felt at least in this school or this department that it was not that commercial policy that the customer is always right ^that is being implemented by the university at, I think, all levels, so that the benefit always goes to the student but never to the academic^ and the academic is then suspected of being biased or intransigent or difficult or some sort of thing, when in fact all she or he is doing is following a professional you know instinct I think that would be helpful too, you know. So that, you know, we knew that our voices were being heard, which we don't always feel that they are.

I: *Right. Okay. Thank you very much.*

R: That's okay. I don't know how helpful that was to you.

END OF TRANSCRIPT

INTERVIEWEE 18

I: *Thank you for agreeing to be interviewed.*

R: No problem.

Q.1 Incident of plagiarism

I: *My first question to you is, could you tell me about an incident of student plagiarism that you've experienced that you found memorable or frustrating?*

R: There are so many. ^One I guess I found particularly frustrating was a student who had copied quite a lot of his assignment, or apparently copied quite a lot of his assignment from another student. ^Interviewing both students it seemed to be that that was what had happened. ^It was not his first offence and so it seemed appropriate for that to go to the Discipline Panel, who asked him to resubmit.

I: *Okay. Was this a first year student?*

R: A second year student. ^Now what was particularly exasperating about it was that when he resubmitted the assignment, it was full of another kind of plagiarism altogether, which was dumping text off websites and fabricating references for it. So…

I: *Oh dear.*

R: But it was a completely different form of plagiarism, so it was very difficult to know how to handle ^because the student consistently claimed he didn't know that what he was doing was plagiarism. So that is one of many cases I've dealt with, possibly one of the most frustrating.

I: *Right, okay. So this student was … were you lecturer and unit coordinator? Or were you just …*

R: I was lecturing and unit coordinating and I was the one who was marking the assignment.

I: *The second assignment?*

R: Both assignments. So the second time it was resubmitted it was full of web stuff. I had to go back and treat it as another case of plagiarism. He eventually just said, "Look, I can't bare this anymore. I'd rather just fail the unit than go through this again." So that's what happened. So it was a very frustrating for him as well. The whole process took close to a year. Yeah. Certainly more than six months anyway.

I: *And what happened to … oh, he just withdrew from the unit then? So there was no penalty?*

R: Well, it all happened long after all the results were in. He accepted a failure for the unit. There wasn't any … it was way too late to withdraw.

I: *Oh, okay. He'd done it and then he'd already left and then you gave him, you failed him. So for the second time he did it, did you go through the steps again and send it up to the discipline committee?*

R: I did, and when he was interviewed by the ^inquiry officer he said he just didn't understand what the problem was, and he'd rather not go through this again. He'd just repeat the unit, which in a sense is not a very good solution either. But he was asked to do some ^training and some, yeah, and had some counselling about it. But his level of ignorance, I mean, really, if you can't see that copying from students or copying from the web is plagiarism then that's quite an extraordinary thing to claim not to know in second year.

I: *Was he a local or international student?*

R: He was a local student.

I: *Local student. Okay. And so you think he might be repeating the unit?*

R: He is repeating the unit.

I: *Oh, he is repeating the unit, but you don't teach him?*

R: I do, yeah. He's repeating the same unit and I'm still the unit coordinator.

I: *Oh right. So do you know … no more third time round?*

R: Not so far, but he hasn't had much opportunity to yet. We'll see how his final assignment goes. I've had to talk to him about over using quotes because it seems that some of the students see the choices being either you quote or you just use other people's thoughts without calling it a quote. And this seems to be this dichotomy that they don't actually think of filling the space with their own ideas. But that's another issue.

I: *Okay. Alright. And this student was sent to, like, training or classes to try to solve the … right.*

R: I believe so, yeah.

I: *Do you have anything like that in here within the school?*

R: Not that I know of. We have a teaching and learning coordinator in the school who does counsel students about plagiarism, and I am to … it was there for this student but I think he was sent over to the Teaching and Learning centre.

I: *Okay, right. Thank you for that. Now I'll give you part (b).*

R: Okay.

Q.2 Policies and procedures

I: *So what I've got in part (b), I've got pairs of statements obtained from my survey, so if you could look at each pair and just give your comments and say whether you agree or disagree and why.*

R: Okay. So statement one, 'policies and procedures for responding to student plagiarism are fair' at […] I guess that means.

I: *Yes, please.*

R: I think they are. I think actually the policy is pretty good. And I think it is pretty fair ^particularly at the lower levels of plagiarism, which are often a result of students just not knowing what they're doing. I think it's a good idea that we counsel them and give them a chance to fix it and record somewhere that they've done that.

I: *It's happened. Right.*

R: I think … and I think the recording of it is crucial to that policy, actually working ... In terms of question two, the way that the policies are implemented I certainly wouldn't go so far as to say it's a joke. I think that … I think it is taken seriously. What I find in this school is that at level two or above, mostly level two, the procedure becomes very slow. And I think that's because it's under-resourced more than anything. And so we get these situations where a case can't be resolved until long after the Board of Examiners has met, and so the student is left in limbo. And I think that's quite a difficult position to put students in.

I: *That particular student that you talked about, how long was it between putting the case up and when he decided he's going to just withdraw? Or fail?*

R: It would have been at least nine months.

I: *Right. So they were the two incidences from the beginning … the first time until the end?*

R: The whole thing being processed eventually going to the disciplinary panel, that decision, then he delayed his resubmission for a long time. And … which, you know, I could have said 'tough'. But I didn't because when he finally received the advice from the disciplinary panel he was in the throes of the end of the next semester…doing all his major assignments for other units. So …it was you know, a stressful thing to put him through, I think. And he's not the only one that that's happened to.

I: *So the time is very long.*

R: To be fair I think that the few incidences that I've experienced that have taken a ridiculously long time were in part teething problems because the procedures were quite new. ^But generally, I think our policy is reasonably fair. And I think if anything it's quite generous to students who say they don't know better when they really should.

I: *And this second year student, when you put it … sorry, just going back to the second year student … when you first put it through, was it level one? And then was the second time level two? Because you said the plagiarism was different.*

R: No, I had already talked to him about what I've considered a level one incident. But because this was copying from another student, which I think it's not just bad referencing, it's not just … and it was a substantial part of the … and because I knew I'd already spoken to him, I put it through as a level two. Which is why it took a long time. The level one cases don't necessarily take very long. It's just a matter of entering it on the website and talking to the student, which you can do because you see them all the time anyway.

I: *That's right. And then so the second one was also a level two, when he copied and pasted it from the web?*

R: I think copying and pasting from the web and fabricating references to go with the words is probably level three. And again, it was a substantial percentage of his work, but he still claimed not to have realised he had done anything wrong. So, ^I treated it as level two, but I basically treated it as I don't know what to do with this. This is a resubmission, this is part of the same process. So it was still part of that same level two processing. But that was possibly an unusual case, but it was a very frustrating one.

I: *Frustrating and lengthy.*

R: Yeah.

Q.3 Responses to plagiarism

I: *Okay. What about three and four?*

R: Ah, question three is 'my responses to incidences of student plagiarism are overtured by those higher in authority'. ^I wouldn't say I don't … that's not my experience. What my experience has been is that the disciplinary panel have tended, although they might agree that it's a level two incident, say, to impose no penalty. So, my experience is that the disciplinary panel is very generous towards the students and tend to believe them when they say they don't know what they are doing.

I: *So what you see as a level two they would say is a level one? Is that what you mean?*

R: Well, either reclassified as a level one, that has happened, ^and again in a case where it was a repeat offence. But also when it is a level two their tendency is to impose no penalty and treat it in the same way as a level one incident is treated. The difference in the procedure is that ^it's recorded in a different file and it's on the student's file instead of just in the central database, so that the student … and that the student gets a letter from the head of school, so… but the

academic penalty is more or less the same as for a level one. And I think that is quite, quite generous to the students, especially when they are in third or fourth year.

I: *That's right. And the committee would know that because they have a record of the times that the students have been through.*

R: Well, I don't know if they do actually. And I think that might be … I don't actually understand. The record that we record for a level one cases is held by the Office of Teaching and Learning and whether it's… I don't even know if the disciplinary panel are allowed to consider the student's record. I actually get the impression that it's not part of the process and I'm inclined to think it potentially is a weakness in the process.

I: *So they might not be aware of the history of the student.*

R: Yeah. Or the details sometimes…

I: *Just like we're not aware sometimes when we teach of the history of students.*

R: Yeah. Yeah. And maybe that is appropriate, I don't see it. But to be honest, I don't actually know that part of the process well, because I'm not involved in it. I only look at it at the front end.

I: *Yes, yeah. What about number four?*

R: ^I … well, I would say yes, I do. But I also actually follow the policy quite closely.

I: *Okay. In what way would you use your discretion? In what area?*

R: I suppose in the way that I … for a level one, there is a certain level of discretion in deciding whether something is level one or level two. And there's quite a … there's the temptation to treat everything as a level one is very strong because the level two process is unwieldy and the level one process isn't. … so there's a level of discretion there in terms of how you treat it.

I: *Right. When it's not clear then you tend to err to level one, to err in favour of the student?*

R: Um … [laughs] given that the end result tends to be the same anyway, but much more quickly reached…And that's only my experience. I've probably at Curtin put through five or six incidences of level two plagiarism and probably about 25 level ones. I am…I'm heavy on it and the students … well, I don't know if it's good … the students don't like it, but I tend to do that.

I: *And is it second years … these are second years or all sorts?*

R: Well, I teach second, third and fourth year. I've put the … the bulk of the ones I've put through are second year and the bulk of them are just bad referencing. …But I do want it recorded somewhere where I've had that conversation with them. And so I do tend to actually follow the policy more closely probably than most do from my conversations with people. I'm more inclined to actually use the system ^than otherwise. But it is a part of the discretionary process. You can't not use your discretion in that sense. You have to make decisions.

I: *With the level two's that you put up, you said five or six … are they also taking a long time? Like your case that you mentioned?*

R: Yeah, although it's improved a lot. You know, I've been … because I spent the last year and a half putting up cases that I work quite well with the inquiry officer now you can usually coordinate it much more quickly to get the paperwork through. But it's a paperwork issue. It's the travel between the inquiry officer and the disciplinary panel that is the time and I don't know how often the disciplinary panel meet. I mean, that's all stuff that I'm not involved in.

Q.4 Students and penalties

I: *Okay, and what about five and six?*

R: I disagree completely that it's mostly non-English speaking students that plagiarise.

I: *Would you have many non-English speaking students?*

R: I have some and some of them do plagiarise but I … ^I wouldn't say they are more likely to plagiarise than the domestic students. And number six, I would have to respond by saying, sometimes. You know, I don't think students should be penalised for level one cases. I think it's a very sensible policy that says a level one case is a case for counselling and not discipline. And I think that's a really good idea. I think if something is assessed at level two it suggests that not necessarily that there should be a penalty but there should be some sort of consequence.

I: *Something more. Something more, because you were saying the level two that you put up was treated … like the penalty was like a level one, which is counselling.*

R: Well, yeah. Well the chance to resubmit, I suppose. But in the meantime, the student's gone… I suppose the issue is we put the students through all the stress of getting a letter sent to their home from the head of school and things and then in the end there's no consequence. I don't know. Maybe you know that's a kind of penalty that's just putting them through stress rather than actually giving them …So I wouldn't agree with that statement unequivocally. But I think sometimes, yeah you know maybe the disciplinary panel is less familiar with the students than the teacher is and maybe that's a good thing. Maybe that is a way of avoiding bias. I guess that's why it's there.

Q.5 Other comments

I: *Right. Okay. Thanks. Is there anything else that you'd like to say about the academic integrity policies and procedures at this institution or anything about student plagiarism that you want to add?*

R: ^I think the academic integrity policy is actually a pretty good one. I don't think it's startlingly different from that of other universities I've worked in. I mean, I think they all seem to be going through this process of classifying them according to seriousness and treating them differently. I think this is quite a generous one in terms of how it treats students compared to Griffith's. I'd say it's generous. But I don't think that's a bad thing. I do think that a surprising number of students do plagiarise and seem to think they can get away with it by saying they didn't realise, which I find slightly alarming and I'm not sure where that problem lies. I find it a problem and I don't know where that problem is situated really. I don't know whether it's that they genuinely don't know or whether they simply have every opportunity to know but take it up because they don't … I don't know. Or whether they just think they can get away with it or what. But the incidence I find of plagiarism is surprisingly high, and part of that is actually just that students don't seem to know how to reference probably…I have a lot of issues about student referencing. So … yeah.

I: *Okay. And are they taught that? Would they be taught*

R: They do a communications unit in first year in which they're taught to reference. I've been meaning to talk to …it's compulsory unless they can get exempted. […] runs it, and I've been meaning to talk to her about it actually because she says that everybody that passes that unit has been taught to reference but somehow they seem to either forget or think that unit's the only place they have to actually apply it. So I've been meaning to have a conversation, you've reminded me actually to get in touch with her.

I: *Okay. Thank you very much.* **END OF TRANSCRIPT**

INTERVIEWEE 19

I: *Okay, thank you for agreeing to be interviewed.*

R: It's a pleasure.

Q.1 Incident of plagiarism

I: *My first question to you is, could you tell me about an incident of student plagiarism that you've experienced that you found either memorable or frustrating?*

R: ^Frustrating. ^I was marking a semester six and semester five nursing student papers and two students had identical ^introductions on their papers word for word identical. I called both students in individually and asked them where they'd got that information from. Both of them ^responded that they'd got it from a friend. ^And they were very, very, very sorry. And I explained to them that in my inexperienced opinion this was plagiarism and I would have to move up the ladder with notifying academics about what was happening. So I made an appointment with the unit coordinator.

I: *So you were just the lecturer for this?*

R: Yes, I was a tutor.

I: *Oh, you were a tutor, okay.*

R: Yep.

I: *And when you say semester five, six, do you mean second year?*

R: Third year, third years.

I: *And were they local or international students?*

R: International students.

I: *International, okay.*

R: And so the unit coordinator said, "Mmm, yeah, this is a bit more than level one plagiarism." I said, "Well, yes, it is." I'd been to the 'what is plagiarism' and 'code of conduct' classes and I knew this was actually level three plagiarism because they had both openly admitted copying or using someone else's work and presenting it as their own.

I: *Right. And the introduction was substantial?*

R: A page.

I: *Oh, it was a page, right.*

R: A page of a three page assignment.

I: *So substantial, okay.*

R: Substantial. ^So that stayed with her and she assured me that she was going to hand it up to the undergraduate coordinator. So that occurred, and I was called in for a meeting. I was questioned on, one, why I had spoken to the students myself ^initially. And I sort of said, "Well, because I needed to know what was their explanation for both of them having identical papers." One was in the 10-12 class, the other one was in the 2-4 class.

I: *Oh, different classes, okay.*

R: So they were in different classes. Neither of them admitted any kind of collusion. Neither of them admitted that. ^So the unit … the undergraduate coordinator had a meeting with me and

her boss and the unit coordinator. And we sat down and they basically said to me, "Because they're international students we need to, um, you know, just be a little bit," … flexible wasn't the word they used but that was my impression. And I just said, "Well, you know, that's actually wrong. This is level three plagiarism, they have both admitted taking other people's work." And the undergraduate coordinator said to me, "Well, where do they live?" I said, "Well, how on earth would I know that." So she went on the computer and said, "Oh, they live in the same house so probably there's a collusion there." I said, "Well, I asked each of them individually had they got this from anyone within the unit currently." "No, no, my friend had done the unit before. And I don't know why I did it, it was the most stupid thing to do", etcetera. This lasted for two or three months. Beginning of this … this is last year. The beginning of this year I was approached about did I have the papers, copies of the papers that these students …

I: *So it was still ongoing across … from one year to another?*

R: From what my understanding was, one student was ^either terminated or needed to repeat the unit. ^The other student was able to resubmit. Which doesn't make any sense to me because they were exactly the same. It was out of my hands in terms of that. And the person above the undergraduate coordinator said to me, "Oh, look, we need to probably look at some of our ah protocols." I said, "Well, I work in the school of […]. They are gung-ho on plagiarism." I said, "Each of the assignments I mark almost all, without fail, all the third year […] students would be done for level one plagiarism without fail. They don't reference, they don't cite properly, they aren't taught and they haven't been taught." And that was what this woman said to me. She said, "Well, they haven't done […]communications."

I: *That's a first year unit?*

R: That's a first year unit. I said, "Well, why isn't someone up-skilling them." I said, "By third year you don't allow," … you know, first years you can …you can go, okay, this is it and you can resubmit and this is what it's about, etcetera. ^I just found it a very, very ^inappropriate experience.

I: *Why did they keep coming back to you? Like, you reported it and then you had a meeting and then they still … yes, why do you feel …*

R: I have no idea. The unit coordinator said to me, "Oh, you know, […], have you got the details on that paper again?" I said, "Well, no, look, I've given it all to you. I handed it all over." I said, "I've," … you know, probably wrongly deleted all those things. Because the email system is over the limits.

I: *You thought they had it.*

R: Yes.

I: *Yeah, you'd thought they had it, yeah.*

R: So, yeah, so that was that one.

I: *That's very strange.*

R: Yes, it was, it was. And I keep thinking to myself, well, if I've done the course and I know that that's … and you've got all these documentation. I gave them the print out from the plagiarism …

I: *Turnitin.*

R: Well no, no, […] doesn't use Turnitin. No. It's from […] that they give you the booklet that talks about plagiarism and what is it. So I'd photocopied that in colour and just bought it to that meeting and said, "Now, look, both these students come under this." We could probably,

you know … I said, "It is not level one plagiarism. And these are third year students. It is unacceptable." Academically it is unacceptable.

I: *So frustrating for you was the procedure rather than finding out the students had done this? It was more, like, …*

R: Oh, no, no, no, no.

I: *… going through this procedure?*

R: Yes.

I: *Okay.*

R: And I think when I talk to the classes at that third year level, it's, like, well, we haven't been told we have to reference every second sentence. I said, "Well, how do you think your ideas get there. They don't just leap into your head magically. ^You have read it somewhere or you have got that information from somewhere, someone. You need to, you know, cite and give credence to the people who are there."

I: *Did you want to tell me about the other example or shall I go to part B?*

R: Yeah, part B.

I: *We'll go to part B, okay. Thank you for that.*

R: That's all right.

Q.2 Policies and procedures

I: *So what I've got in part B, I've got pairs of statements that I've obtained from my survey. So if you could have a look at each pair and just give your comments, say whether you agree, disagree and tell me a bit about why.*

R: ...Okay. Oh, yeah, well, see …

I: So n*umber one would be your experience.*

R: Yes. Yes, I do think policies and procedures are fair, yes, they are.

I: *You think they're fair, okay.*

R: The implementation is a joke, yeah.

I: *Yeah, you agree with that.*

R: Yeah, I do.

I: *From what you've just told me.*

R: Yeah. But primarily only in that school. In this school it's not, they follow it to the letter.

I: *All right. So it was a different school from this one you're in now?*

R: Yes, yes, yes.

I: *Okay.*

R: Oh, yes, there we are. Number three, yes, that's correct.

I: *Well, you would have, yeah, you would have said they were level two …*

R: I would have said they were level three.

I: *Level three. But what happened is you said one of them had withdrawn or one of them had failed the unit, asked to repeat the unit.*

R: Yes, yes.

I: *So would they have said that's level three?*

R: They did accept it was level three. But on the initial meeting, let's just call it level one, shall we.

I: *Level one, okay.*

R: No, we won't. It's not appropriate to call a level one.

I: *Okay. So that one was a level … it was overturned initially but then not. In the end she got level three.*

R: Yes, in the end it was level three.

I: *And the other student you said was asked to repeat.*

R: Was asked to resubmit…under the understanding it was either level one or level two.

I: *All right, okay. Which would have, again, not been your initial feeling?*

R: No, no, no. Not at all.

I: *Right. So that's happened, okay.*

Q.3 Responses to plagiarism

R: Yes, I do use my discretion but within the... confines of a protocol that the unit coordinator has given me. So I teach in […] and there is a very clear understanding when you are marking assignments, one, they have to go into Turnitin it is compulsory. You don't mark them unless they have gone through Turnitin. So you do the Turnitin report. There's much more work, mind you. You do the Turnitin report first, you look at that, you evaluate what Turnitin said, you make a decision about what you're seeing here. If you think for any one reason it's plagiarised you put it to one side, give it to the unit coordinator. ^And then you mark …

I: *So your decision would … you use your discretion only in deciding whether it is or isn't plagiarism?*

R: Yes, absolutely, yes.

I: *And then you give it straight to the unit coordinator?*

R: Yes, yes. And they then make that decision and get the student to, because they're first year students, to resubmit without the plagiarism. And then it's remarked.

I: *Okay. But in your other story you told me you didn't use Turnitin.*

R: No, no.

I: *But you had decided it was a level three.*

R: Yes, yes, according to the protocols at […].

I: *Allright. So you didn't give it straight to the unit coordinator and let them …*

R: I called the girls in first. Which was, you know, with hindsight may not have been the best thing to do. But I needed to know for me …

I: *You wanted to find out more.*

R: Yeah. I mean, was this a mistake, had they changed papers, what was actually the story? So that when I go to the unit coordinator and up that ladder I have something to say other than, look, I'll hand it over. Which, you know …

I: *But now you wouldn't do … now you're teaching first year so you would just...*

R: Hand it straight over.

I: *… get the Turnitin and hand it straight over?*

R: Yes, yes. And it comes into the Turnitin. The School of […] don't use Turnitin. So you have to work out yourself whether it looks like … and I wouldn't have known except I'd marked the first one in the 10 to 12 class and thought this is outstanding, this is excellent. And then sort of a day later I was marking the next class and went, you know, this sounds really familiar.

I: *I've seen this before.*

R: Really familiar. And brought them both up on the screen and they were word for word.

I: *Identical, right, right.*

R: So there was no doubt in my mind this was major plagiarism.

Q.4 Students and penalties

I: Ok*, thank you. What about four and five then?*

R: Five and six, you mean?

I: *Sorry, five and six, yes.*

R: No, no, it's not mostly. In the first year ones there's probably … I've just marked 30, 40 papers. Of those probably ten I would suggest are level one plagiarism. Maybe level two but because they're first years they're just considered level one my understanding is. And it's probably a mix, a mix. At first year level. Certainly at the higher levels that was my experience.

I: *Your experience was they are NESB?*

R: Yes, yes, yep.

I: *Okay. Do you have an equal number in classes, would you say?*

R: No, no.

I: *No. More local?*

R: More local.

I: *All right.*

R: I'm just thinking back... In behavioural perspectives, in family ... there was a … in one of the classes there was about a 50/50.

I: *Equal number?*

R: Yes.

I: *Okay, all right. And six.*

R: Yes, there was. And number six, lenient. Well, I suppose it depend what level of plagiarism. Like, if it's level three and they're terminated I think that's fair enough.

I: *That's fair, okay.*

R: Level two with an academic misconduct on their record I think is fair. Level one to resubmit I think is fair. So, yeah, …

I: *So they're okay?*

R: Yeah, I don't think they're too lenient.

I: *What about in your case with those two students?*

R: Yeah, no, that's …

I: *They got different penalties.*

R: Yeah, that wasn't fair.

I: *Something wasn't … yeah, something wasn't …*

R: That wasn't fair. And I don't know the story about that at all. And I wouldn't be told anyway.

Q.5 Other comments

I: *Right, okay. Is there anything else you'd like to say about this university's Academic Integrity Policies and Procedures or anything about student plagiarism?*

R: No, I think they're very clear. I think they're very clear. And ^I think if they were implemented […]'s levels of plagiarism would decrease. And I think the first year units … the core inter-professional first year units that they're running now lend themselves to instructing and educating the students on what the policies and processes for academic integrity are.

I: *Right. So educating the students and then in terms of implementation, how would … how would we go about that?*

R: Well, most of the core first year units currently, that I'm aware of, have very clear guidelines on how to do assignment presentations. And the students are given every opportunity to access those guidelines and it's reinforced, like, from about week eight through to now. We're doing every week reinforcing, okay, do you understand.

I: *So training, educating them so that they can avoid plagiarism?*

R: Yes, yes, yes.That's right. And getting them to understand the repercussions and the consequences of it. You know, you can be terminated.

I: *What about on the other side, for lecturers, in terms of do you think …*

R: Well, I mean, most …most, I know for a fact all the staff that I've worked with here in public health are very clear. And...

I: *Okay, so they know.*

R: Yeah, they very … they know absolutely. And when I took on sessional work that was one of the first things that I was coached through. This is how you do it. Most of the unit coordinators will give you a template of what is the expectation in marking.

I: *Right. So you get guidance, you get education, you get training as a sessional?*

R: Yes, absolutely. Yes, yes, yes, I do.

I: *Right, good, okay. Good, thank you very much.*

R: Okay, that's a pleasure.

END OF TRANSCRIPT

INTERVIEWEE 20

Q.1 Incident of plagiarism

I: *Okay, thank you for agreeing to be interviewed. My first question to you is could you tell me about an incident of student plagiarism that you've experienced that you found either memorial or frustrating?*

R: How many do you want?

I: *One; just one first. [Laughs]*

R: Okay. The most recent memorable and interesting has been with my third year group. This year, I have received the first assignments from two students, and on reading their assignments they plagiarised from the same article, and had identical conclusions, because they'd cut and paste from the same article. And one of them had cutting and pasting from other articles as well.

And I sent that up to the, you know, filled in all the paperwork, went through, marked it, marked it, marked it all, found all the references etcetera, and sent it up to Head of School.

I: *And so you are the lecturer and tutor for this particular group?*

R: Yes, I lecture and I'm the unit coordinator.

I: *You're the unit coordinator, too. Okay.*

R: And I also have to deal with first years as well, which is another different … because I coordinate that unit. I basically coordinate all the literacy units. I'm the lone literacy ranger! [Laughs]

Anyway, they came back and they had to resubmit, which I thought was very generous. And I'm marking their resubmissions yesterday, I'm looking at them going, this is very, very similar! I've seen this before.

I: *To the first, to the first …*

R: No, to each others. Because one's a regional student, she's actually living in Bentley but she's enrolled regionally, because she's pregnant and found it difficult to get to […]. The other is a face-to-face student. And there's another page in there that even has identical formatting and dot points. And it's been plagiarised from one of our chief texts. They've kind of reworded a little bit of it and reordered the dot points. But it's still … for me it's evidence of collusion. Especially in the light of the first incidence.

Also what I found really, really frustrating was both students had used the same excuse – "I cut and paste into my assignment and then I reword. Or I rephrase." That's their method of doing it. And they … both of them used that. And I personally find it disturbing that they were allowed to resubmit for pass marks.They're third years. Because I saw it as deliberate, obviously the panel saw it differently.

I: *You saw it as level two or three?*

R: I saw it as level two. And this latest one, I would say level three.

I: *Right. What will you do? What do you plan to do with this resubmission?*

R: The resubmissions I have done all the paperwork again and I've returned it to Head of School as a level three…Because there is more to it. I have received indignant emails …which I find particularly frustrating….And in one case a little offensive. And what is even more frustrating is that both students are non-attendees, basically. One only has attended five out of the twelve face-to-face lectures. The other one I check up on the Blackboard statistics. She has accessed

the grade centre, the announcements, but very little on the discussion board or on the learning side of things. So, I find that very, very frustrating.

I: *Do the students know each other? Because you've put it up as level three and possible collusion. Do you know …?*

R: Yeah, I do believe that they know each other.

I: *Okay. And is this the end of semester or are we looking at … where …?*

R: This has been going on since the beginning of semester, four weeks in when they had to submit their first assignment. And now it's the end. And I'm still …It's still in progress, yes. And it's … one of the frustrating things is it goes to our Head of School, it was going to our Head of Teaching and Learning next door, the lovely […]. But he's been ill with a back operation, so it's had to go to Head of School.

I: *So there's a delay there*.

R: There is a significant delay, which the students find frustrating and I find frustrating.

I: *Right. Yes, of course. So it won't be resolved anytime soon?*

R: No. Which is frustrating for them as well, but I just find it really frustrating because I've had one of these students from first year. Like, she started when I started and I have said all along you do not cut and paste. You do not … and that's the first lecture.

I: *So she's not learnt in the three years*.

R: No. Well, if she attended the first lecture she might. But it's dishonest and I find it very, very worrying that somebody is prepared to cheat on gaining a qualification. And now they're going to go out and be in a position of responsibility and supposed moral integrity as a teacher. I'm not saying they're all saints but there has to be that level of honest, that honesty, that standard. That was a long answer.

I: Thank you! That was good. Thank you. Okay.

Q.2 Policies and procedures

I: *Yes. If we can look at part … thank you for that … now looking at part (b), what I've got here are pairs of statements obtained from the survey that I did. So if you can just have a look at each pairing and give your comments and say if you agree, disagree, why.*

R: Um … I agree that statement one is fair, in that the students are given a right of reply, and there's levels. And I agree that number two is a joke. That the policies are a joke because they seem to be able to come back into the system instead of … when they commit something dreadful it's kind of wearing down the system by appeal. If they'd put as much effort into their assignment as they do into their appeals and their bleatings afterwards, the whole system would be so much better.

I: *Right. So you do agree that it's a joke in terms of implementations?*

R: I agree that our policies and procedures, the implementation of those, need to be strengthened. Need to be standardised. Need to be, you know, given to one person as a responsibility. At the teaching and learning forum at the beginning of the year, I went to a session, a lady from the University of Leeds, I think it was. And she was the plagiarism queen. And she was the person responsible for the education and the follow up, not the Head of School. And I think that's a very good method to go. I'm not actually putting myself up as queen of plagiarism, but there needs to be somebody … and stringent, very, very stringent. Take no prisoners after the first year, basically.

Q.3 Responses to plagiarism

I: *Three and four together.*

R: I actually agree with number three that, my responses to the incidences are overturned by those higher in authority, it goes to a panel and they come back and they're allowed to resubmit for a pass mark. And I don't agree with that.

I: *Does that happen all the time for you? Or is it just for these particular two third years? For example, you said you've got first years.*

R: And I've had second years. It doesn't happen for all the time.

I: *Okay. Alright. But do you think that as it gets more serious, then there's a tendency to …*

R: There's a tendency to be nice about it. "Oh, I'm in my third year, I will have wasted a whole year." Well, that's actually not my problem. My problem is you have used somebody else's words. And I use my discretion when responding to incidences of student plagiarism. Yes, I do.

I: *In what way?*

R: I judge on their level of academic experience, in particular. And whether it's just a, you know, a badly paraphrased sentence. Like one of these I have in my pile of marking here. My colleague brought it to me and said, "Look, this is very uneven writing." That's because you've got student (a) who's a very good writer, and student (b) working with her who's not so good. She says okay. And also, I went right through it. It took me an hour and a half yesterday to check out all the references, and there's one incidence where they've got poor paraphrasing. So in that case I highlighted it, and said, "You really need to be careful with this," because it's only two lines.

I: *It's only two lines. And they were first years?*

R: They were third years.

I: *Oh, they're third years as well. Right, but very small amount.*

R: A very small amount.

I: *Right. So you use your discretion in terms of their level and also how much is there.*

R: Yeah, and how much. And also I know these students. So I've had them three years in a row, which is very good. And I try not to let my personal opinion of the student get in the way. I try to remain very professional about it. In another incident I teach online, regional students, and I have a lady who's re-entered after a number of years. She has a teaching qualification, but it's only a three year, so she has to do her fourth. Being a long time since she's done anything academic her first assignment was terrible so I didn't penalise her, I sent it back with a whole lot of educative statements.

I: *Terrible in terms of plagiarism?*

R: In terms of plagiarism and really poor paraphrasing. Not understanding that you need to put quotation marks around and you can't just change a few words in the sentence, and that kind of stuff. So I sent it back with a whole lot of stuff and she has returned something that's greatly improved. But that's an educative process. And knowing the student. So I really do use my discretion and … In terms of finding out if the level of the student, the type of student …And knowing the student. I don't stick them in willy-nilly. I don't submit plagiarism forms willy-nilly. But I do use my discretion.

Q.4 Students and penalties

I: *Good. And five and six? In your experience? Because you wouldn't get very many international students, would you?*

R: We do have students from Chinese backgrounds and many Islamic students…They will teach here. And I have found that yes, they pop up quite often. And it's an education thing. If they've not, you know, been educated in academic writing. But then again, one, two of my third years, standard students …Local students...Local white Australian students. And when I first started my first case was a boy in second year. And he's a local student, a local Australian student.

I: *So it's probably not the case then that it's mostly NESB students that plagiarise?*

R: Not really, no. It tends to be scattered, but it's more …the more serious ones of cutting and pasting are the international and non-English speaking backgrounds.

And six - penalties handed out to students who plagiarise, I agree. I strongly agree. From my perspective and from, you know, I spend hours doing this. It takes up so much time. They know they're not supposed to and they do it. They still do it. So I actually sent out an announcement to all my students saying that if you Google, so do I. You use Google, I use Google and guess what? I find exactly the same things. It's quite easy to do, you just stick in the clause or the phrase.

I: *The clause, yes, to check. Do you use Turnitin or just Google?*

R: Just Google. Because a lot of the assessments are applying things to practical activities or … that I didn't find Turnitin that useful. It picked up a whole lot of stuff that would have been standard anyway, and didn't really pick up the issues. I find Turnitin if they plagiarise against each other, but not necessarily against other people's work.

Q.5 Other comments

I: *Are there any other comments that you'd like to make about academic integrity policies and procedures and student plagiarism in general? Anything else that you'd like to add?*

R: I'd like to see, very early on in the students' career here, some formal education about it.

I: *You don't do that in first year?*

R: We expect them to know and we tell them during their classes.This is what I expect. It is mentioned in the unit plan with penalties etcetera, etcetera, etcetera.

I: *But you need a bit … you think maybe a little bit more?*

R: I think a formal session. When they first come in and say, "This is what academic integrity is." A lot of them don't know about the student code of conduct. And a lot of them I don't think take that sign-in sheet, the cover sheet, the signing of the cover sheet where it says, 'I agree that I have not plagiarised and used other people's words,' etcetera. They don't take that seriously…A compulsory session. I'm thinking of starting it in the first year. Except the unit doesn't start, it's in the second semester so it really needs to be like day one…Week one you get hit with this really, really serious stuff, because it is serious. I say to the students, "You wouldn't take somebody else's phone or car. Don't steal their words." [Laughs]

I: *Okay. Thank you very much.*

END OF TRANSCRIPT.

INTERVIEWEE 21

Q.1 Incident of plagiarism

I: *Thank you for agreeing to be interviewed. My first question to you is, could you tell me about an incident of student plagiarism that you've experienced that you found memorable or frustrating?*

R: Directly experienced? Well, I suppose …

I: *At this university.*

R: Yeah, for this university. I suppose in my capacity as the investigator, student investigator, or discipline investigator … student discipline investigator.

I: *Academic, right, academic …*

R: For our school. I see a few of those come through. So to pick one, they're all unique. But I suppose ^ probably our first year students tend to fall into, stumble into plagiarism more than the others who generally should know better later on. So you tend to see more blatant plagiarism, I suppose, at that lower level.

I: *Right, at first years.*

R: So I can think of one in particular who they have a paper they write on, it has to do with chiropractic history and they're supposed to research out some different things and they're given guidance in that from the instructor. And this particular student talked to one of the upper year students who had provided or showed them their paper that they could use as a reference or just to kind of get an idea how to format and write the information. ^But they decided to maybe use it a bit more extensively, okay. So in the process of doing that … now they are required to submit their papers through Turnitin.

I: *Right. And that's how it was found out?*

R: That's how it's identified. Now they're supposed to submit that through and then get feedback on it as to say, here's a certain amount of overlap with other papers that have been submitted, either through the school or that are, you know, just generally identified internationally as having been run through Turnitin. So they have their paper on record.

I: *You mean like a test, like a test …*

R: A test or a text, journal articles, anything that has been submitted through Turn It In. So that they would have that information. Okay, so then the student can see that and they can self-correct. So before it gets turned in they're supposed to …

I: *Test it, they try it out.*

R: Yeah.

I: *Okay.*

R: Okay, well, half of my thing is showing up as coming from other sources, I need to figure out why that is. So they get a chance to correct that. ^And this particular student either didn't understand the system or didn't realise … well, one of the things that also happens is that students tend to wait to the last minute to submit. So say a day or two before the deadline. Submit it, they get it back but now the deadline to Turnitin has come and gone because maybe for whatever reason the system might take a bit of time. ^So their paper sits there as a submission at that point. They didn't get a chance, they didn't get a chance to correct it. There have been some health issues and everything going on as to why she had run behind, according to her. So this comes through and the plagiarism occurs.

Well, part of the investigation process is to go and find out why it occurred. And through that process the student ^essentially denied that she'd plagiarised, that it must have been coincidental that this happened. That, yeah, she had talked to this other student and had gotten some advice from them but hadn't used their paper to write their …okay, well, some of the stuff you can see comes across as plagiarised because they direct quote but then they don't use the right ^actual annotations or things. So they may have attempted to do something but it didn't actually … they didn't follow the proper process. So you can see they didn't really plagiarise. They did source it out but it just didn't get picked up in the system. So you can pick some of that up pretty easily. ^But then there are lots of things that aren't. Okay, things that are clearly thought processes another student has put forward that are virtually identical. And that just doesn't happen.

I: *And did that student's paper show up on Turnitin that you were …*

R: Mmm hmm, oh yeah, they had that as well.

I: *Right. So you were able to compare that they were very, very similar.*

R: Very similar. So then what I do is I can pull both papers out and I can look at the sequence and I can go through and look at the sequence of their conversation, their discussions and compare that to the sequence of the discussions …

I: *The other one.*

R: … the other person used. And you can see that each plagiarism that's identified but then there are component … in 20 some instances, other than one, actually followed the exact sequence of discussion. There's just no way you're going to accidentally stumble across that many times. And so through the process eventually the student admitted to the fact that maybe she had done a bit more than she had admitted to. ^And then she was able to, through the disciplinary process, resubmit her paper. But a potential for reduced marks and those types of things.

I: *Right. Was she your student or did she come to you as …*

R: Was not my student.

I: *… the integrity officer?*

R: So purely in my investigative capacity at that point.

I: *Right. And you asked her to resubmit? That's the procedure, that you asked …*

R: That one of the things I can suggest …

I: *You suggested it, right.*

R: … as the investigator to the arbiter is a penalty or such that can be applied to that. ^So in that case if there's a potential for significant ^penalty, then it goes up to the faculty or Pro Vice Chancellor over our faculty at that point.

I: *Right.*

R: And then I can also make a recommendation and then they can look at that and decide how they want to approach that.

I: *So who actually asked her to resubmit? That was decided by the person above you?*

R: So that would be … well, upon my recommendation, in consultation with the coordinator. So we don't do these things in isolation. It's usually a good idea to find out what they think would be appropriate as well, because they have a better kind of understanding of the student in that context. Then we … I discuss it with them, I make a recommendation to the Pro Vice

Chancellor for our faculty and they either agree or disagree. In this case they agreed with that particular penalty.

I: *To resubmit.*

R: Resubmission. And then there's substantial penalties based on the amount of plagiarism. And, you know, the fact that they denied instead of coming forward and these types of things. So there's a lot of things that go into it.

I: *They will consider that, okay.*

R: They can look at that as far as the penalty for that. If the student willingly, okay, yes, I did this versus dragging you through a process where they're trying to get away with something and then they realise they're not going to get away with something. And then of course they could appeal the process. So all those things are in place for that.

I: *Yes. And did she resubmit?*

R: Mmm hmm.

I: *Do you know what happened to that …*

R: She did resubmit. If I recall the paper was not ^of a very high quality at that point. It was almost like she didn't know what to do now with it. To try to keep the context of the other one without the plagiarism bits, it kind of dismantled it a bit. And so she really didn't … I don't know ultimately what happened with the mark on it other than the feedback I got was the paper wasn't that great.

I: *Was not good, okay, all right.*

R: Afterwards.

I: *Okay, thank you for that.*

R: That's one memorable one.

Q.2 Policies and procedures

I: *One very memorable one. Thank you for that. Okay, I'll give you this sheet now. So what I've got here, I've got pairs of statements that I obtained from the survey instrument. So if you could just look at each pair and just say whether you agree, disagree, why, just any comments you'd like to make about each pair.*

R: I tend to agree with …

I: *So you can start with … yeah, the …*

R: So for number one, policies and procedures for responding to student plagiarism are fair, and I assume this is in the context of our university.

I: *Yes, yes.*

R: Okay. I would agree with that.

I: *You would agree, okay.*

R: And as far as the implementation of plagiarism, a joke, I would disagree with that.

I: *You disagree with that?*

R: I disagree with the second statement.

I: *Right. You feel that everything is implemented quite smoothly and …*

R: Yeah, I mean, the university has just recently gone through a fairly extensive process of upgrading that and the procedures. And in particular this whole investigation process …

I: *Right, that's a new part, is it? Yes.*

R: The process is new that's put in there. So you have a very formal process. If an accusation of plagiarism or cheating or anything like that is brought forward, it all has to be recorded now and kept on file. It's all investigated and either found to be not, no accusations or no further investigation is required, clearly this didn't happen, it was a mistake or a misunderstanding or clearly there is. And then there's a very formalised process. Now within that there's still some nuances that we're working out because the university has tried to provide a procedure that's not overly prescriptive but still gives you direction on what to do.

I: *Some discretion, okay.*

R: So there's discretion within that as well.

I: *Right. Do you feel that being, in your role as the integrity officer, do you think that particular idea is useful, it helps the implementation? Having you, like, as an objective adjudicator third party in the procedure.*

R: The instances I've been involved in, I think so. Certainly one unit coordinator felt that in one sense they were kind of disempowered because of that process. And so they were a bit concerned that maybe the penalties or procedures that they would have liked to have seen might have not happened. But in the end they felt that the ultimate outcome was appropriate.

I: *Was fair.*

R: So I think as long as they know that they'll be involved in the process, it's their advice …

I: *Because you take their advice?*

R: Yes.

I: *Right.*

R: I don't just say what do you want me to do but here's what I'm thinking, do you think this is appropriate or not. And if not why and what would you suggest. And then we look at that and balance that out. But then I only have so many ways that I can go within the guidelines that I'm given as well as to what I can do.

I: *Can do. And asking them for their opinion, would that be part of … is that part of the role or it's your discretion?*

R: It's probably discretion ...

I: *Right.*

R: It's not … there's nothing in the procedures that you need to do this. But it's generally just that that's a good idea. So if I make a recommendation to the Pro Vice Chancellor, and I do, and I've said, and I've discussed all this with the coordinator and they feel that it fits the crime, the punishment fits the crime, so to speak, then that goes better than if that's not there. It also helps them to know that there's been a fair bit of thought to the process. And I think with the process ultimately does is it prevents someone from overacting or under acting to a situation.

I: *That's good.*

R: And ultimately it's designed, from the student's point of view, to make sure it's a fair and transparent process. So they're included in and they're copied in on all the documentation that's put forward so they can see everything that's been put through.

I: *The steps, okay.*

R: It's not like at the end they go here's a penalty and you have no idea how it came to …

I: *Okay, okay, that's good. That's good.*

R: Whether they agree or not, of course then there's that appeal process.

Q.3 Responses to plagiarism

I: *The appeals, yep. Okay, what about three and four?*

R: So for three and four. ^Let's see. My responses to instance of student plagiarism are overturned by those in higher authority. Well, I haven't found that to be the case.

I: *No, because in your role you can only … you only make recommendations and then they make the final decision.*

R: Decision. But even my recommendations, I haven't had anything changed.

I: *Overturned, so it's been the same, good.*

R: Yep. So I would, I guess, disagree with that statement. And four, I use my discretion when responding to instances of student plagiarism. I would agree.

I: *You do in the sense that you can use …*

R: There's a certain amount of discretion that I have. I mean, there are guidelines but then there's some movement within those guidelines.

I: *Right. So the policy's quite fluid, quite …*

R: It is, yeah. It's hard to describe. But it provides a firm sort of parameters but some certain flexibility. And even around those parameters there are some flexibility because every case always has its own unique ^component.

I: *Is different, yes, that's right. Okay.*

R: And for five and six. Let's see, five.

I: *Sorry, when you use your discretion, back to four, in your role as lecturer and tutor, when you see an incident of plagiarism, do you refer it to yourself or how do you handle that?*

R: Yeah, well, that hasn't come up yet. If it did then I could refer it to myself but then there's also the option to access investigators from other schools in that situation. If I feel that I am too close to the situation. Which is probably would be what I would do. So I can't really investigate my own case that I'm bringing forward here because there's a certain bias I suppose. No matter how ...unbiased or objective I feel I might be. But …

I: *Okay. So there's an opportunity to give it to another officer, okay. Okay, thank you. And five and six?*

Q.4 Students and penalties

R: Okay. It's mostly NESB.

I: *Non English speaking background.*

R: Or international students that plagiarise.

I: *In your experience.*

R: I would probably disagree with that. Because actually none of the students I've had to deal with were in either of those categories.

I: *Right. And is that because …*

R: And not that I have thousands of students that I've looked at but I don't know. Well, like I said, it seems to be more of the early year students.

I: *The first years. And they're local students?*

R: And they tend to be local students in my experience.

I: *Is that because in your school there's mainly local … would there be mainly local students or would you have a mixture?*

R: No, we probably have probably 20 to 30% of our students would be international or non English or English as a second language type students, yeah.

I: *Okay. But in your experience it's been all … the incidences you've experienced as investigating officer have been the local students?*

R: At this point have all been local or at least Australian, yeah.

I: *All right. And how many in a 12 month period, would you say?*

R: Well, I've only had this role for a year.

I: *Okay.*

R: So I have investigated three or four cases. I know there's many others that have happened before that. But of the ones I know of, and this is, I mean, for plagiarism, I obviously get into the broader scope of cheating in exams but that's another issue.

I: *Okay, you've got that as well. Yes.*

R: That's part of what I look at. But specifically for plagiarism that's what I've come across.

I: *So a small, quite a small percentage.*

R: Yeah.

I: *Of your students.*

R: Yeah. And with the new systems, Turnitin and things, if they use the system properly it should pretty much be able to avoid plagiarism. Because it just tells them, this will be plagiarised. Okay, well, I can figure how to fix this. So it's really … and so in that sense I think the incidents we see will probably drop down for those who use Turnitin.

I: *Because of Turnitin and because of your procedures.*

R: And then in the year they learn those procedures, so later on they know how to write without doing that.

I: *Okay. Is Turnitin compulsory then for …*

R: For some units. It isn't compulsory for everyone at this point, it's just recommended. And it doesn't necessarily fit some situations. I'll have things in units that I teach where the information they're turning in, either because I allow them to work together, come up with it or because the information only has a very finite number of ways it can be presented. Eventually everybody will be plagiarising. There's no way to reword things other than what they are. So sometimes it doesn't really fit.

I: *Doesn't work.*

R: Yeah. But for bigger papers and things like that it works better, I think.

I: *Okay. And number six?*

R: Penalties handed out to students who plagiarise are too lenient. ^Again, I haven't seen in my experience that that's the case. Particularly with the new system, because it's fairly defined in what we can do.

I: *Right. So this first year student that you mentioned, that had copied a third year student's paper, she was asked to resubmit. You feel that's fair?*

R: Well, the resubmission, it's not just you need to resubmit. There's other things that go out, so you can resubmit, you can reduce the mark, you can say whatever you get, on top of that there's a mark reduction. You can say the maximum mark you can get is 50% or something like that. And so there are …

I: *So there are conditions?*

R: There are conditions within the penalties that can apply. So resubmission is one thing. And generally the idea here, particularly in the early years, is not for this to be as much a punitive as much as an educational process. So it's not so much that you need to be out of here kind of thing cos you need to learn how to do this right. So we're much more interested in having them do that. Plus most scenarios, or anybody where they have to redo anything, is also required to take an online, I won't call it a unit, but there's an online course that they can go in and go through. And it just goes through all the issues of plagiarism and honesty and integrity and those kinds of things. And so they need to go back and look at that. They all go through that in their foundation units. Well, they're supposed to. But these apparently maybe missed the point or whatever.

I: *Okay, so they have to do it again or do it.*

R: So they need to do it again. Now we don't have any particular follow up on that so say if you don't do that what happens? But when we send them a letter we say you need to do this. So on top of the …penalty there's also the learning, educative component that goes in with that.

I: *Educative, okay. That's good.*

R: So that's what we try to … the balance between …

I: *You do that to the first year. But what about if it was a third year, it would be a different story?*

R: Well, if it was a third or fourth year student or a postgraduate student or things like that …

I: *Right, it would be different.*

R: … then the level of penalty goes up. And that's noted as part of our processes. Where they fit in the system. Right, so in that case they may not be … there's certain penalties we can't even offer because they're just beyond where the expectation would be.

Q.5 Other comments

I: *Right, right. Okay, good. Is there anything else you'd like to say about this institution's academic integrity policies and procedures or student plagiarism in general? Any other comments?*

R: Well I think generally I wasn't as familiar with the procedures, say, two or three years ago. But coming into my role as a student investigator and looking at the changes they've made, certainly the direction they're heading is good. It can be frustrating at times as the investigator to not

have an exact prescriptive way to approach things. So I'm constantly calling legal and governance and saying, well, what about this situation and you've kind of said this here but … and they say well this is how we would maybe think you'd want to do it but it's kind of up to you. Okay, there's no definite one way. As long as you're within these general principles that we put up.

I: *Parameters. Okay, that's good.*

R: So that makes it a bit of a challenge. Especially the first one that comes through. And of course then the next one is uniquely different from the other one. And the one after that is uniquely different from the … and you're constantly having to think about things. So that can be …

I: *Think and consult, and consult with others.*

R: It is. So as you go along … and then the people you're consulting with as well are going, okay, so they're kind of keeping a log so that if the next person from some other school has another situation, well, here's how we did this in the past, kind of thing.

I: *That's good, that's good.*

R: So to build some consistency into that.

I: *That's good.*

R: So I can see this after a couple of years becoming a fairly consistent process with ways that have been defined. And then every six months or so we get together all the investigators and the governance and people get together and talk about, okay, what's happening, where are the first years and where are the gaps, where do we tighten things up kind of stuff. Because we've identified … that was one of the things we identified as, okay, you go off into your little silo and nobody knows what anybody else is doing. And then pretty soon you're back to where you've got this disparity between schools as to what's actually happening.

I: *Right. And this role you're in, is that permanent or is it just for a certain time?*

R: It's as long as I want to do it. It was initially the School Deans that would take it on. But they get rather busy at times taking on all these things ^and so I said that I would step in and take this over for them at this point. Down the road someone else may do it.

I: *Okay, right.*

R: But it's good to have somebody in the position for a while so that they get used to it and know how it works.

I: *Get to know it better.*

R: Yeah. ^Plagiarism in general, I think there are still some problems with plagiarism. It's really hard to define. ^And I think a lot of the plagiarism that occurs, in my experience, has been that most plagiarism or a large percentage of the plagiarism within any particular document is a misunderstanding of how to actually write or put a quote into context or something like that. Or if you change something slightly, in other words if, … ^say in Turnitin, if someone does a quote but they may misspell one of the words within that quote, then that quote is not an exact quote, it's a slightly modified quote. And now that's plagiarised. So that's my job as an investigator to go in and look at the original quotation and say, well, what's the deal here, how did this happen? Well, you can see all they did was misspell a word or they transposed two words or something. Which, you know, was not an attempt to plagiarise. Clearly the intent that they had was to do the right thing. So that's where it's …

I: *So it's unintentional and it's the writing, it's a writing issue.*

R: Right. So the plagiarism checking tools are not foolproof. And you really have to go in and look at what's been identified as a plagiarism issue. You can't just go look this says 10% of what you did was plagiarised. Because maybe it's only in the end maybe 2% of what they did was plagiarised which is really probably insignificant. And the rest of what they did was just error type stuff. Or they forgot to put the name of the person, the source there. or something.

I: *Something small, something small.*

R: They put it in … clearly it was, you know, even though they did put the source at the back they just forgot to put it in. Or they put the name down and then forgot to put the source in the reference or something like that. Often they're just silly mistakes because you're rushing at the end to get something done.

I: *Yeah, yeah.*

R: And I think that's probably all I have to offer.

I: *Thank you very much. That's good. Thank you, thank you very much.*

END OF TRANSCRIPT

INTERVIEWEE 22

I: *Thank you for agreeing to be interviewed.*

R: It's a pleasure.

Q.1 Incident of plagiarism

I: *My first question to you is, could you tell me about an incident of student plagiarism that you've experienced that you found either memorable or frustrating?*

R: Well, probably both. Okay. So, let me give you two examples. One is a student in a writing course, in a professional writing course, who was given the task of writing a short journal article. The choice was very broad and so the student was able to select an area that was of interest, that meshed with the interests that the student had. And I discovered … when I received the article it seemed to me that on the basis of work from the student that I had seen previously in semester and this one, that there was such a significant difference in the prostyle, that I wondered if this actually was the work of the student. Now this university doesn't use any plagiarism software.

I: *So no Turnitin or anything?*

R: No Turnitin. And I come from a background where Turnitin is just a part of the furniture. In fact, it's so much a part of the furniture that we all understood, at my previous university, that Turnitin wasn't so much about catching plagiarism but rather about establishing a culture, in which why would you even try. I mean, why would you even think about doing it? So I was doubly on my guard, being rather anxious because there was no software, no program to depend on.

I: *To check.*

R: Yeah. So I took a few sentences and I Googled them and of course up came a very elaborate website from which this material had been taken, more or less sentence by sentence. Now when I went through the process and discussed this matter with the student, the student claimed that the material on the website, that she in fact had produced that material… And I thought that's an interesting line. And so I said, "Well, that isn't acceptable either because in this unit as it says quite clearly you need to produce work for this unit, not recycle work from another unit." And so I asked her to re-submit it.

I: *Okay. Was this a local or international student?*

R: It was an international student… second year. So there are a number of factors in play. This is a second year student, this is an international student. This is a student who comes from a different culture. This is a student who is anxious about doing well, you know, all of those factors.

Now what was frustrating was that it was very difficult to communicate to the student that what was required here was her own work, not work that had come from somewhere else. Because of course the issue for her was this work … after it was clear that I wasn't going to accept work that had been allegedly produced by her for another purpose, her second line of argument was that she needed to produce work which was authoritative and how could that be her own work, because she's just a student? And having supervised Japanese students at the MA level I was very sympathetic to this argument, but nevertheless.

So by now it's three weeks after the return date and the semester is marching on and other work is due, and eventually in fact, what happened was that the student withdrew from the unit. So that was extremely frustrating. Because the purpose of the exercise was to engage the student's

attention in the task, not provide a reason that she should withdraw from the course. Particularly since it was after the census date and so she had already […] so that was very frustrating.

I: *So do you feel that it was because of this situation that she withdrew? It was due to you asking her to re-submit that she …*

R: Well, it may have been. I think more than anything she was embarrassed. So there was that. But there was also the sheer fact of having to do a large assignment again…So, you know, and that coupled with the semester coming to an end and pressures from other units, I mean of course. It's a problem. It's another reason why it would be better to deal with the matter of plagiarism before the student starts submitting work rather than afterwards.

I: *To teach them before. And were you in your role as unit coordinator for this course, or were you the lecturer or tutor for this particular unit?*

R: I was actually both lecturer and tutor in this case. And the coordinator was another colleague.

I: *Did you take it up with her?*

R: Yes. Of course.

I: *Alright. So you went through the process?*

R: Yeah, we went through the whole process. And in fact that was quite an interesting experience too because the coordinator of this course was a much younger colleague, who was still learning. I mean, he hadn't coordinated many courses at all. And so, for a start, the first problem for him is that he gets grandma as his tutor, so there sets a slight problem. But on the other hand we had the opportunity to discuss this matter, to talk about what to do and how one might go here, and rah, rah. Meanwhile, there were 120 students in my class. And the semester is marching on and …So there's pressure. There's pressure on everybody all round the table. So it's a problem.

I: *So…was it you who asked the student to re-submit after you had spoken to the coordinator?*

R: Yep.

I: *So you went through … but she didn't, she withdrew.*

R: No, she withdrew. Ok. So the second example is an example from one of the medieval literature courses that I taught. And again it was … it's always, I mean, if you come from my generation in English, you know, the joke is that I was a teenage levicite, you know, because I did my undergraduate degree before there was theory. So what there was a lot of was formalism. So I'm extremely good at picking changes in tone and styles of writing at about 150 paces, I can do that. So this was another instance of a student who was miraculously producing extraordinary high quality prose. Not it seemed to me to be the result of my teaching. Sadly.

I: *So first year, second year? International?*

R: This is a second year student, domestic student. So I said … I wrote on the bottom of the essay that there was, there seemed to be some discrepancies here and it seemed to me that it would be a good idea if we talked about it. The student came in and of course I Googled the material …

I: *You Googled before and found matches?*

R: Yep, to prepare for the interview. And of course I found that it had come from a not standard textbook but one of the traditional scholarly pieces. And there was something wrong with the footnotes as well. So it was a kind of two-pronged pincer movement. So I said to the student, "Look, from where I'm sitting there's a problem with the style here. And there's certainly a problem in your citation. Now what … do you want to just take me through this?" And first of

all, of course there was nothing … I was wrong. The student was in the right, and that's very common, of course. And then it was, "Well, I've been unwell," and then it was, "Well, you might have a point," which I thought was actually a pretty big concession, if you like. I probably spent a lot more time with this material than the student had. So then it was a matter of re-submitting. And so there was quite a lot of argy-bargy about that too. But in the end, the student did it. Now the frustrating thing … well, the annoying thing about that is that the frustrating thing is that a second year domestic student has absolutely no reason on God's Earth to do that. I'm a very accommodating tutor. I'm an extremely friendly tutor. My door is always open, blah, blah, blah … Now there's no reason why the student couldn't have come and seen me if there had been a problem. I'm sure there was a problem. I think it was probably called leaving it to the last minute, hitting the panic button, its three o'clock in the morning, what the hell am I going to do? You know, I found this in my mother's books. She's never going to know this because it's too old. Nevertheless, so …

I: *Were you unit coordinator for this particular unit or were you …?*

R: No, again I was lecturer/tutor. Yeah.

I: *So did you check with the young … was it another coordinator …?*

R: Yes, so I checked … no, not the young one. A much more experienced coordinator. Who nevertheless had a slightly differently view to me. But I took a fairly hard line, because I had in fact in a seminar that the student had not been to talked about plagiarism, as I always do. So that was annoying because the student hadn't turned up. It was a clear-cut case. We had to go through all of this embarrassing stuff of faffing around, and then actually the student sort of conceded that she needed to do this thing again on the basis that not that she had done something wrong but on the basis that I might possibly know more about the scholarship than she did. You know, that's just really unnecessary…It's just completely unnecessary. And if the student had said, as other students have sometimes said to me, "Look, I did the wrong thing here." And indeed in another instance, second semester of last year I said to a student, "Look, I'm going to have to call you on this one." And she said, "Oh well, I will go away. I have really learnt something here. I'll go away and redo it." And then I actually got an e-mail from the student after she had re-submitted saying, "Look, I made a mistake and thank you for pointing it out and for giving me the opportunity to do this again."

I: *Because you are giving these students a second chance, aren't you?*

R: Yep, exactly. Absolutely, yeah. So I thought that was very good of the student. It's one thing to say it, it's another thing to put it into writing. So although there are other instances that drive you berserk, on the other hand there are other instances where we're going through all that process and counselling the student and creating another opportunity. I think turns out to be …

I: *They've learnt. Right.*

R: Yep, and if they've learnt, that's the point of the exercise. You know, that's what it's really about to me.

I: *This particular student, the second one you mentioned, after she re-submitted did she do better? Did she pass the unit? What happened to her?*

R: She could only pass. Okay, if you're asked to re-submit under those circumstances you can't do more than a pass.

I: *Right. But she's still in the system, she's still here as far as you know.*

R: Yep, yep. Exactly. Yep.

Q.2 Policies and procedures

I: *Thank you for sharing that. What I have now is, if you don't mind, I have pairs of statements that I've obtained from my survey. So I've got three pairs of statements. If you could look at each pair and just let me know whether you agree or disagree and why. And just give your comments for each pair?*

R: For each pair?

I: *For each pair. Yes.*

R: So … okay. Well, I can sympathise with both of these. Policy making takes a lot of time. Designing procedures takes a lot of time and requires a lot of coordination. And at the end of a process like that, we only put those policies and procedures in place because we think they are fair. And from our point of view, they are.

I: *And from the students' point of view as well?*

R: Well, from the students' point of view I think … yes, I mean, they probably think it's fair or …

I: *Because you're giving them a second chance, in a way.*

R: That's true, then I don't know if students actually … at this university it's not plagiarism students that do actually make a decision like that, you know, this is a fair thing, this isn't a fair thing. At my previous university where the culture is quite different, I think students did think it was fair enough, you know, because the process, the Turnitin software was there and it was just part of normal life to sit with that way… And if you took the decision to plagiarise under those circumstances, well, fair enough about being caught.

I: *Yes. But here, for you as a lecturer, the policies are fair? From your perspective?*

R: I think we want to believe that they're fair. I think in terms of, you know, under the heading, best practice in designing policy, I'm sure they tick all the boxes. But actually I think that the policies and procedures here are not fair. I wouldn't go so far as to say that it's a joke.

I: *Right, in what way would they be unfair then?*

R: Well, I think they're both unfair and ineffective. I say they're ineffective because they don't work, because otherwise I wouldn't be getting the number of plagiarism cases I did get. And I'd have to say that this is a […] university. I've had more plagiarism cases in my two semesters of teaching here than I had at the regional university where I taught previously.

I: *Is that right? Okay. That's interesting.*

R: And plagiarism is … the P word is the word that people don't want to hear. So there's a reluctance to deal with it. So I think that the policies and procedures are ineffective.

I: *When you say that you've had a lot of incidences, in what sort of percentage would you say? Because you've mentioned three.*

R: Well, I think that three was too many for a start. Whatever it's out of it's too many. It's too many. So it's not a … it's not a huge percent. I mean, I don't know, maybe it's … and I'm in English, I'm in Arts. So, I don't know. Maybe it's between two and five percent, or something like that. But that shouldn't be in this kind of discipline. Now, my students tell me that in other faculties … and this is heresay … so let's put a big circle around that, that plagiarism is far more widespread. It's widespread typically in first year units that are large that are taught by sessional teachers, you know, same old story. And I get that. Now the reason why I think that the policies are not fair is that they're voluminous in their documentation, which means that students don't read them. That means that I'd be willing to bet the farm on the fact that students don't realise that if a lecturer counsels the student, that is what I did, called the student in and say, "Well, there's something going on here, you need to do this again," , the lecturer has the

choice in the procedures of putting a note on the student's file. Now I'd be absolutely certain that students don't realise that. Because if they did I think they'd be thinking twice about it.

I: *And did you do that? You put a note on the file that goes up to …*

R: Well, one has a choice about doing it. Now I actually chose not to do that. Because I thought that it was unfair. I thought that the policies did not make that explicit. I also actually don't like being in a position of having to make that decision, you know. Am I going to … it feels just a tiny bit secret policeish, although that's perhaps an exaggeration. It feels, I think it's unfair to do that kind of thing. So I understand where these are from. I also sympathise with colleagues who are confronted by an elaborate process and say to themselves "I don't care. I haven't got time to play with this". Or students who also think they're in a position … I mean, when I talk about plagiarism I say to students, "Look, this is your degree that we are talking about. I've got my degrees, I don't need anymore. But these are your degrees that are being devalued by instances of plagiarism. So you might like to think about that." And so from a student's point of view, they're potentially in a position of knowing that there's plagiarism, knowing that people are getting away with it and knowing that the institution is not stopping it or doing something about it. So I can see how a student would say, for example, they think it's a joke.

Q.3 Responses to plagiarism

I: *Okay. Thank you. Three and four?*

R: Okay, 'my responses to student plagiarism are overturned by those in higher authority'. Not overturned, but I was really stopped dead in my tracks when I took an instance of plagiarism to a more senior colleague. Now this happened because the student had discovered that the essay questions set by my colleague were available on the web and had not been changed since 1995. And the student had actually taken an essay that had been written in response in 1995, and used that. And my colleague said, "Oh well, who cares?" And I have to say that that really gave me paws. Because it wouldn't have occurred to me in a gazillion years to do that. Not to change your assessment topics…And not to make sure that that they didn't go up onto the Web.

I: *Right. You mean the answer went up as well?*

R: Well, both the question and the answer had gone up. And then the response being not, "Holy cow, I had better take it down." Or "I have some responsibility in this." But rather, you know, "Well, the students use it to do that."

I: *Was that a unit coordinator?*

R: It was a unit coordinator. Yep. So that wasn't overturned. I mean, he then said, "You can do what you like." And I was incensed about, you know, everybody all the way around. The student for having done this, my colleague for having facilitated this happening. And I was in a position of having to deal with this mess…And I got more things to do with my time, like teaching, not correcting plagiarism. And I do use my discretion. I certainly do. That's absolutely right. It's a very different thing to confront first year students as confronting later year students. I know colleagues … I know one colleague who had an instance of plagiarism in an honours year, which was devastating for everyone. I've never had that myself. I've never had to deal with that. But I certainly do use my discretion. Sometimes people don't know and sometimes there are cultural issues. Sometimes there's no worded policy that hasn't ensured that students know exactly what the score is.

I: *Right. Are student taught here at the very beginning about academic integrity? Do they get taught?*

R: Yeah. There is a compulsory online course that you have to pass.

I: *So they should know.*

R: Yep. And I'm in fact enrolled in a graduate diploma here. So of course I'm a student here. So I had to do the course….the same online course, yep. And I just thought that it was inadequate, you know. I mean, one of the issues about plagiarism is that it's cultural and it's problematic. It requires discretion and judgment. It requires teaching the student how to exercise that judgment. How to be able to tell the difference between, you know, in the classic case the difference between paraphrase and influence and outright plagiarism. You know, and extreme kind of borrowing without citation. And it isn't always clear. And we do have heterogeneous student cohorts. And again that's why Turnitin is such a big cultural move.

I: *So it's not used at all because of … is it like optional at the university or is it?*

R: It's not clear to me. I hear that in some faculties some colleagues use it. But that's worse because that then … it's almost like … it's not quite as extreme as this but it's almost as though they are encouraging the dare to see if you can get away with it. It would be so … look, Turnitin is not foolproof, it's not perfect, blah, blah, blah …But it sends a message. And the message is … in fact I've often used Turnitin as a positive teaching strategy, you know, because it produces the analysis and you're able to show students the official representation of the proportion of citation and discussion in their work. And sometimes it's very useful to be able to say to a student, "Look, you're not actually citing it. You're not engaging with the material enough. Here, this is what it looks like."

I: *But that's not here, is it? But that was at your other institution?*

R: Yeah, exactly. So I'm mystified as to why this doesn't happen here.

Q.4 Students and penalties

I: *Alright, five and six. In your opinion, in your experience?*

R: I don't actually think that this is the case. In my experience, you know, certainly there are non-English speaking background students who may for cultural reasons have particular difficulties with understanding the concept of plagiarism. But also such students in my experience, often when they come from Singapore, have an impeccable grasp of English grammar. They have an impeccable grasp of text and they don't make mistakes like that. Whereas, then you get, you know, the sport playing, incredibly popular, number one, you know, cool dude, whose social calendar is like Oprah Winfrey's or something. And such a person can come under extreme pressure with their lives.

I: *Right. Right, so there's nothing that you've noticed to say that there's international student, no.*

R: Not in my experience.

I: *And in your units, is there balance?*

R: No, this is the thing. In English based courses, one gets far fewer international students. And the students you get are fantastic. They tend to be fantastic. The unit in which I had, you know, the incident I related first, was a unit that drew across the university, students from all faculties. So I had a much higher proportion of international students in that particular unit.

I: *Right. Okay. And six?*

R: Well, um … this is hard…if you…um…

I: *It is hard. So for example, if you asked your three students to re-submit, do you think that was being lenient? Because they were second years, they'd been through this online writing course…*

R: Yes. I suppose… Well, if you re-submit you can't get more than a pass. And if you re-submit, the purpose of the assessment is different. It's not to see … it's not to satisfy the assessment

criteria and the learning based outcomes. It's actually to teach this person not to plagiarise. So getting them to produce an essay which is theirs, is a success.

I: *Right. And it's work for them.*

R: Exactly. It's work, they have to think about it. They have the embarrassment of having to do it and they actually do learn something, because grandma here stands over them and I go through the re-submitted essay with a fine-tooth comb. …On the other hand, you know, students when there are no extenuating circumstances … students who are just lazy, or have been skiing, and it's all, as they say, 'but it was just like too much.' I probably think that sort of student should fail the piece of assessment outright. Because that's wilful incompetence and egotism. So…I probably think in some instances the penalties are too lenient. Again it's such a matter of judgment. And I think that's one of the real issues for younger colleagues that given that there is no longer a kind of tutor system, given that it's difficult to find a more senior colleague who is prepared to mentor you, given that not all sessional tutors or early career researchers can go through a teaching internship or something like that, it's been a pretty tough call to say to that person, " Okay, you're one year out of your PhD, you haven't done a teaching internship, you've been employed sessionally. You've got 120 to deal with, and now make a judgment about plagiarism." I think that's unfair too. So I can see why managing plagiarism becomes kind of a blunt instrument. You either clobber them or you don't clobber them. Well, it's more work to clobber them, so … (a) leads to (b), sort of thing.

Q.5 Other comments

I: *Okay. Thank you. Are there any other comments that you'd like to make about academic integrity policies and procedures or student plagiarism in general? Anything else you'd like to say about this institution's procedures? Policies?*

R: I think plagiarism is just one of the things you've got to front up to, you know. You can't sweep it under the carpet. You can't pretend it doesn't exist. It's not going to get less, it's only going to get more. On the other hand, it's an absolutely fundamental way of defining integrity. You know, integrity is not as if it were a given, one has to go out and define it…And one of the ways in academic culture I think that we do define integrity is the injunction not to steal someone else's work. I mean, the other thing I guess I do is say is, "Look, plagiarism and citation go together. And you're all sitting there groaning at me thinking that looking at citations is a bloody nuisance, and why do you … But don't think about it like that. Citation is a conversation you're having with other scholars. It's your way of joining the intellectual community. And what you have to say matters and what you think about other people matters. In other words, it's, you know, it's a badge of citizenship. It's not just a pain in the neck."

I: *So you are sort of embedding this learning about plagiarism through citing and …*

R: Yeah. And also through saying to students, "Look, you have an identity here. You matter here in this community." And one of the things that I think that is really exciting about the ways that students have changed, you know … I think I started teaching in 1983, so I've always had that … students now come to university with a sense of themselves as citizens in the global economy. There are some things they are fantastic at and there are some things that they are terrible at. But they really do have this sense of being citizens of a global economy. And part of that … my approach is to say, "Look, part of that citizenship, is learning how to treat other people with respect. If you had produced this piece of work, you would want this cited. Your footnotes show me the conversation that you're having with other people who have worked in this area. That's make you a full essence…So I guess that's all.

I: *Okay. Thank you very much. Thank you.*

R: No worries. That's a pleasure. **END OF TRANSCRIPT**

INTERVIEWEE 23

I: *Thank you for agreeing to be interviewed.*

R: Yep, no worries, I.

Q.1 Incident of plagiarism

I: *My first question to you is, could you tell me about an incident of student plagiarism that you've experienced that you found either memorable or frustrating?*

R: ^ there's so many to choose from really. But most of them haven't been too frustrating. I'd probably rather relay a more general ^ ongoing frustrating observation which is particularly in the last few years, it seems to be there's an increasing number of students not just in first year, who are just copying and pasting things, obviously from the internet. You know, they don't even bother to change the font size, so seriously people, if you're going to cheat, you can't even use paste special or something?

But, you know, they ... and then when you raise it with the class, they seem surprised, they're not getting the message that this is a serious issue and, ^, I speak with colleagues regularly with whole classes of second and third year students who, you know, we give them back their assignments and we say, "You have failed this because you haven't adequately referenced", and that is plagiarism, even if we can't it's not proven copying. If it's not referenced, if they're not actually acknowledging sources, that's also plagiarism. ^

I: *Do you feel that it's an increasing problem?*

R: It seems to be, it seems to be an increasing problem and ^, I think there's a lot of things that influence that, I think there's a lot of things going on generally in the culture of our learning society. I think that there's not a great ^ as great a value placed on learning as there maybe once was. ^, I don't think students are learning in school to love learning as much, and also because universities have a greater proportion of students coming in, a bigger cohort, I mean they, a senior colleague of mine who I was speaking about this with probably a year or so ago said, "It's because the same proportion of people in the society are actually suited to being scholars", but we're taking in more of them to fill seats, so there's a greater proportion of people at university who actually either don't want to be here or it's just ticking boxes so they don't actually engage with the learning and maybe that's part – I don't know, I mean, it's all conjecture really.

But the observation is that the greater incidents of cheating and the perception of assignments as ticking a box exercise, ^, just regurgitating existing knowledge or copying something out of a text book, ^, appears to suggest that a larger group of our current students ^ don't understand the purpose of assessment, you know, they are just, "Oh, I just have to write something". It's not that ... they don't understand that they're supposed to be demonstrating that they understand the concepts and that by engaging with the literature and referencing, it's just, you know, levels of critical thinking, levels of ...

I: *So it's a bigger problem.*

R: Kind of everything, yeah, I think there's a bit of a systemic problem and I don't think you can ... I think lots of people like to blame lecturers and things and I don't think that's the problem, I think that actually, you know, they're doing a pretty good job considering, but there's something else influencing it. But I think the thing that frustrates me, you said something that's frustrating is that this continuing having to constantly say to students, "Look, this is plagiarism, this is serious", and giving them examples. I mean, probably the last time this semester a colleague of mine came in and had to sit and vent to me because exactly the same thing had just happened

to her. She said, “I’ve just totally ripped the shreds of these students because they just don’t get that this is serious”.

I: *And these are not first years we’re talking about?*

R: These weren’t first years.

I: *Are they taught at first year?*

R: They are taught. They are taught. All students at […] are required to do a foundation unit and it’s a big part of the foundation units, and I’ve taught in a foundation unit so I know we go over it and over it and we hammer it, ^ but it just seems that students have this ... they’ve adopted this model of learning where they rote learn to the end of an exam and then they kind of wipe the memory bank to start afresh next semester, and that’s something we’ve also observed in […], because our degrees are built on building a body of knowledge and skill and, you know, so the stuff that they do in third year is based on what they learn in first year, and so they’re struggling because they’ve ...not remembered it because they’ve only surface learning, you know, they really haven’t engaged with learning. So that’s a real problem, ^ but the fact that these students will really, I mean, N came in and she said, “How can they not get this by now?”, you know, these are third year students.

I: *And they wouldn't have come, like, direct entry into second or third year, they would have come through the system?*

R: No, maybe a couple, maybe a small proportion maybe have come to do a post-grad diploma or something. But even so ...

I: *But they’re not the problem.*

R: ... they tend to not be the problem. They tend not to be the problem, they tend to be very good students who read the unit guide for a start.

I: *And what would you do with these students that frustrate you, that you’ve noticed the increase in plagiarism?*

R: We just we give them examples, ^ my colleague said ...

I: *So education?*

R: ... look, she gave them examples of things that had actually happened, she said, “Last year a student was stripped of their degree, that their career is over, they can’t get a degree because of this”, and the students were shocked. But how long will that last? I don’t know, it would be really interesting to interview some students. So, you know, maybe someone who was charged with plagiarism and see what they’re doing three years later. I don’t know, why don’t they care and I don’t really care. Bit like the people that don’t follow the road rules really, isn’t it? In wet weather, I don’t understand, it seems like common sense.

I: *But they’re not getting it.*

R: They don’t appear to be, and that may be an unfair statement because of course we see the incidents of plagiarism. It’s a bit like the negative arm in any society sticks out so you think ...

I: *But you’ve noticed that it’s more, you feel it’s increasing?*

R: I’ve noticed over the years it’s increased. I think the biggest problem is that ... I wonder, I guess a theory that maybe I have is I wonder if it’s because accessing electronic information is so much easier. Maybe, I mean in the past, you know, we all had to go to the library and read through papers and when you’re copying something out from a paper or a photocopy you’re much more mindful of it, whereas when people copy and paste notes, “Oh, that’s a good bit,

I'll paste that in and then I'll reword it later", but maybe they forget who knows? I wonder if there's something about the process of utilising electronic data that makes it less obvious to the student, perhaps. I mean, it's still not acceptable, but then we've also had people say that the quality of writing has decreased over the years, you know, the quality of ... people have to be retaught how to write essays every year. It's a bit sad.

I: *So it's a much bigger issue than just dealing with the plagiarism, you're dealing with different standards or different ...*

R: I don't know, different expectations, different understandings, and yet we are all made very clear at the beginning of ...

I: *That this is wrong.*

R: ... the units that these are the expectations, these are the requirements. Every single unit guide has a big section at the front about how serious plagiarism and what it is and what the consequences are, but it's like no one actually looks at it. Do the students look at it?

I: *Are they dealt with appropriately, so if they're caught ...*

R: Yeah, if they're caught, yep.

I: *... does it go through the system?*

R: And more and more lecturers here are using Turnitin as an example, you know, to manage it because obviously it's these days there's so many bits and pieces, you can't know every bit of written stuff and unless you recognise something in the past you wouldn't see it. Or unless you suspected that it wasn't the words of the student, then you would look it up maybe. And that's what I do, I don't use Turnitin yet but it's very easy to see in student reports, I mean, only a couple of weeks ago I read something that a student had written and I thought, er, I typed the exact phrase into Google and sure enough, up it pops, you know, it's not difficult to pick.

I: *To find, yes.*

R: ^, so ... and they are, you report them ^ I think first offence is ... I think in first year, I deal with students in first year very differently because I do think they are just trying to ...

I: *Learn.*

R: ... they don't know yet really, but by the end of first year they should know, because as far as I'm aware, every single lecturer here hammers that home, and they lose marks for it in their assignment, but they don't necessarily have a formal ... unless they did it twice in my unit, I wouldn't necessarily formally report them in first year, ^ because usually I take them to task, the first assignment, explain ... see if they're aware of what they're doing, ^ and if they're not aware of it and they appear to honestly have not realised what this is, then I wouldn't report them to the Dean or anything ...

I: *You wouldn't go further.*

R: Yeah, that's right, and I think that's what I'd said before. And that's what I think it says in the unit coordinators, in the policy it says that it's the unit coordinator's ^ decision as to what level of the ...

I: *And this is you as unit coordinator and lecturer?*

R: Absolutely, yep. Whereas in a second and third year unit, I would almost automatically report plagiarism, because they have had the opportunity to ... well, it's been ... as far as I'm concerned, every unit in their first year, they've been exposed to the seriousness of plagiarism, they should know by second year. Even by second semester really. ^, so yeah, that's what happens, and

the university's very good, I know even for collusion, students have been ^, you know, failed units because they've worked on an assignment together and it's been picked up and ... it's ^ ... it is complicated.

I: *Thank you for sharing that with me.*

R: That's alright.

Q.2 Policies and procedures

I: *I'll give you this sheet now. ^, so if you look at part B, what I've got, I've got pairs of statements obtained from the survey and if you could just look at each pair and give your comments and say whether you agree or disagree with each pair and why.*

R: Well, the first pair is kind of two separate statements because one is saying that the policies are fair and the second is saying it's the implementation of the policies is a joke, so ...

I: *The opposite.*

R: Yeah, it's not ... well, the second isn't saying that the policies aren't fair.

I: *No.*

R: They can be fair but if they're not implemented, what's the point. So I guess that ^ ...

I: *Do you feel that the policies here are fair?*

R: I think they're fair. ^, I mean, they're fairly standard as well, they match, as far as I'm aware, they match with similar policies in other universities ^ in terms of the stages of severity depending on the offence, and also the level, I mean, an honour student that submits a thesis which is half copied from somewhere else gets their degree stripped, they're gone. And that's fair because at that level that's what should happen.

^, I can understand why other people might feel that the policies and procedures are a joke, and that may also depend on which school they're in, which faculty, because ^ I know in this faculty of ^ science and certainly in the School of […], if something's reported by the coordinator to the faculty it is dealt with. It's followed through as well, ^, but then if it's the unit coordinator's choice to ^ report that, and there may be other unit coordinators that don't report it or can't be bothered or are too busy or – I don't know, but I'm just guessing, then perhaps if ... perhaps if they ... if somebody might have feel that, well, it's all up to the unit coordinator to report it and if they don't, then nothing happens, so therefore, the whole policy falls on its head. Which is true, because unless the person who's recognised that plagiarism exists reports it then nothing can happen.

I: *That's right. You say in this faculty of science that ^ you deal ... it's dealt with, it's implemented, dealt with, compared to other faculties. Is that what you ...*

R: Well, I don't know because I don't have the experience in other faculties, although I do teach across schools, I teach in the School of […] as well, ^ and ... I mean, I'm not making a negative comment at all but I do know that there's certainly in some cases there's less of a focus because the ... it's the preparation of the student teachers, they're more focussing on the practical development of the student ^, maybe there's less focus on the academic rigour of some work, but that's a different ... it's not really a fair statement because I haven't taught in the units that are highly theory based. So in those units, then I imagine there would be quite clear responses.

^, I know the Dean of that, if someone reported it to the Dean of the School of […], they would deal with it seriously. ^, and I can only comment on this school because these are the people I interact with ...

I: *And you know that ...*

R: And we discuss it quite frequently.

I: *Okay, that's good, so you discuss it informally and then you deal with it in a similar way, would you say?*

R: Yeah, yeah, absolutely. ^, and also, you know, because when you do have a case of plagiarism, usually you feel a bit indignant as well, so you tend to share it with your fellow staff as well. I know one of our Professors, you know, if she's got some plagiarism in there, she's on the war path, you know, so you know about it because it's like, grrr, she'll be telling people that this just ... it's not good enough. And I think you feel the need to do that too, because you want to justify your own ... because at some level, you also ... you want your students to be doing well. You don't want to have to penalise them or make their lives miserable because maybe they've got lots of extenuating circumstances, but at the end of the day this is wrong, and that's what the policy's for.

I: *Okay, good.*

R: So I don't think it's a joke in our faculty. And I know that students right from first years right through to third year have been through the process where they've been to ...

I: *The Head.*

R: ... it's not mediation, yeah, you know, they have to have a meeting where they're actually ...

I: *Consultation?*

R: Yeah, they're consulted, they're essentially ... it's almost like interviewed by the senior staff and the consequences are determined.

I: *Okay.*

Q.3 Responses to plagiarism

R: So three and four?

I: *Three and four, mmm.*

R: I think they are ... the first one's not accurate in my experience.

I: *Okay. So when you, as unit coordinator, when you find an incident and you suggest ... do you suggest a penalty or do you suggest what action do we take and then it goes through and then the Head ... ?*

R: ^, I don't think I suggest an action because they're fairly well set out really. ^, what you suggest is the severity of the ^ incident ^ and usually you're involved in the meeting and ^ the consultation of with the student, or students, about the case ^ and why it's happened, and then you meet separately to determine the ... you don't decide in front of the students what the penalty is etcetera. ^ ...

I: *So you play your part, you have ... you're able to help make the decision at the high level?*

R: Yeah, absolutely, you can intervene. So if you feel, you know, maybe it's ... and also I think they are ... I mean, like, point one, are they fair. If it's a student's first offence, ^, you know, and unless other staff say, "No, that student was shocking in first year", or whatever, there are cases where, you know, this is a known offender who's been given leniency before and then they ...

I: *And how would you know that? Would that be recorded or is that again through talking to your colleagues?*

R: I think it's through ^ ... usually, even the minor cases that aren't reported are discussed, you know, so I would talk to the Dean and say, you know, I've had some cases of plagiarism ...

I: *So it's like informal but it's sort of recorded ...*

R: Sort of recorded, yeah.

I: *... in a way, yeah.*

R: It depends how serious it is, like I said in first year, first offender, first time, but if they keep doing it over the semester then you make a note of that ^ on their ... there's a spot you can put in your marks record where there's a note of their performance etcetera. ^, but number four, I mean, they're kind of separate because of course we all use our discretion when responding, because ... if we're the unit coordinator or the tutor of whoever, perhaps ^ three might be true of a tutor that reports the plagiarism to a unit coordinator because a tutor themselves doesn't have the power, so if I've employed someone to do my marking, and they've said there's plagiarism in this and then given it to the unit coordinator and the unit coordinator's gone, oh "Pfff", you know ...

I: *Would that happen often?*

R: I don't know. It's never happened to me… and I've worked my way up through the school, so ... and I've worked in other schools and it's never happened there…But that's not to say it doesn't, you know. ^ ...

I: *You use your discretion in what way in terms of ... ?*

R: Well, it depends on the nature of the plagiarism. I mean, copying and pasting a whole chunk straight off Wikipedia into your assignment, ^ word for word, and not using quotation marks or not referencing at all is pretty bad. ^, if a student's written an assignment and it's clearly paraphrased but they haven't referenced, then it's a little different, like, especially if it's the first time, you know, maybe they don't realise, in first year they often ... I've got some second year students at the moment that on their drafts I'm constantly saying, "You need to reference this and this". "But I've got a reference in that paragraph". "Yes, but you've not referenced all the material in that paragraph. All of the stuff that's there did not come from that source". "Oh". So in that case, they're making an effort but they don't understand the complexity of the ... so it's a bit different to blatantly copying and just trying to use it. You know, kids in school do that but you don't expect that at university level for their assignment or their, you know, project on the history of paint. They might copy stuff straight out of a text book but that's not acceptable. ^, so I think that's where the discretion comes in^, you use your own teaching skills first to identify, as I said, the nature of the plagiarism, the intent behind it, ^ and its severity obviously, I mean, even if the intent was not bad but they've copied and pasted whole things or used someone else's assignment or something like that. That's ^ that's very serious and you would expect even if a student didn't understand plagiarism itself, they should know that that's wrong. So there's ... I think there's different degrees of severity and that's where your discretion comes in.

I: *Good.*

Q.4 Students and penalties

R: ^, I definitely don't agree with number five. Definitely.

I: *Okay. Do you have a lot of international students in your school or an equal proportion or more local students?*

R: We've probably got slightly less ^ non-English speaking students in […], however, in the foundation units, there's a high proportion of, you know, there's always a good proportion of ^ international students.

I: *Because that's for the ... foundation unit's for the whole faculty, is that what you're saying? In the foundation unit ...*

R: Yeah, the foundation unit. Well, a student from anywhere in the university can do any foundation unit, so the foundation unit that we run can have students from history, law and arts, you know, you don't do only the foundation unit in your school necessarily, because they're all supposed to be sort of across the board, and they all teach the same things but they just have a different theme, so you can choose a different theme. So, for example, a past foundation unit –[…] – the theme was ^ science fiction and ^, you know, life in the universe obviously, stuff, ^ so that was quite popular with lots of students ^ across the board, ^ and you use that genre to explore issues but the units essentially are about teaching/learning skills. ^ ...

I: *Okay, but in your second and third years, in your experience, there's students that have plagiarised have been local?*

R: Yeah, not necessarily non-English speaking. ^, I think it's probably equal. It might seem like there's more non-English speaking background students plagiarising because there's fewer of them maybe in our faculty, ^ but I'd say in terms of proportion of the two separate groups, or two separate cohorts, it's probably equal. I don't distinguish. In one of the units I teach education for sustainability, ^, it's most often the local students that plagiarise, and often it's a case of just sloppy work. They're either over-committed, ^you know, maybe they're working and looking after family so they do something quickly at the last minute and it's not well constructed and they haven't gone through and referenced, that sort of thing. I don't often have the cases of straight out copying anymore. When I was teaching in units probably five years ago, I did have a couple of cases where people were literally copying, and we did have someone try and hand the same assignment in, as somebody else. A bit interesting. ^Yeah, so I don't agree that it's mostly international students that plagiarise.

I: *Okay.*

R: In my experience.

I: *In your experience, yes, okay.*

R: It might be different in different ...

I: *Faculties.*

R: ... schools, yeah. And also different assignments, different context. Don't know. Imagine it would be quite easy to copy things from maybe […] who've got a lot of international students, it would therefore seem that it's mostly international students that plagiarise, because it's probably the same proportion, it's just that they've got a greater number of those students. ^, and I don't know about the penalties. In my experience it hasn't been too lenient, I don't think, ^ but I don't know what happens in other areas so I can't comment really fairly.

I: *But for the students that you've ^ picked up and sent through, ^, the penalties ...*

R: Yeah, haven't been too lenient. I mean ...

I: *Were there actually some that left? Were there some that were ... ?*

R: Excluded?

I: *Excluded.*

R: Um, not from ... no student that I have ^ picked up has been excluded but none of them have ... I haven't picked up people at honours level or anything like that. ^ ...

I: *So they fail their basic ... they fail the unit?*

R: They fail the degree or fail the unit depending on the case. ^, majority it's just been a straight zero for the assessment but often when the assessment's worth 40% ...

I: *That's a fail.*

R: ... that's going to be a fail for them. So ...

I: *So it's quite serious.*

R: It's quite serious, I think. It's a lot of money, you know, I mean, essentially it's a, what, $5,000 fine, because they've got to redo the unit to do the degree, if it's a core unit and they've paid for that, and they have to pay for it eventually. They pay for it again, yeah. So I think that's quite serious. Maybe people don't think it through.

I: *No, before they do it.*

R: Yeah. No, I mean, people who think it's too lenient that they just fail the assignment but when you think, well, actually, if they fail that assignment and then they fail the unit as a result, then a $,5000 fine for an undergraduate student who's made a mistake in copying something is ... I think that's fair for that level, yeah. I mean, an honours student doing that, then they would have their degree stripped. I don't think that's too lenient, I think that's good and same with a PhD. I think if a PhD submits something and I've heard of cases where they have, ^ one of my colleagues was the Dean of Postgraduate Studies and he was relaying me stories of some things that had happened and a student that was here that had handed in a ... submitted a PhD that was literally just sheets and sheets of copied material, and ^, and they were just ... had their whole degree stripped. And ^, see, why would you do that? I think in that case the supervisor should have had a kick too because how on earth could they have got through that? How could they possibly have allowed them to submit that?

I: *So it's two-way, isn't it?*

R: Yeah, I mean, someone at some point has said to them, "Yeah, that's fine, submit it". How could that happen? Seriously.

Q.5 Other comments

I: *Okay, is there any other comments you'd like to make about academic integrity policies and procedures or student plagiarism in general?*

R: ^, apart from the fact that unless you've been here for a long time, or you know where to look, it's very difficult to access policies.

I: *Is that right?*

R: I think so. ^, I mean, you either have to know exactly what the policy's called, or which part of it, where it is, because you can search for things and you get all sorts of bits up on the website. I mean, I've been here for a long time so I know where the policies are but ...

I: *You're not taught ... there's no training or education for academic staff in ... ?*

R: I don't know, there might be. I've never had any. But then I might be one of these people that slipped through the cracks because I've been here too long.

I: *So you sort of learnt through searching?*

R: I learnt through modelling, really. My ^ peers modelled to me, ^ as I was coming through from PhD ^ and doing ... while I was doing my PhD doing tutoring and teaching, so ^ we had the material in the unit guide, it actually does have the links now in the unit guide, all of our unit guides.

I: *So it's easy to find now?*

R: Yeah, well, it's easy for my tutors and people to find it because I put the links in.

I: *You put it in, right.*

R: But if they didn't have that, then ^, you know, where would it be. But how would they find it.

I: *So you need to do your own searching.*

R: Yeah. So all of the stuff on academic integrity, you know, that's ... I've put this in and with the links and what it ... defining each, what they are and what happens ^ and also links on how to reference properly and avoid plagiarism so not just what the policy is. But, I mean, who would have known, if you were looking up plagiarism as a new tutor, you might not know the phrase 'academic integrity'. And if you just put plagiarism in then nothing comes up. ^, anyway. But most of us have that material in the unit guides now. But it is hard to find.

I: *It is hard to find, okay. So you wouldn't know if there's any changes? Would you get an email or ... ?*

R: Yeah, they do send you ... they send people who are on the staff list, so tutors wouldn't get it but academic staff get the updates all the time when there's policy changes. And sometimes we're asked to comment on them as well. ^, but ^ the other thing is you have to sign in.

I: *So it's really up to you and people like you to inform people that work for you ...*

R: Yeah, that's right.

I: *Right, okay. Which may or may not happen.*

R: Yeah, I guess so, ^ but then because we've got it I the unit guide and the tutors equally have access to the unit guide, they can access it through that ^ but then you're relying on them to be proactive. Because there's no time to train people. I do, but ^, you know, I'm lucky, I only have small units. If I had a 400 student unit and so I had ten tutors under me I wouldn't be able to spend the time I currently spend with my tutor. So my tutor for the units I run ^ when assignments come in, she marks them and then we actually go through a sample together ^ also to make sure ... I mean, that's my view on good quality assessment as well so I am actually involved in the assessment, I'm not just palming it off. I am saying yeah, that's an appropriate grade for this and I agree with that or when she's marked the first couple she'll bring them to make sure she's on the right track. So that works really well. And also ...

I: *And you can do it because you have a small cohort?*

R: Yeah, so I can understand that if I had ... as a part-time staff member, if I had a large unit that I was coordinating that had ten tutors ^ for each tutorial, how would I have the time to do that? It would be physically impossible as well as having, you know, lots of post-grad students and your actual teaching lecturing time and staff meetings and ... yeah, how could you do it. It's difficult.

I: *It's hard.*

R: Yeah. So I do understand some of the other comments, but it's very situational, isn't it?

I: *Yes. Thank you, you can keep that. Thank you very much.* **END OF TRANSCRIPT**

I: *Okay, I'll put it here. Is that all right?*

R: Yeah, wherever is fine.

Q.1 Incident of plagiarism

I: *Thank you for agreeing to be interviewed. My first question to you is, could you tell me about an incident of student plagiarism that you've experienced that you found either memorable or frustrating?*

R: ^Yes, I can. So I've got a couple of options, I suppose.

I: *All right, yes, okay.*

R: Most recently, so as background, as you should know, is … so I did all of my graduate training in the United States. And then I came here three years ago.

I: *Okay. So you've been here three years.*

R: Three years. So I have, you know, I'll probably switch back and forth between the university systems. You'll be able to make some decisions about your data here.

I: *All right, okay, okay.*

R: But so one instance, many years ago when I was a graduate teaching assistant, and the final exam in the United States, if you teach the unit, you have to supervise the final. You don't have someone else do that for you. And the student had answers underneath the exam paper. And so that was …

I: *So that was cheating.*

R: Yeah, it was definitely cheating. It was unambiguous. And that was an instance where we just we turned her into the Plagiarism Committee essentially. In that instance, at that university, it was run by students, and students are often harder on their peers than anyone else, so that's one. Most recently, here, this past year, I had a student who … I've recently turned to electronic submission of all my assignments.

I: *Is that Turnitin you're talking about?*

R: Yeah. And so Turnitin flagged one student. And they had basically copied and pasted from a range of websites. And so …

I: *That was your student?*

R: Yep, it was my student.

I: *And what sort of unit, a first year unit?*

R: Third year unit.

I: *Oh, third year unit.*

R: So it was a third year unit. A student who was in their late 20s or early 30s'ish. And so I looked at what the university policies were, and I just had this conversation with a colleague as well, ^there's a substantial hill to climb when it comes to paperwork. So I elected to call the student in and just sort of confronted her and I gave her 50%.

I: *So you didn't … as lecturer or unit coordinator you called her in?*

R: Both. I was one and the same.

I: *So you didn't want to go through the paperwork? You wanted …*

R: No.

I: *You dealt with it yourself.*

R: Yeah, that's right, yeah.

I: *Okay.*

R: So that's probably an important thing for you to know, yes.

I: *Yes, okay. Why did you do that? What was the main reason you did that?*

R: The main reason I did that was for two reasons. The student had copied just enough and had done just a crappy enough job at not really changing the text and they sort of cited the websites. It was not something where they had completely, it wasn't sort of …

I: *Completely copied.*

R: Yeah, they didn't have, like, the answers under their exam paper. It was more the situation where it would take some documentation and some work. And at the end of the day the student might have had some recourse to defend themselves a little bit.

I: *So you were worried … is that one reason, you were worried that … you worried for yourself or for the student, that's why you didn't go through with the paperwork?*

R: I wasn't worried … I mean, I called the student in and confronted the student. At that stage she sort of made a few perfunctory attempts at defending herself but pretty much accepted the punishment. And that's what told me, like, yeah, she knew better and I'd caught her out and I sent her away.

I: *So she failed that particular assessment?*

R: Mmm hmm.

I: *And was it worth much?*

R: 15% of the overall mark.

I: *All right. And do you know what's happened to this student? Has she graduated? Because she's third year, so …*

R: Yeah. I don't know. She was either close to finishing or will finish ^in the near future.

I: *Okay. So that's your only case here that you've …*

R: That I'm aware of.

I: *That you've dealt with.*

R: Yeah.

I: *Okay. Do you think you would do it differently in the future?*

R: In the future I might actually just flat out give the student a zero.

I: *Okay. And is that in accordance with … because you said you looked at the policy and then you had a chat with somebody.*

R: Mmm hmm.

I: *Would that be what the policy says?*

R: Yeah, so […] University's policy is this very large complicated flow chart and there's, like, an investigator and blah, blah, blah, and first instance and second instance. And ^it's a substantial amount of work on my end to move that up.

I: *To do that. Do you have a lot of students under you? Do you have a lot of students that you coordinate?*

R: Yeah. I mean, about 100. I don't know if that counts as a lot. I mean …

I: *Average, average.*

R: Yeah.

I: *And do you have lecturers and tutors under you?*

R: I've got one tutor.

I: *And have they brought up anything to you in terms of something similar to your case, incidence of plagiarism?*

R: No, no.

I: *So for the moment it's just that one particular case?*

R: Yeah. And you're talking to someone who's … I mean, I've only basically gone through one year and a little bit of being a lecturer.

I: *Okay, so you're new, quite new.*

R: So I haven't had enough sort of iterations to accumulate that. There's numbers of incidences probably.

Q.2 Policies and procedures

I: *Right, okay. Thank you for sharing that with me. So if I can give you part B now. So what I've got is I've got pairs of statements that I've obtained from my survey. So if you could have a look at each pair and just give me a comment, say whether you agree, disagree with each pair and why. So just comments about each pair, each pair of statements.*

R: Okay, so the first pair, so we've got the policies and procedures for responding to student plagiarism are fair, implementation of policies and procedures for student plagiarism is a joke.

I: *What about, in your experience, do you feel that's …*

R: I feel that the first statement is, at […] University, is largely accurate.

I: *Okay.*

R: ^Insofar as I'm aware of them. I haven't been all the way through that process myself.

I: *But you had a read … you read them on the website and …*

R: Yeah.

I: *… you said they're lengthy.*

R: Yeah. Somewhere I've got a copy; if you want it I'm happy to send it to you.

I: *That's okay.*

R: And then the second part of that, in a sense it is a joke. Because of the … I mean, I literally two days ago had a conversation with a colleague who's also new here who's teaching a first

year unit and is faced with a similar instance. And she has elected to handle it herself. And that bears on the second half of this because it is such an onerous ^thing to advance this, that …

I: *So it puts you off doing that because it's so onerous and time consuming.*

R: Absolutely.

I: *Right.*

R: Now obviously whoever, what committee or working group or whatever, came up with this they want to make sure they were fair to the student. And that you didn't have sort of half-baked accusations ending up on a student's record, because that could be very harmful. So they obviously took that very seriously. I don't think that they … I can't speak to what the conversation was but it is a joke because essentially it more or less guarantees that a very large majority of the students who do undertake this sort of behaviour won't get it on their record because it's just too much work.

I: *So you're not the only one you feel perhaps in your …*

R: No, no.

I: *You feel in your school that people will do the same thing or do you know or you're not …*

R: I think the vast majority of faculty would just as soon handle it themselves.

I: *For this particular faculty.*

R: Yeah.

I: *Right, okay.*

R: Yeah. In terms of, yeah, my knowledge would be …

I: *From your experience.*

R: This school plus other colleagues in […]. Yeah, absolutely.

I: *Right, you feel that everybody will just handle it themselves rather than go through that paperwork.*

R: Unless it's really outrageous. I mean, if you're getting to the point where you're going to fail a student in the unit and then you're looking at the possibility of the student coming back to you or appealing it, then you see that as the potential harm to you under appeal. Why did this student fail, because I gave them a zero. Why did you give them a zero? Then you have to defend yourself. That would be the instance under which …

I: *You would go …*

R: … you might think about protecting yourself. But because of the sort of activation energy here is high, that would probably be what it would take. You wouldn't do it out of a sense of justice or …

I: *So it's more you do it to protect yourself if you had to?*

R: Unfortunately, yes.

Q.3 Responses to plagiarism

I: *Okay, all right. What about three and four?*

R: Okay.

I: *Because you're new you might not have an answer but just from your experience and opinion.*

R: Well, I mean, certainly I definitely think I use my discretion. Clearly …

I: *In this case clearly, right.*

R: Absolutely. My responses are overturned by those in higher …

I: *I suppose that hasn't …*

R: I can't speak to that myself.

I: *You can't say because you haven't experienced that yet.*

R: Yeah.

I: *Yeah, okay.*

R: So, I mean, briefly I would report it to somebody else who's designated in this school. Theoretically then it's their job to investigate and make a finding. Then it would travel up the end. At that point sort of in your flow chart there should be a decision whether it needs to go up or not. That investigator might just meet the student and it's done. And so that part of the structure probably works in the sense that it either goes up or it doesn't in terms of the seriousness of it.

I: *Right. But you haven't as yet been to that officer, you haven't taken it that far?*

R: No, no.

Q.4 Students and penalties

I: *Okay, all right. What about five and six?*

R: ^I would say for the last one, that it's too lenient, that's probably what happens. It is too lenient on average. That probably varies by individual.

I: *Because you gave that … that was a third year … that was a mature student.*

R: Oh, yeah.

I: *I'm assuming she was local, like Australian.*

R: Oh, yes, yeah, UK, yeah.

I: *Mature, third year, ready to graduate and then the assignment was only worth so little and you failed her. So do you feel that was lenient to her? Because she could have perhaps gone further and failed the unit instead of just failed the assignment.*

R: Yeah, I guess the inverse of that is you have to ask yourself what's the lesson, what's the outcome for the student. ^If it's a first year student I feel like you could probably change their behaviour. ^For a third year student, particularly for a student who … I think she was probably late 20s or something I'm not sure how much I'm going to change their behaviour. And what's the point of failing a student in the whole unit. I mean, she kind of barely scraped by as it was. I'm not really sure what that would have accomplished.

I: *Did you feel because you're young and she was older, do you feel that the age was a factor when you thought …*

R: No. No, no. I know what you mean. My very first class I ever taught, I was new and I was probably 23 or four and I had, like, 20-year-old students. That was weird. But, no, no, yeah.

I: *So that's not a factor there.*

R: No.

I: *Right, okay.*

R: 'It's mostly international students that plagiarise'.

I: *In your experience?*

R: You know what, I have heard people say that repeatedly since I got here. And particularly these sort of Asian students who think that if they plagiarise it's a way of showing respect for whatever they're … like some sort of cultural thing. I haven't seen it.

I: *You haven't experienced that.*

R: And it might have to do with the fact that I'm not in […] where maybe there's a larger proportion of students where you're going to see that. But in the […]

I: *There're not many international students here?*

R: They're around, they're definitely present. But I'm guessing not at the same concentration. Because I'm looking at a class of 80 students, I've got, you know, three or four that are Asian. International.

I: *Okay, all right. So in your experience, no, it's not the case?*

R: I haven't seen that as an issue.

Q.5 Other comments

I: *All right, good. Good, is there anything else you want to say about this institution's Academic Integrity Policies and Procedures or student plagiarism in general? Any other comments you would like to make? Because you just mentioned that, you said you found them very long, lengthy.*

R: Uh-uh. Well, any impression I have is probably confounded by the filter of culture. Being from North America. ^I guess I would say … I would share one sort of thing with you, and that is that my experience in the past was that universities in the United States have what they call, like, a judicial board, and that's populated by undergraduate students, and when you have an instance of breach of academic integrity, students then have to go before that board. And so that's peers evaluating peers. And I've always felt that that was really good. Because they will be harsh, much harsher than the faculty might be. And …

I: *They have the power there, the student has the power in the States but it's the opposite, you feel it's the opposite here.*

R: It's the very top down.

I: *Academicians have the power.*

R: Yeah. And ^I feel … when I matriculated, when I started my own undergraduate, I had to sign an academic code of conduct. And that was a big deal.

I: *Like an honour code.*

R: It was an honour code, that's exactly what it was. And that idea of you're responsible for your own activities I feel is reinforced when students take responsibility for policing themselves, and I feel like that element is absent here. And obviously I'm a fan but that's just, you know, that's just my perspective.

I: *Okay, that's very interesting. Okay, thank you.*

R: Sure, no worries. **END OF TRANSCRIPT**

INTERVIEWEE 25

Q.1 Incident of plagiarism

I: *Thank you for agreeing to be interviewed. My first question to you is, could you tell me about an incident of student plagiarism that you've experienced that you found either memorable, or frustrating?*

R: Where to ... which one? ^Yeah. I seem to have a knack for spotting them. Well, perhaps a group incident, beginning of this year, is the most recent so that's strongly memorable. A class of third years asked to write an assignment. Out of 30 students nine plagiarised at level two or above, and when I detected the plagiarism initially I didn't use Turnitin, because it was a technical document, I wasn't expecting to have a problem, and I started reading them and I thought, "Oh dear." You know, there's the common signs that the English doesn't match within the document. It doesn't match to what you've seen of the student previously and - not good. So I put everybody's assignment through Turnitin and others that I hadn't even spotted popped up. One was 70%. And I called each of those students in for an individual interview to give them the news.

I: *Right. As lecturer, or unit coordinator?*

R: Lecturer. Because they were wondering why they hadn't got their assignment back and I just said ... I'd already notified the unit coordinator and filled out the reports and everything, and I was just saying to them, "Okay. The reason I'm not giving you back yours is because we detected plagiarism, and this is what's going to happen. And, you know, you are going to be given an opportunity to explain and justify yourself." And every excuse was different, but every excuse was, "I didn't know." or "I didn't think it mattered for this." Or, "We've never done an assignment before." In third year! So it was quite shocking. The other one that perhaps ...

I: *And were these – sorry - were these local students, or international? Or a bit of both?*

R: Actually, I think either completely, or mostly, international, but certainly none that you would think were struggling with their English. By the time they get to third year in our undergrad course, they've either struggled their way out, or they've caught up to everybody else. You know, you would say that perhaps you would expect their English to be not as good as someone who'd spoken it all their life. And I think it's amazing those international students are able to come and work here. But, yeah, there was a problem.

The other really memorable one was, perhaps, I think it was my first one here. ^Again it was a Masters student, a Masters by coursework and assignment. It was handed in, it was completely plagiarised, ten pages, completely lifted, to the point where personal comments from review papers had been left in, and hypertext links, everything, and I thought, okay, and this was before the new policy, and I think even before the old new policy. So I sat her down and I think I spent about two hours explaining to her what it was, why it was unacceptable, and then how to avoid doing it, and then I gave her the opportunity to re-do the assignment, and there was two students who'd done the same thing. One was worse than the other in terms of extent, but they were both very, very bad.

I: *And they were Masters, but were they from here?*

R: No. They were both international students.

I: *So they'd come through without going through undergrad?*

R: No. They hadn't been through our undergrad. No. And I guess why that incident's very memorable is because I gave exactly the same talk to both students. One of them left crying, because she'd always been a top student and didn't realise, and this was perhaps my first

indication that cultural mores were really strongly affecting them, and it's very much shaped what I do with my students now in terms of teaching them about plagiarism. She went away crying, and came back the next day and said, "Thank you. I'm sorry I cried," and blah, blah, blah, "but I think I understand." And I said, "Oh that's great." And then they both re-submitted their assignments, and the one who'd gone away crying was perfect. Lovely. The other one, all she'd done was changed my ... in the sentences to Dr So and So. And that was my first experience of the actual formal process of, "Oops, you've been a naughty person".

I: *And what happened to those two Masters students? Did they graduate, or ...*

R: Yes. Actually, I'm not sure if the second one did. That particular unit, it was considered to be a level two, it was judged to be a level two and I think she got zero for the assessment, but not for the unit, but from memory I think that may have meant she failed the unit, because of the weighting of the marks. And I can't actually remember whether she graduated. I know the other one did, because she bobs in to say, "Hi," every now and then.

I: *What about your nine ... you said there were nine students this year, nine out of 30 that had plagiarised a technical report, what happened to them, because they're third years? Do you know what happened?*

R: Yes. I don't actually know the outcome. It's one of these processes where it just takes so long, and we never get told. As far as I'm aware ... well, I know what's happened within the school, it was looked at by the unit coordinator and then sent to Head of School, and then it was judged to be beyond the school's control.

I: *So those nine have gone out of the school?*

R: Out into the system.

I: *In the system, and you don't know. So it's been ten months, and you don't ...*

R: It was first semester. It was towards the end of first semester that this happened.

I: *So at the moment it's still going through, so you don't know the outcome of the nine?*

R: And those students are in a four-year degree.

I: *Okay. So they've still got another year.*

R: They're out on clinical placement at the moment. So I don't know. That's one of the problems we've found with the plagiarism system; it's very hard to track. There was another incident that I wasn't directly involved in, although ironically the student who didn't manage to get the idea of plagiarism was involved in this one again. Another international student in the same course, but a different unit, submitted work that was not her own, and we knew straight away it was not her own, because it was meeting the requirements of an assignment given two years previously. She'd basically just changed the name, and submitted the same assignment.

I: *But it wasn't your student, you said?*

R: No. It was with someone else.

I: *But you found out through talking?*

R: But the assignment that she'd submitted was that student's, which I thought was quite strange.

I: *Oh dear. So they didn't learn. Thank you for that.*

Q.2 Policies and procedures

I: *Could I give you this now? So what I've got is, I've got, in B, I've got pairs of statements obtained from the survey, so if you could just look at each pair and give your comments and say whether you agree, or disagree, and why.*

R: So, "Policies and procedures for responding to student plagiarism". When you say 'responding' is that from a staff point of view or a student point of view?

I: *Yes. Well, you could take both, but mainly from staff point of view.*

R: I'd say one would be a fair comment. Two is ... I can see how it could be considered that, but I don't agree with it. It's very ... the policies and things are ... (sighs) as a lecturer it would be nice to be able to say, "You've cheated. Zero." But I know that it's not always that simple.

I: *So that when you say the policies and procedures are fair for lecturers, you feel it's different for students?*

R: No.

I: *No. So fair to both sides?*

R: I think so, because the students get an opportunity to have their say in the matter and it's all very clear, and what I tend to do is pull out the assessment booklet, the plagiarism and whatever it's called now, with the table, and say, "This is ..."

I: *And explain to the student. And when you say you don't agree with two, but what about the fact that your nine students, you still haven't ... and that was semester one, and you still haven't heard, or it's out of your hands?*

R: Yeah. I mean, that's a process thing, and just because I don't know it doesn't mean that something hasn't happened. So it's more of a case of there's not any flow, and I think our school is actually implementing some sort of a tracking process so that we can find out what's going on. I think one of the reasons why it's so slow is that everything has to go through one particular person, and of course that bottlenecks everything.

Q.3 Responses to plagiarism

I: *Thank you. What about three and four?*

R: I disagree with three.

I: *So when you said they were level two and three, your nine students, you said that as lecturer, went to the unit coordinator, did she ...*

R: He.

I: *... he accept that as two and three?*

R: Yeah. He judged them the same as me, and then the Head of School did the same.

I: *So no incidences where ...*

R: No.

I: *Good.*

R: And four. I guess I do use my discretion ...within the rules in that ...^if I think a student ... if I start to read something, and it looks like it's going to be really bad, I'll stop, and say en masse to the students, if you think you've plagiarised, now's the time to recall your assignment and have another go at it. Just...

I: *Like a second chance ...*

R: Yes. I teach a lot of Masters students, and most of them are internationals, and as I said earlier, because of that very first experience I now spend a lot of time trying to teach them how to avoid plagiarising, so we do little assignments where they all take the same introduction to a paper, and have to write a list of the facts from that paper, and then write their essay from those facts, and we do it in staged things, ^so when I know that the students should know, I don't bend the rules, but if I think, "I haven't taught this student before. They've come in from the side. This is their first semester at […]," and you know, you stand up in front of them, and you explain, you give them examples, you have it in handouts, it's on blackboard; they don't take it on board, they sit in front of you with a smile on their face, staring you in the eye, looking for all the world as if they understand every word you say, and they don't.

I: *So you use your discretion, initially, first time, first week, first day, first assignment.*

R: And it's not to say, "Look, you've cheated but I'm going to ignore it." It's a case of, "I haven't explained to you ... you haven't understood my explanations, I'll explain it again." And, you know.

Q.4 Students and penalties

I: *Second chance. Thank you. And five and six.*

R: I'd have to agree with five.

I: *Is that in your experience, or is it ...*

R: In the ones that I've ... yeah.

I: *... or have they all been international?*

R: No. Mostly though. Probably 90%.

I: *And is there a higher proportion of international students in your units, or about 50/50?*

R: In terms of actual numbers it would be more locals, but not hugely. We are probably talking 30/70. I suppose that is fairly big, isn't it? [laughs]

I: *And six?*

R: No. I'd disagree with that. There's some pretty scary ones. And I've seen them sitting here shaking in their boots. Once this particularly this last batch. I explained, had their private interview with them, and then it went through, and then I was just inundated with them asking to come and see me, "What's going to happen?" "What does this mean?"

I: *As lecturer.*

R. Mmm. They're just terrified of what it's going to mean to them.

I: *And do you help, because once it goes to unit coordinator, it's out of your hands, so if they keep coming back to you, do you find that frustrating, or do you ...*

R: Umm not frustrating.

I: *Time consuming?*

R: Well, certainly time consuming, but it depends on why they're coming. If it's just to say, "What's happening, what's happening?", I just say, "No. There's nothing I can do to help." And I just keep repeating the rules about what will happen to me - "This is going to happen. That's gonna happen, and then you will know." But if it's wanting to rectify their misapprehension, and misunderstanding, I'm happy to help.

Q.5 Other comments

I: *To help them with that. Was there any other comments you'd like to make about Academic Integrity Policies and Procedures here, or student plagiarism in general? Anything else you'd like to say about ...*

R: No. No. I can't say that I've actually read the policies word for word. You sort of dip into them as ...

I: *As you need to?*

R: Mmm. And there's just so many.

I: *But you have got some serious cases here of third year students, so it's quite serious?*

R: Yes. Yeah. I find it fascinating the whole concept of how people deal with this, and the learning stuff, and I'm a scientist, I work on very hard, cold facts, but the teaching side of things is very fascinating, and I guess I've had a bit of background in learning theory, and stuff, and so you think, "Oh okay. So that didn't work. What can we try next time that will make it more pertinent?" For instance, lab books, you say to the students, "This has to be as you're writing. As you're doing the work, you write in your lab book. If it's neat and tidy at the end of the year, that proves that you didn't do it that way." And you'll get bad marks, and I show them mine, how messy they are, and I say, "Neatness and tidiness. As long as you can read it."

I: *Doesn't mean anything.*

R: That's the main thing.

I: *So it's education for you, educating from day one, rather than punishing?*

R: Absolutely. Me, and a number of other people around the place, have changed our units, and based on what we've learnt from the students, and the different cultures, and one student ... what I do now, particularly with the international, with the Masters classes, where they've come not through our undergrad degrees, is if they fail the first assessment, I have a private interview with them to try and find out why, and sometimes it's they're lonely, and other times they just didn't understand it. It's just an academic thing. Sometimes it's English. But almost always they say, "Oh." And I say, "Well, if you didn't understand, why didn't you ask?" "Oh, I'm not allowed to ask."

I: *Culture.*

R: And so we really spend a lot of time trying to make them aware that asking questions is really good.

I: *It's okay. Thank you for that.*

END OF TRANSCRIPT

INTERVIEWEE 26

I: *Thank you for agreeing to be interviewed.*

R: No worries.

Q.1 Incident of plagiarism

I: *^ could you ^ tell me about an incident of plagiarism that you've experienced that you found memorable or frustrating?*

R: Well, the most recent one ^ was just a couple of weeks, or maybe a month ago and it's a Master's students, a Master's thesis I was examining and it was ... I wrote the comment in my feedback that it was bordering on plagiarism and I left a recommendation to the ^ the university staff who would handle it – it's not this university - ^ to look at it and make the judgement for themselves as to whether they thought it was plagiarism or not, and what it was it essentially was using references inappropriately, and I suspect ^ while everything was cited, had a citation, what was ascribed to an individual author was inappropriate and when I followed up some of those things, I mean, actually was some of my own work, it was out of context.

Certainly some of it was inappropriate it was taken out of context and other things, you know when ... I checked one of them, I checked the sort of the 2010 reference and I found ... and I just did it by doing a Google search on phrases, and I found it within that article. I had that article on my computer already, it was something I wasn't familiar with, and I looked in the article and the student had referenced the 2010 thing, but they'd also included reference to, like, a 1992 or something citation, which was in the 2010 one, and I just thought, nuh, you didn't read the 1992 one, mate, that was my intuition.

So I flagged, there was about three or four examples of that kind of thing as well as stuff definitely taken out of context, so where phrases were used they had a reference citation but they were not appropriate because the Master's thesis was a different context and it was inappropriate use of it. So that was one.

I: *So a bit of cutting and pasting here?*

R: Yeah, a bit of sloppy ... I mean, it was good ... yeah, a bit of sloppy cutting and pasting, copying and pasting rather than engaging in thought.

I: *Okay, and this was ^ the student, was it your student?*

R: It wasn't my student, I was just an examiner. I was an external examiner.

I: *Did you know whether the student was international or local? Any idea?*

R: They were local in the country, they were in ... English would have been their native language.

I: *Okay, and it was a WA ...*

R: No, it was in […].

I: *Alright, so a separate institution.*

R: Yeah, yeah.

I: *And do you know what's happened there?*

R: No, I haven't even received the outcome but, I mean, I still see past the Master's but I said, "Look, you cannot possibly publish it, the thesis, it must be rewritten". It was only a small part of the thesis that I noticed, I mean, it was otherwise quite good but I have a zero tolerance approach to plagiarism. So that was Master's.

Another example, when I get something in my course work, I give it zero. I give it zero. If there's any – any suggestion that it's plagiarism I give it zero. So if it's simply a paragraph which I know contains content from somewhere, I'd even know where it is, but it's content about the subject about IT impact assessment so it's content about impact assessment, and there is no reference provision, I say this is plagiarism because you weren't ...

I: *Even if it was just a paragraph?*

R: Even just a paragraph, and I give the assignment zero, but, I then say, if there's other use of references by the student, and mostly there is, because most students it's just usually basically sloppy writing, I point that out to the student, I say, "Look, I'm not sure if your intention was to deceive or to plagiarise", and I usually then say, "So in this case I'm not going to report you to the authorities", because we're supposed to, technically, "However I'm going to give you zero but you've got the opportunity to resubmit the assignment", and then I give them the means score for the resubmission, for the two submissions.

I: *What sort of students are these?*

R: These are post-graduate students, these are ...

I: *Oh, they're post-grad, so not first years or anything ...*

R: No, no.

I: *Okay. So you're giving them a second chance?*

R: No, no, it's not giving them a second chance because I allow all my students to resubmit their assignments on the means score principle because I take writing extremely seriously, and I teach writing skills, all my students I have some part of the course where we talk about writing skills, I give them resources on writing skills that I've written myself, an article called *Writing About Writing*, and as well as I've got the usual lengths to plagiarism and blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, you know, the normal stuff.

I: *And these students, the post-grads that have plagiarised and you've given them a zero, are they local students or international?*

R: Anything.

I: *Anything?*

R: Could be anything.

I: *And are there many or just a few?*

R: No, it's not common. There might be one per year ^ out of 70 students I might teach.

I: *And you find that frustrating that you ... because you have zero tolerance, even if there's one or two, you'd find that frustrating?*

R: I'm not frustrated, I mean, I don't allow these things to upset me ^, you know, I understand it is frustrating but I'm not frustrated in the sense that ^ it's just life, these post-grads are busy people, first years are lazy, you know, first year undergrads, I have issues with first years sometimes. ^ students make a choice and I respond to that choice in what I think is an appropriate way – zero. And that's it, and then that's the end of the story. I don't want to waste my time with ...

I: *You don't want to go ...*

R: ...reprimands and go through ...

I: *... through? Through the system?*

R: Oh, I go through the system if it's really serious, as in if it's a clear ^ cut and paste. If it's a cut and paste, oh, that's bad news. I'm just talking about using ideas ...

I: *Poor referencing ...*

R: Yes, I'm talking about actually inadequate and inappropriate referencing. So if you get a paragraph with no citation, and it might be original text they've written but it's based on ideas that I know they ... The rule I say to my students is, "If you weren't born with this knowledge, you must provide a citation". And it's in my guidance that I give them. So basically I say, "Every single idea you put in there must be referenced." And I model that behaviour in my PowerPoint slides – I put full citations to everything I give my students. So I model it, I explain it, I talk about it.

One of the things I have on my web is a thing I've devised myself called *A Guide to Grades*, so it says this is what a pass is, this is what a credit is, this is what a distinction is, and under pass it says the minimum is you must obviously meet the assignment objectives but you must also meet professional writing expectations and that includes referencing. So I make it very clear to them that it's a zero tolerance approach. And you know what? As soon as they've been picked up I've never had an appeal, I've never had anyone appeal my approach to higher authority and they actually thank me. They say, "Thank you for letting me resubmit", and they usually work really, really hard on the resubmission, or they withdraw. And the ones that I figure, the ones who withdraw just haven't got their heart in it, and they're not ready for study and the realise that. The ones who rework, they sweat, and they often come and see me and they apologise and they actually say, you know, because they're then worried about their marks and I help them as best I can to bring their work up to ... you know, and it includes ...

I've always offered my students the opportunity to send draft assignments before the submission date, and I review that, and the students who do that get much better marks. And often, when that happens, when they get draft I can say, "Look, this wouldn't pass because basically that paragraph is plagiarism of some kind or inappropriate referencing and that would actually be a fail if you submitted it", so they then correct it.

I: *Giving them help and ...*

R: Well, that's what I'm here for. I'm here to teach them how or write and how to think. I'm not here to punish them, I'm not interested in that. I'm not here to do appeal processes and when you asked me about Turnitin I'll be very strong-minded about that.

Q.2 Policies and procedures

I: *Thank you very much for sharing that with me. Okay, so what I'm going to do is if I can give you some questions now, part B, what I've got is I've got some comments that I've obtained, statements that I've obtained from the survey, the questionnaire that I gave out, so if you could look at each pair and give your feedback to say whether you agree or disagree with each and why.*

R: Okay. Number 1, policy and procedures for responding to student plagiarism affair – I agree with that statement. At […] we have a system where the first instance of plagiarism ^ you report it to a board and they get some sort of warning letter and so on. ^ the second instance, if it's reported, the student I think gets expelled or something, and I think that's great. It's the way it should be. The system of course breaks down where academics don't report it, and they go, oh poor little student, or maybe they don't understand, I'll give them a second chance. If everyone gives them a second chance, it doesn't work.

Now I know I just said that I don't usually report it. I report gross cases, you know, cases where they're copying and pasting, cutting and pasting and deliberately ... that's manipulation. The ones, the examples I'm giving in the previous ones were more a case of the student was clearly

reading material and trying to pull together the story for their essay or report but they didn't understand that I was serious about every idea being referenced, and so they were trying to find the balance between ^ what was referenced, you know, reference that you must, make sure you must reference.

I: *So you would report. How ... what percentage would you report would go through then?*

R: I don't know what percentage. In my whole career I've reported about three or four instances over 15 years.

I: *So the rest you've managed yourself?*

R: Yeah, and I might get one a year. So I guess what the numbers are saying it's, what, 15 to 20 cases I've had perhaps and I've reported perhaps three of it. I wouldn't try and make those into statistics.

I: *Okay, so you would agree that policies here are fair?*

R: Yes. The statement 2, implementation of policy on the student is a joke – well, that's a nonsense statement, except that whose implementation? I think a lot of academics don't follow through, and I know I'm kind of semi-guilty of that myself but I have met people ^ I've done a lot of co-teaching and ^ I've done units like ^ we have a unit called research methods where research students had to do a lit review, it was a major assignment, but the lit review was marked by the supervisor, and I would then compile the results and do it, and so I could see how other ... my colleagues were marking some people's work, and I was appalled at what would be given HDs, and I'd look at this work and go, "My God, I cannot believe it!" There are sentences that are unsupported, claims effected are unsupported with references and all sorts of basic other writing problems and so on, ^ ...

I: *So was it plagiarism?*

R: I'm just saying this but I wouldn't ... I just know that when I've given a student zero before, ^ particularly experienced students like second years or third years or whatever, they've come to me often in tears – and we get the tear stage, we always go through the tear stage – and they come to me and say, "Oh, no one's ever done that to me before, I've always written like this", and I'm thinking, bloody hell, what's going on? So I'm a bit suspicious of the implementation from an academic point of view of academics implementing, but I think the policies themselves are great and the procedures we have in place are great. And I have used them from time to time when I think that the degree of plagiarism warrants it.

Q.3 Responses to plagiarism

I: *Okay, what about three and four?*

R: My responses to incidents of student plagiarism are overturned by those in higher authority. I don't really care. I report, I report and it's done. It's not my business to make the decision. I give a report, I hand over the evidence, I've done it where I've ^ I've handed over the thesis or the report and I've attached to it the ^ PDFs or photocopies of the material it's come from and I've done the match, I've said, student wrote, you know, paragraph, you know, I give them numbers – paragraph 1 corresponds to point number or paragraph 1 here in this one, you know, I put a numbering system, a highlight system ...

I: *You give all the evidence.*

R: I give all the evidence, and then it's not my responsibility anymore.

I: *You don't make a suggestion as to what level it is?*

R: I would say I believe this is pla ... I believe this is clear evidence of plagiarism but I don't care what the follow up is, it's not my business. Because I've done my job and I always give the student zero. I don't care about the fairness of waiting for someone to tell me whether it's plagiarism and whether ... I just give them zero and move on with the teaching process.

I: *Okay, so you're not concerned, you're not worried about what happens to those students, the ones that you've sent up? You're not concerned?*

R: I believe they should be kicked out ^ because if they're strong enough to send it up I think, you know, that's it but if it's their first time, well, then they should get the warning and that's it. I think we do get informed, I think ... it's only happened two or three times that I've actually done a formal one. And some of this, like the […] one was an example where it didn't ... it wasn't a […] one so I didn't do it through procedures so I've had a bit of that. I'm a journal editor as well and the most common feedback I give to journal article writers is that, you know, this should be referenced and when I review papers. The number of times I go, "You need a reference here." So in a sense that's plagiarism, that I'm highlighting, but at the journal article level there's no formal procedure, so I'm off track now, I'm sorry.

I: *That's okay. Alright, so what about four?*

R: I use my discretion, absolutely.

I: *Absolutely, yep, from what you've told me, yes.*

R: So basically if there's a piece of work with zero references in it, and there's obviously material in there that comes from a source or whatever, that's, I mean, I send that straight up to the committee, but I try and pre-empt all that, you see, when I teach first years, I run writing workshops, and I tell them and I give them the materials and I sit down and I actually make them do writing exercises, I make them write a paragraph, I make them engage, I make explain author date referencing, I explain the principle of it and I give them a little ^ a page ^ a page, one page that contains three or four ^ paragraph quotations taken from a source on one topic, you know, salinity or something, and then I say, "Now I want you to write a paragraph about salinity just using the material on this page and referencing it correctly." So I make them do it.

I: *So you educate ...*

R: Yeah.

I: *So you educate rather than punish?*

R: Yeah, so if someone actually then submits to that course something that's clearly plagiarised, obviously it means that (a) they didn't come to the class and (b) participate or listen in to the lectopia recording, well, it's still got the stuff on the web, so, you know, it's a university policy, zero tolerance, send it off to the committee. But honestly, that's only happened once or twice, so it's really rare.

I: *Is it because you find it time consuming, that you don't you prefer to deal with it by giving them a zero rather than sending it up because it's time ...*

R: Well, I'm going to give them a zero anyway. No, no, but obviously the serious ones I send up, and I'm using my discretion.

I: *To decide the seriousness ...*

R: Yeah.

I: *Okay.*

R: But remember, I can have a 1500 word essay, so, you know, it's got 20 paragraphs in it, and there's one paragraph that's not referenced, and I give that zero, even though the other 19 are referenced.

I: *That's quite strict.*

R: It's pretty strict, but they never, ever do it again, and I let them resubmit.

I: *Okay, alright, so they have that chance.*

R: They have that chance, yeah.

Q.4 Students and penalties

I: *Okay. What about five and six then?*

R: International students that plagiarise ... oh, non-English speaking background.

I: *Non-English speaking background.*

R: ^ mostly. Well, I don't teach a lot of international students. I know it's a problem, I know that, for instance, Indians and Pakistanis, they tend to copy their lecturer, and I've seen that, I've experienced that. Some […] students do it too, I teach in[…] and I'm aware there are some of the issues with […] students. Yeah, but ...

I: *But not in your experience?*

R: Australians are just as bad, I mean, it's just about poor writing and poor thinking skills, and ^ I want to philosophise about plagiarism at some point in this conversation but when you hear my philosophy on plagiarism, it applies to any student, ^ ...

I: *So it's not necessarily true, that statement?*

R: Penalties handed out are too lenient. No, that's fine, I think you get zero for the assignment or zero for the course, I'm not sure what the exact rules are, and then the first time is a warning, second time you're out, I think. That's fine, that's good penalty, that's appropriate.

Q.5 Other comments

I: *That's fine, okay. Okay, now you can ^ make any other comments, if you like, about academic integrity policies and procedures and student plagiarism.*

R: Okay. I've thought about plagiarism a lot and philosophically plagiarism is the absence of a student in the work. When we teach good writing skills what we're saying is that you need to craft a story and tell it to us. So ^ because no single ... there's no single view that makes sense, and let me use a sporting analogy that a […] colleague shared with me recently. He said that when you teach writing and to use references, you've got to use multiple references and weave them together just like when in a sporting issue there's multiple cameras following the ball or watching the play and you have the third umpire sometimes where the referee can't the umpire on the ground can't see what's coming, and they look at the replays and the cameras come from all angles.

In a way that's what literature is, it's authors, multiple authors and cameras from different angles. So when you watch ^ a game of sport on TV you are constantly seeing all the different cameras coming into play. If you just had a single camera it wouldn't work. And of course that's the same with writing so the art of good writing is to be like those multiple cameras and weave a story that's a continuous arc. So that requires that the author, the writer, engages. They have to engage.

What is plagiarism? Plagiarism is not-engagement. Philosophically it's non-engagement because all they do is they go to the web or a site and they copy and paste and pretend it's their own, so there is no engagement, there is no flow, there's no link, there's nothing of them, because in crafting it, in going and getting a piece of information and saying, "What does this mean? What does this piece of information from England means for salinity in Australia", or whatever it might be, they've got to apply their thinking, their line of argument, their knowledge to craft that into the thing. Therefore the author has a place.

I: *Right, so because they don't do that, you want to wake them up so you sort of wake them up by giving them a zero to say that's ... you need to put your voice there?*

R: Well, I guess I respond ... I'm responding to the energy they put in. So they're putting zero energy in, I'm giving zero back. The marks reflect the energy that goes in. Now I know, of course, you can have students who put enormous amount of work in and miss the point, and that's a different story and you always have sympathy to that when you mark, of course, ^but the plagiarism one if a glaring one because it's the absence of the student effectively, philosophically. And, if you think about it, then we go to Turnitin, what's Turnitin? Turnitin is a machine, a mindless bloody machine but it's a very expensive machine, what a monumental waste of money! If we had the money that we spent on Turnitin at […], that's tens of thousands of dollars each year. If we had that money for good things, writing workshops for students, how to teach writing skills to academics ...

I: *Is it compulsory to use Turnitin?*

R: No, it's voluntary but the university's paying a bucket load of money for the damn thing.

I: *So you don't use it, I assume?*

R: No, I hate it, it's revolting, and it's ^ it's the absence of the lecturer, of the academic. It's just as bad, it's the other side of the coin. Philosophically it's the other side of the coin, in my view. ^, so the lecturer's saying, "I'm not creative enough to teach you how to write and to provide you with an assignment that you cannot plagiarise easily. I don't have that imagination, I don't care, I'm not going to invest that much myself so I'm going to use this faceless, mindless machine to do it for me." I don't like that, that's the absence of the teacher, that's the absence of the academic.

My argument is that you should set an exam question, an assignment question that basically cannot be plagiarised. So if you set a ^ a question that says explain the greenhouse effect, well, you go to the internet and you go 'greenhouse effect' and you copy and paste. First years love to do that. But if you set an assignment that says explain the ^ implications of the recent carbon tax on the greenhouse effect and its management in Australia, they have to explain what greenhouse is which means they can plagiarise a little but from the web, but beyond that, they have to apply their thinking to what's the carbon tax, how does that work, what's the situation in Australia and dah, dah, dah. And now you've got them at a deeper learning level, not just what is greenhouse effect. They have to do that to answer the question anyway but it's only a smaller part of a bigger thing of understanding the significance of that and preparing an argument. And Turnitin, if you do that, you should basically not need Turnitin because when you mark it, it's going to be glaringly obvious whether they've plagiarised or not.

I: *Right, because you'll know.*

R: Yeah, you just know. You know plagiarism, you just see it, and then you get Google out – I shouldn't say Google – you get an internet search engine out - please delete mention of names, I don't like monopolies – and ^ you punch it in with quotation marks and it finds it. In a snap. And ^ and then you've got them. It took me all of three minutes to find the Master's student thing and I pasted the com ... I copied ... I did the copy and paste then from the reference, pasted it into the margin of the document, I'm marking electronically, I just paste it into the margin of

the document and then I put a line around it, put a highlight to the student ... to the examiner, "Dear examiner, look at this, this looks like plagiarism to me and you judge." Ha, ha, ha. Being Master's that's different.

I: *Yes.*

R: But I didn't need Turnitin to do that, and Turnitin takes a long time. I tried it once on a student I was supervising I knew who was plagiarising and it was far more ponderous ...

I: *But you use a different ... you were using your experience to find it.*

R: Yeah, and that's me engaging. Which is, I think, a good academic should do. They should be part of the teaching process.

I: *Right, right. Okay, thank you very much.*

(TAPE RESTARTED AT REQUESTOF INTERVIEWEE WHO HAD MORE TO SAY-Part 2)

R: I just remembered an interesting one from a couple of years ago and I had a husband and wife doing my course and ^ ^Two examples, the first one is husband and wife and ^ it was two years ago and when I read the second one I went, "Ah, I've read this before", and I went back to the spouse, whoever I'd marked first and then I flagged it and I said, "Look, these are just too similar". I said, "I appreciate you've used different references and so on but these are just too similar. The structure's exactly the same". So I gave them just a low mark. Again, I said, "I can tell from the ..." ... they were both very high achieving students, they were HD students and I gave them a low mark and they were really disappointed, they came back and talked to me about it, and they were both external but they dealt ... we had a good correspondence by email, and they said, "I've never got such a low mark", and blah, blah, blah, "I understand where you're coming ...", and I just explained, I said, "Look, this is ...", "Okay, I understand that", and from thereon, they obviously worked very separately, and their work was dramatically different, it was good.

The second example I've just remembered was last year, no, this year, last semester, ^ first semester which was we had a new unit and we got them to do groupwork in the lab, in the workshops, but we said that you have to submit, we called it a portfolio assignment. It was basically a sort of response to ^ discussion topics each week, but because of our discussion topics, and it's policy stuff, which is not sort of black and white, you want to have discussions so we advised them to work in small groups in the class but we said, and strictly said, "You must submit separate work". But where they had too much in common. Often they had exactly the same work and we ...

I: *Some group members?*

R: Yeah, and we ... so that was collusion ...

I: *That's more collusion, yeah.*

R: ... than plagiarism, and if they acknowledged that, if they acknowledged that and said, "Look, this is a report prepared by four people and we did this but I've actually added this bit and that bit", fine, but if they didn't we gave them just a very low mark and we actually let them pass but ^ yeah, it was collision so ... But again, it wasn't, you know, these are students that knew about referencing and so on and they weren't deliberately deceiving, I mean, they weren't trying to hide their tracks. It's when they try and hide their tracks, when they do the cut and paste, that's ... and they pretend it's their own and they sign the little declaration on the front saying this is all my own work, they're the ones that I send up to the committee. I hope that helps.

I: *Thank you for that.* **END OF TRANSCRIPT**