Information for examiners on plagiarism

How can we spot plagiarism in project reports?

AAU uses the anti-plagiarism software Urkund which is accessible from Digital Exam. All projects handed in through Digital Exam are automatically scanned for plagiarism by the Urkund programme and a report of plagiarism is made.

Software for anti-plagiarism scan cannot reveal all incidents of plagiarism and sometimes plagiarism is detected manually while reading the project report and preparing for the project exam, even though the plagiarism software did not find any. Therefore, it is important that you as an examiner check manually if the sections of text, which could indicate plagiarism, but are not revealed in the anti-plagiarism software, have been copied from elsewhere.

What should I as project supervisor check in projects?

As project supervisor, you must check for plagiarism in your groups' project reports. Prior to the exam, you should check Digital Exam to see if the scanning for plagiarism have caused reason to suspect plagiarism. The plagiarism check in Digital Exam is automated but does not retrieve all incidents. Thus, you should be particularly aware of the risk of plagiarism if a section of text is differently formatted than the rest of the text, if a section of text does not fit in the context or if a section of text is very different from the rest of the text in language or content. If you detect any signs of plagiarism from the report of the anti-plagiarism software or by reading through the project report while preparing for the project exam, you should immediately report this to the deputy head of department.

I am the person responsible for a written examination, what should I check?

If you are responsible for a written examination, you must focus on any plagiarism in the exam hand-in which will be assessed at the examination. All hand-ins will be scanned for plagiarism, in the same way as project reports.

Regardless the format of the assignment, you should be attentive to formulations which could indicate plagiarism (for instance sections of text with deviating formatting, sections of text which does not fit in the context or sections of text which is very different from the rest of the text in language or content).

I suspect plagiarism in a project report or in a written exam – what should I do?

If you suspect plagiarism, you must pass the case on to the deputy head of department for further actions. When reporting your suspicion, you should indicate the module/course in question as well as the study number of the student.

If your suspicion of plagiarism is based on the report of plagiarism in Digital Exam, you must report your suspicion together with a copy of the project report/exam hand-in and copy of the report of plagiarism.

If your suspicion is not based on the report of plagiarism (or you cannot use the anti-plagiarism software to do the scan), you should include the materials necessary for the deputy head of department to evaluate if, where and how plagiarism may be in question. Thus, you should report the suspicion of plagiarism together with the following (preferably digitally with highlights/comments by commenting functions):

- A copy of the project report/exam hand-in where the sections you think represent plagiarism are highlighted and numbered
- A copy of the text you think has been copied where the relevant sections are highlighted and numbered corresponding to the sections of plagiarism in the project report/exam hand-in

How should I act after my report and how will I be informed about the outcome of the case?
It is the responsibility of the deputy head of department to ensure that you as project supervisor or person responsible for an examination is informed about the status of the process and the decision made. Until then, you should not act further. If you are addressed by the involved parties in the case, you should refer them to the deputy head of department.

Useful links and contacts:
Digital exam for assessors

Procedure regarding exam cheating (general description)

AAUs disciplinary rules

Further elaboration to the disciplinary rules

IT-support: Phone 9940 2020 or support@its.aau.dk (for support to Digtal Exam including Urkund)