



Guidelines regarding the handling of plagiarism at Bern University of Applied Sciences

The President of Bern University of Applied Sciences,

based on Article 35 Paragraphs 1 and 2 of the Law of 19 June 2003 regarding Bern University of Applied Sciences (FaG¹), Article 34 Paragraphs 2 and 3 of the Statute of Bern University of Applied Sciences of 9 November 2005 (University Statute, FaSt²) and Article 23 of the Regulations for Competency Assessments at Bern University of Applied Sciences of 7 July 2005 (KNR),

has passed the following resolutions:

Agreement of student

Art. 1 Upon registering at Bern University of Applied Sciences, all bachelor's, master's and continuing education students agree to act in accordance with these guidelines and not to commit plagiarism during their studies³.

Submission and electronic monitoring of assignments

Art. 2 ¹ To facilitate the electronic monitoring process, all larger assignments are to be submitted in electronic format⁴.

² Electronic monitoring of written assignments is done by a standardised software process in which papers submitted are uploaded to a database where they are also available for crosschecking against other papers. Disclosure of papers or parts thereof shall be carried out exclusively on an individual basis, on request in suspected cases. The specific implementing procedures of electronic monitoring are defined by the university departments. In the absence of such regulations, the implementation of electronic monitoring is at the discretion of the lecturers responsible.⁵

Procedures and due process in suspected cases

Art. 3 ³ In a suspected case, the lecturer responsible supplies evidence to support the claim of suspected plagiarism and notifies the student of this suspicion.

⁴ The student has 14 days to respond to the accusation of plagiarism.

³ The lecturer subsequently forwards a copy of all documents to the head of degree programme. Based on the documents supplied (lecturer's report, student's response), the head of degree programme then decides as to whether it is actually a case of plagiarism.

¹ BSG 435.411

² BSG 436.811

³ In force since 1 September 2013.

⁴ In force since 1 September 2018.

⁵ In force since 1 September 2018.



Penalties on a case-by-case basis

1. Principle of proportionality

Art. 4 If an act of plagiarism is confirmed, the principle of proportionality, i.e. penalties on a case-by-case basis, is applied depending on the extent of the plagiarism.

2. Minor case

Art. 5 ¹ Smaller acts of plagiarism in a competency assessment or in an assignment used for credit towards a competency assessment in a module result in the competency assessment being counted as a fail⁶.

² In addition, the student is given a written reprimand which threatens further penalties including potential expulsion from the university in the event of a repeat offence (see Art. 6).

3. Major case

Art. 6 ¹ A repeat offence (e.g. another act of plagiarism in the same or in a different module) or large-scale plagiarism is regarded as gravely dishonest conduct per Article 23 of the KNR.

² Repeat offences and gravely dishonest conduct both result in disciplinary proceedings and can lead to expulsion.

³ Should a repeat offence or gravely dishonest conduct be discovered after a title has been bestowed, the title may be revoked.

Coming into effect

Art. 7 This regulation comes into effect on 1 January 2009.

Bern, 10 December 2008

University Board of Bern University of Applied Sciences

signed Dr Rudolf Gerber, President

Changes approved as of 30 June 2011

signed Dr Rudolf Gerber, President

Changes approved as of 1 September 2013

signed Dr Herbert Binggeli, President

Changes approved as of 1 September 2018

signed Dr Herbert Binggeli, President

⁶ In force since 1 September 2018.