



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

*The Rector of the Bern University of Applied Sciences,*

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

*has passed the following resolutions:*

Signature of student

**Art. 1** All bachelor's and master's students as well as all postgraduate students [added as of June 30th, 2011] at the Bern University of Applied Sciences sign a declaration submitted to the responsible head of course of studies, in which the student pledges not to commit plagiarism during his studies.

Submission and electronic monitoring of assignments

**Art. 2** <sup>1</sup> To facilitate the electronic monitoring process, all larger assignments are to be submitted, as far as technically possible and reasonable, in both printed as well as electronic format.

<sup>2</sup> A standardized software solution is used to electronically monitor written assignments. The specific application of the electronic monitoring process is determined by each university department. In the absence of guidelines to this effect, electronic monitoring is at the discretion of the responsible lecturer [added as of June 30th, 2011].

Procedures and due process in suspected cases

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

<sup>4</sup> The student has 14 days to respond to the accusation of plagiarism.

<sup>5</sup> The lecturer subsequently forwards a copy of all of the documents to the head of the course of studies. The head of the course of studies then makes a decision based on the documents supplied (lecturer's report, student's response), as to whether it is actually a case of plagiarism.

Penalties on a case-by-case basis  
1. Principle of proportionality

**Art. 4** If an act of plagiarism is confirmed, the principle of proportionality or, in other words, penalties on a case-by-case basis, is applied depending on the extent of the plagiarism.

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<sup>1</sup> BSG 435.411.

<sup>2</sup> BSG 436.811.1.



2. Minor case

**Art. 5** <sup>1</sup> 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 assignment and thus the entire module being counted as a fail.

<sup>2</sup> 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** <sup>1</sup> A repeat offence (e.g. another act of plagiarism in the same or in a different module) or large-scale plagiarism are considered to be grave dishonest conduct as per Article 23 KNR.

<sup>2</sup> Repeat offences and grave dishonest conduct both result in disciplinary proceedings and can lead to expulsion.

<sup>3</sup> Should a repeat offence or grave 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 the Bern University of Applied Sciences

signed Dr Rudolf Gerber, Rector

Changes approved as of June 30th, 2011

signed Dr. Rudolf Gerber, Rector

Appendix: Legal foundations



# **Appendix to the guidelines regarding the handling of plagiarism at the Bern University of Applied Sciences**

## **Legal foundations**

### **1.1 Law regarding the Bern University of Applied Sciences (FaG)**

#### **Art. 61a Disciplinary procedure**

<sup>2</sup> Students who gravely or repeatedly violate the disciplinary code or the principle of academic integrity may be expelled from the Bern University of Applied Sciences.

### **1.2 Statute of the Bern University of Applied Sciences (FaSt)**

#### **Art. 34 Students**

<sup>1</sup> During the course of their studies, students shall comply with the legal system in general as well as with the rules of the university. The orders of the rector, the university executive office, the heads of department and the lecturers shall be observed.

<sup>2</sup> Students shall live up to the principle of academic integrity. A violation of the principle of academic integrity occurs when false information is given, the intellectual property of others is damaged, or research activities are compromised by other dishonest means.

<sup>3</sup> The rector, the university executive office, the department heads and the lecturers are authorised to take necessary action against offending students in order to uphold academic standards. If necessary, the responsible department head issues a written reprimand.

<sup>4</sup> Students who have gravely or repeatedly violated the disciplinary code can be expelled from the Bern University of Applied Sciences by the rector at the request of the appropriate department head. The University reserves the right to criminal proceedings.

<sup>5</sup> The reprimand as per Paragraph 3 and expulsion as per Paragraph 4 take place in the form of a decree.

### **1.3 Regulations for Competency Assessments at the Bern University of Applied Sciences (KNR)**

#### **Art. 23 Cheating**

<sup>1</sup> If a student uses dishonest means to attempt to achieve a better mark for himself or someone else, he shall receive the grade "not fulfilled" or a mark of 1 / F.

<sup>2</sup> The examiners shall record the incident in writing and forward it to the head of department. In the case of dispute the latter shall make a decision by decree. Further procedure is based on Article 26.