

Please read carefully if you conduct any examinations or if you correct exam papers

Dear academic staff,

Various exams and papers will be submitted soon and you will be correcting various student submissions. With this message, we would like to inform you about your obligations regarding the prevention of exam fraud and to communicate the norms that exist at FASoS regarding the creation of Canvas submission points.

Our academic community shares a commitment to high quality teaching and robust standards of academic integrity. This includes the principle of honesty and fairness in acknowledging the ownership of ideas. It is our responsibility to prevent exam fraud – especially its most common form, plagiarism – and to teach students how to follow common expectations of honest and responsible scholarship. At FASoS it is the duty of the Board of Examiners (BoE) to issue guidelines to examiners about the prevention of exam fraud, including plagiarism, and to apply appropriate sanctions where offences are committed by students.

How does FASoS counter fraud and plagiarism?

Although exam fraud is not common at FASoS, each year there are a number of cases, typically in large-scale sit-in exams (for example exams in the MECC) or involving plagiarism in submitted papers. The main instrument to counter exam fraud at sit-in exams is the UM-wide framework document “Rules of Procedure for Examinations” (“Reglement van Orde bij Toetsen”). We recommend that you carefully read [this document](#) (for a working link, please make sure you are logged on to the intranet). It specifies the procedures for examinations at the central assessment facilities used by the UM and outside UM facilities in case of online examinations with online surveillance. Due to the absence of on-site invigilation, online assessment is more prone to fraud than traditional assessment settings. The [FASoS Assessment Policy](#) includes an appendix that summarizes the principles we aim to adhere to for online assessment, including an overview of good practices that examiners may consider during the design of their online exams.

The main instrument that helps examiners trace possible plagiarism in written assignments is the UM anti-plagiarism software Ouriginal, built-in with Canvas. Responsible examiners (course coordinators) are required to create specifically designated upload points in their Canvas course. Please consult the Canvas course “Online Teaching & Learning Support” for more information on how to create upload points and how to access plagiarism reports. For more information on reporting suspicious cases to the Board of Examiners, please see [The Instructions for Examiners – Fraud Prevention](#) (Home > Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (staff) > A-Z Education > Fraud prevention > Fraud Prevention - Instructions for Examiners).

We have seen an increase in cases of plagiarism caused by sharing notes and documents (mostly online) to prepare for tutor group meetings that are then used for exams. These are texts from file storage and synchronization services, or platforms. Students produce them in collaboration or re-use notes from previous study years to prepare for tutor group meetings and exams. This can also lead to fraud if the original sources are not properly referenced or students simply copy/paste from these texts in their exams. Using shared notes in this way does not constitute individual work, cannot be graded, and falls under the category of plagiarism.

What is expected from you?

In a nutshell, you are required to assure that:

1. Ouriginal **plagiarism checks are performed at all times and for all electronically submitted exams**. FASoS aims at 100% conformity to this rule. The BoE therefore urges all FASoS examiners to assure that the check is performed for all electronically submitted exams.
2. Due dates are **set on working days and within working hours**. The norm at FASoS is 16.00 hrs.

The similarity score of Ouriginal represents the total amount of the complete text that matches with text in (an)other source(s). This score differs from other (previously used) software where the overall score indicated the probability that the submitted paper contains matches to existing sources.

Ouriginal runs a check against a large database of published texts, including websites, and previous student papers. It provides you with a report highlighting all matching phrases, sentences or paragraphs. You should check whether all matching content is duly referenced as required by the [FASoS Writing Guide](#). If unreferenced or inadequately referenced extracts are found in the paper, the responsible examiner needs to report the case to the BoE via [the plagiarism reporting form](#).

How to interpret Ouriginal reports?

Next to each uploaded document, Ouriginal issues a similarity score. We advise you to click on the score and to open the web overview. To best interpret Ouriginal's findings, we advise you to:

- Click on "view the entire document" or "matching text" and then on "sources" to see how many times a source has been used. The number of times that a source is used is reflective of the extent of similarities between the student's submission and a source, more than the issued percentage.
- Click on "findings" to have a look at the actual similarity of one part of the text to a source (side-by-side). The higher the similarity score, the higher the chance that the text is poorly paraphrased or identical to the source (check for quotations and references).

NB: Foreign language sources

Please note that Ouriginal is not able to detect translated text. If you notice that a student has only made use of foreign language sources, it is highly advised to double check the exam paper manually. Suspicious cases should be reported to the BoE.

NB: Course coordinators for multiple courses

Ouriginal does not use the first sit exam paper of a student as a source to check the resit exam paper. In other words, "if a student submits multiple drafts of an assignment from the same email address – to the same analysis address – then it will not be used as a source in the analysis report created for the teacher. This function is in place to allow multiple draft submissions and not clog up the analysis report with invalid cases of "self-plagiarism". This means that there is a (slight) risk of self-plagiarism in cases where a coordinator is responsible for multiple courses, because a student can submit the same paper for different courses coordinated by the same coordinator.

The BoE has created a Quick Guide on how to use Ouriginal as a plagiarism-detecting tool and how to overcome its shortcomings. You can access this guide via Home > Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (staff) > Fraud Prevention - Instructions for Examiners > Related > Quick Guide on using Ouriginal March 2022.

How does the BoE deal with possible cases of plagiarism/fraud?

The BoE will evaluate the nature of the evidence and the severity of the infringement and will then invite the student for a hearing. The aim of the hearing is to give the students an opportunity to explain their perspective. If the BoE establishes that a student has committed plagiarism or fraud, it will take appropriate measures. Depending on the severity of the case, sanctions may vary from a formal warning and annulling the exam result, to exclusion from participating in the resit or, in more severe cases, exclusion from participating in other exams in the programme for up to a year. In the most extreme cases the BoE can propose to UM's Executive Board that students be permanently deregistered from the programme.

The BoE is committed to set the norms of academic integrity for all engaged in the educational process and to raise awareness about how to counter fraud and plagiarism. An email is sent to our students twice a year. This email explains how fraud and plagiarism are defined in the [FASoS Education and Examination Regulations](#) (Article 5.12) and the [FASoS Rules and Regulations](#). It also outlines what students can do to avoid "accidental" plagiarism and provides them with a top 10 of concrete do's and don'ts while preparing papers and exams.

Furthermore, the BoE performs random checks (audits) on submitted written work in order to verify that our teaching staff follows the FASoS anti-fraud policy e.g. by properly opening Canvas upload points, and to see whether examiners systematically report possible instances of fraud and plagiarism.

We hope that you will never have to deal with exam fraud, and that you will be as committed as we are to its prevention. After all, it depends on all of us to create

a fair, productive and open academic learning environment where exam fraud is as near as possible to non-existent.

We wish you the best of luck with all your exams!

Best regards,
The FASoS Board of Examiners

(May 2022)