

## SPSO decision report

**Case:** 201403588, University of Aberdeen  
**Sector:** further and higher education  
**Subject:** policy/administration  
**Outcome:** not upheld, no recommendations

### Summary

In the fourth year of his Masters degree, Mr C's dissertation was found to contain work taken from other sources and he had not acknowledged the sources of the copied work. Although the university's disciplinary hearing found plagiarism had been committed, Mr C was allowed to re-submit the dissertation whilst continuing with his fifth year of studies. He was told to amend his original piece of work. When Mr C re-submitted, it was again found to contain plagiarism and, after a second disciplinary meeting, the university terminated his studies. Mr C said that the university did not follow their academic regulations and he should not have been allowed to make a re-submission of the original piece of work. He also reported that he was not given sufficient time to re-submit or adequate instruction about what was required for the re-submission. We considered all the correspondence between Mr C and the university, the records of meetings, the university's regulations on academic student discipline and their responses to Mr C's requests for clarification. We found that the university had shown leniency as their regulations allowed, and asked him to resubmit his work for a course where no resit was normally permitted. Mr C had been told to re-work his original dissertation to ensure that no plagiarism remained, but he did not follow the advice he was given.