



Title of Project:

An Investigation into Plagiarism in Second-Language (L2) Writing

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Project Summary:

Since the early 1990's, a growing body of research on second language (L2) writing has sought to investigate the link between 'cultural' background and instances of plagiarism in higher education (Howard, 1995; Shi, 2006; Divan et al, 2013). There is some evidence to indicate that L2 students - that is, students whose first language is not English - can be particularly vulnerable to plagiarist behaviour (Divan et al, 2013). This study seeks to assess to what extent a targeted pedagogical intervention – one which is based on collective understanding of a learner's previous educational background - can help L2 students avoid plagiarism in their written assessments. It will seek to clarify through semi-structured interviews with L2 writers what background factors *they* believe to be instrumental in their understanding and management of plagiarism. Their collective views will inform the nature and the structure of the pedagogical intervention, as will the views and experiences of educators who take part in the study. To this end, an Action Research methodology is proposed, one which is based on collaborative working and allows participants to share outcomes and incorporate findings into practice. The aim is for an interpretivist approach which will allow for meaningful clarification of the issues and the emergence of effective outcomes which will inform existing policy and practice around plagiarism within higher institutions in the UK and beyond.