

# Student Plagiarism Policy for UCD School of Biomolecular & Biomedical Science

(see also UCD Plagiarism Policy)

<https://www.ucd.ie/governance/resources/policypage-plagiarismpolicy/>

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## Summary of Procedures for Academic Staff

SBBS defines plagiarism as:

- Presenting in your own name, work authored by a third party, such as other students, friends or family (with or without permission), or work purchased through any source or given to you by a third party, including organisations such as essay mills. The original source may be in written form or in any other media (for example, audio or video).
- Presenting ideas, theories, concepts, methodologies or data from the work of another without due acknowledgement.
- Presenting text, digital work (e.g. computer code or programs), music, video recordings or images copied with only minor changes from sources such as the internet, books, journals or any other media, without due acknowledgement.
- Paraphrasing (i.e., putting a passage or idea from another source into your own words), without due acknowledgement of the source.
- Failing to include appropriate citation of all original sources.
- Representing collaborative work as solely your own.
- Presenting work for an assignment which has also been submitted (in part or whole) for another assignment at UCD or another institution (i.e. self-plagiarism).

SBBS has a Plagiarism Committee. That Committee has a threefold remit:

- To advise the School on plagiarism.
- To examine reported claims of plagiarism in submitted work.
- To impose an academic sanction where appropriate.

All submitted assessments must include a Plagiarism Declaration. EXAMINERS AND/OR MODULE COORDINATORS MUST NOT PENALISE FOR PLAGIARISM. If plagiarism is confirmed it is the Plagiarism Committee who will impose an academic sanction on the student, not the examiner, module coordinator or any other member of academic staff. If you suspect that a student has plagiarised an assignment, whether in whole or in part, then do one of the following three options:

- Give a second chance. Discuss the issue with the student and ask the student to properly cite the passages in question. The student is then allowed to resubmit the material without any penalty. However, the School must be informed that a matter arose but that the student was given a second chance, or
- Refer the case. Tell the student that you are going to formally refer the matter to the Plagiarism Committee, who will then take over the case or
- Use discretion and take no further action. It may be a very minor incident such as a lack of a citation. Note, this is not an option where an examiner detects numerous incidents. In those cases, use previous option.

Where plagiarism is deemed to have taken place the Plagiarism Committee will decide on a penalty guided by a University approved tariff.

- Minor instances are likely to be addressed by Module Coordinators.
- Direct that the student resubmit the work without further academic penalty.
- Permit the student to re-submit the assessment component, incurring a late submission grade penalty
- Permit the student to re-submit the assessment component and direct that the grade be further capped or reduced
- Direct that the grade for the assessment component be further capped or reduced without an opportunity to resubmit the assessment.
- Reduce the grade for the work to an NG (highest possible grade penalty).
- Refer the case to the Registrar for action under the University's disciplinary procedures.

## Summary of Procedures for Students

SBBS defines plagiarism as follows:

- Presenting in your own name, work authored by a third party, such as other students, friends or family (with or without permission), or work purchased through any source or given to you by a third party, including organisations such as essay mills. The original source may be in written form or in any other media (for example, audio or video).
- Presenting ideas, theories, concepts, methodologies or data from the work of another without due acknowledgement.
- Presenting text, digital work (e.g. computer code or programs), music, video recordings or images copied with only minor changes from sources such as the internet, books, journals or any other media, without due acknowledgement.
- Paraphrasing (i.e., putting a passage or idea from another source into your own words), without due acknowledgement of the source.
- Failing to include appropriate citation of all original sources.
- Representing collaborative work as solely your own.
- Presenting work for an assignment which has also been submitted (in part or whole) for another assignment at UCD or another institution (i.e. self-plagiarism).

SBBS has a Plagiarism Committee which can impose an academic sanction on proven plagiarised work. All work, that you submit for assessment in SBBS, must have a Plagiarism Declaration included. If an examiner / module coordinator believes that your work contains improperly cited material they have three options:

- Firstly, they could request that you rectify the material and resubmit the work without any penalty (but they will still let the School know that you were given a second chance).
- Secondly, they could refer the work to the Plagiarism Committee. If the Committee makes a finding of plagiarism against you, a note to this effect will be placed on your file. If you do not resubmit the work to the examiner / module coordinator with the requested amendments, they will also refer you to the Committee.
- Lastly, the examiner may use his or her academic discretion and choose not to pursue the matter if the incident was very minor, such as a forgotten citation.

Where plagiarism is deemed to have taken place the Plagiarism Committee will decide on a penalty guided by a University approved tariff.

- Minor instances are likely to be addressed by Module Coordinators.
- Direct that the student resubmit the work without further academic penalty.
- Permit the student to re-submit the assessment component, incurring a late submission grade penalty.
- Permit the student to re-submit the assessment component and direct that the grade be further capped or reduced.
- Direct that the grade for the assessment component be further capped or reduced without an opportunity to resubmit the assessment.
- Reduce the grade for the work to an NG (highest possible grade penalty).
- Refer the case to the Registrar for action under the University's disciplinary procedures.

If a module co-ordinator refers you directly to the Plagiarism Committee then you will be invited, in writing, to attend for interview. You may bring a friend or other representative with you. You do not have to attend if you do not want to and you can submit a letter explaining your actions if you like.

## Introduction

This document discusses the issue of examining plagiarised material that is, or forms part of, an assessment provided by the School of Biomolecular & Biomedical Science (SBBS). There is a need for a consistent approach for dealing with plagiarised material and the fairest way to do this will be explained and discussed in the following pages.

The University places a responsibility on Schools to promote academic integrity and to provide guidance on plagiarism. Schools must have arrangements for dealing with plagiarism and must determine the penalties or consequences for producing plagiarised material. The University's policy on plagiarism states:

- Each Head of School will ensure that appropriate advisory arrangements are in place to promote academic integrity in the subject area and to provide guidance on instances of plagiarism. This responsibility may be vested in a nominated individual.
- Each School will periodically evaluate its arrangements for dealing with plagiarism to ensure that where any recurrent patterns of plagiarism emerge, either in the case of individual students, or groups of students, its overall approach is appropriate and capable of ensuring that any further recurrences are addressed.
- Suspected instances of plagiarism should be assessed within the School and a determination made as to whether the matter may be resolved at a local level or whether a referral to the Registrar under the University's disciplinary procedures is required.

Additionally, the policy also states:

Where an examiner detects a suspected instance of plagiarism in a student's assignment or examination, taking account of the specific context and nature of the case, any of the following courses of action may be followed:

- Discussion directly with the student to provide advice about correct citation and how to avoid plagiarism in the future. The student may be required to resubmit the work without any further penalty.
- Referral of the alleged instance for review according to the School's plagiarism advisory arrangements. The student may receive a verbal or written warning, will receive advice about correct citation and may be required to resubmit the work with or without an academic penalty.
- Referral of the alleged instance to the University Registrar for resolution via the University's disciplinary procedures. In some contexts, a first instance may require referral directly to the Registrar.

## Reasons for a Plagiarism Committee

In order to ensure that fair procedures are in place (for both staff and students), SBBS has a Plagiarism Committee. This is the forum within the School for module coordinators / examiners to refer suspected instances of plagiarism. Even where there is an instance of gross plagiarism which merits the Registrar's involvement, the module coordinator / examiner is to refer the case to the Committee in the first instance rather than go to the Registrar directly. This ensures continuity of procedure from the SBBS and also provides a clear and consistent approach to all cases.

The University's policy also states that prior to the submission of assessments, students must be briefed about plagiarism. The correct method of citation must be explained. For example, this could also include a brief talk with students about plagiarism and explaining how every source must be cited properly. Students can be confused about copyright issues where material (like a diagram) can "be reproduced without permission from the author". This still needs a citation but that may not be obvious to some students. All submitted assessments must have a Plagiarism Declaration included.

It is of crucial importance that the educators in SBBS are not seen as the academic police. Rather, plagiarism should be approached from a teaching and learning perspective and students are to be encouraged with good educational practice and academic research.

The value and integrity of the degrees we offer depends on the quality of the work produced. This University is not a “Degree Mill” and as such we must define what we will, and will not, accept as academic work. Educators will only engage in the process if they know that the School will support their findings and deal seriously with any cases of detected plagiarism. Additionally, and somewhat contradictorily, educators do not want to see their students facing formal disciplinary action.

Therefore, we have put in place a mechanism that is fair to all those involved. Academics have the support of the School and know that their hard work in examining and reading student’s projects / essays / dissertations is not in vain. When a problem is detected they know that it will be dealt in a speedy and fair manner. Students know that plagiarism is not permitted and if it is detected, that they will be dealt with in a just manner on a case-by-case basis.

The module coordinator has the option for allowing students to check their own work for plagiarism via URKUND. Educationally, this possibly best practice. The academic does not have to spend time checking for plagiarism and students will spend some time learning how to cite correctly in order for their work to be satisfactory. However, it is recognised that the module coordinator does not have to make this self-checking for plagiarism option available to students.

In SBBS, when the module coordinator / examiner wants to act on a case of plagiarism then there are two options. a) Discuss the issue with the student and have the matter corrected but still let the School know that an incident has occurred or; b) formally refer the case to the School Committee who may or may not impose a further penalty. The School will keep a record of all “second chances” that have been given in order to ensure that students will not repeat instances of plagiarism. Where a second chance has been given, there will be no sanction or official note made on the student’s file, unless, of course, the student continued to plagiarise material. In cases where a student’s work goes before the Committee and a finding of plagiarism is made, then the Programme Office will place a note to this effect on the student’s file on SISWeb.

### Definition of Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the inclusion, in any form of assessment, of material without due acknowledgement of its original source. Plagiarism is a form of academic dishonesty and may include, but is not limited to, the following:

- Presenting in your own name, work authored by a third party, such as other students, friends or family (with or without permission), or work purchased through any source or given to you by a third party, including organisations such as essay mills. The original source may be in written form or in any other media (for example, audio or video).
- Presenting ideas, theories, concepts, methodologies or data from the work of another without due acknowledgement.
- Presenting text, digital work (e.g. computer code or programs), music, video recordings or images copied with only minor changes from sources such as the internet, books, journals or any other media, without due acknowledgement.
- Paraphrasing (i.e., putting a passage or idea from another source into your own words), without due acknowledgement of the source.
- Failing to include appropriate citation of all original sources;
- Representing collaborative work as solely your own.
- Presenting work for an assignment which has also been submitted (in part or whole) for another assignment at UCD or another institution (i.e. self-plagiarism).

Plagiarism can be either intentional or unintentional. In both instances it is a serious academic offence and may be subject to University disciplinary procedures.

## Educating Students about Plagiarism in SBBS

All material submitted to modules provided by the SBBS for assessment is subject to the Plagiarism Policy as set out in this document. N.B. This Policy also applies to students in other Programmes who take SBBS modules and who submit work for assessment. In order to ensure that all students are well informed, those involved in educating must ensure that part of a module is dedicated to informing students about academic integrity and honesty. Brightspace could be used for this purpose. Furthermore, our colleagues in the Library have developed excellent educational tools about plagiarism and it might be useful to refer students to that online resource (<https://libguides.ucd.ie/academicintegrity>)

It should be noted that a large proportion of our undergraduate students come from an educational system that is largely based upon systematic rote learning where notes from teachers and the opinions of textbooks must be replicated in an exam. Now, as they enter third level, we must encourage students to think for themselves, to conduct research and present their thoughts and ideas in an academic and responsible manner. At graduate level, module coordinators should include this policy and the university's documents on plagiarism in the student's information packs.

Finally, all documents in relations to plagiarism must be made available on Brightspace for the students.

## Use of Electronic Plagiarism Detection Systems

UCD routinely uses plagiarism detection systems (PDS) for material submitted for assessment. This may involve the use of external companies, who may store material prepared as UCD assignments, theses, etc., in their databases for plagiarism detection in UCD and other institutions. If a module coordinator chooses to use a PDS such as URKUND, then students are required to submit their work as directed.

## Plagiarism Declaration

The Declaration can be made available electronically but students must agree to their terms every time they submit work. It can also be presented in hard copy and attached to the work. Module coordinators can decide whether they wish work to be submitted electronically or in hard copy. THE FOLLOWING FIVE POINTS ARE TO BE INCLUDED IN ALL SUBMITTED ASSESSMENTS:

I certify that ALL of the following are true:

- I have read and fully understand the definition and consequences of plagiarism as set out in the School of Biomolecular & Biomedical Science Policy on Plagiarism and the UCD Plagiarism Policy.
- I recognise that plagiarised work (in whole or in part) may be subject to the penalties as outlined in the School of Biomolecular & Biomedical Sciences Policy on Plagiarism and the UCD Plagiarism Policy.
- I have not previously submitted this work, or any version of it, for assessment in any other subject in this, or any other, institution.
- I have given my correct information on this Declaration and all details are the same as those on my student card.
- I have not plagiarised any part of this work.

An example of a Plagiarism Declaration is included at the end of this document (Appendix 1).

## SBBS Plagiarism Committee

To ensure a consistent and fair approach, the SBBS has established a Committee. This is the SBBS's forum for module coordinators / examiners to refer suspected cases of plagiarism.

The responsibility of the Committee is:

- Examining allegations of plagiarism in submitted work referred by Module Coordinators.
- Evaluating the case and deciding whether plagiarism has taken place.
- Deciding whether a case should be addressed by the School Plagiarism Committee or referred without decision to the Student Discipline Procedure.
- Providing an accompanying report where allegations are referred to the Student Discipline Procedure.
- Deciding on a penalty for cases where plagiarism is deemed to have taken place.
- Communicating the outcome of the School Plagiarism Committee meeting to the student and the Module Coordinator.
- Keeping a record of the type, circumstances and outcome (decision and penalty) of referred allegations of plagiarism.

The Committee may consist of the following members:

- Chair (usually the Head of Teaching & Learning).
- A rotating panel of four members of academic staff.

For each allegation of plagiarism the Committee will normally comprise of the Chair and one other member of staff from the panel. In addition the Chair can co-opt any other member of staff such as a module coordinator where appropriate.

Students will be invited to attend for a meeting with the Committee. This is to ensure that any student whose work is under investigation will have had an opportunity to explain and/or refute the claim. Even if the student has met with the module coordinator / examiner they will be invited to meet with the Committee also. It is not mandatory for a student to attend and they are free to turn down the invitation if they so wish. Students can also submit a letter to the Committee if they believe it would help.

It is important for students to note that this is not a formal disciplinary hearing. However, if attending the Committee, it may be helpful if the student were to pick one of the following as a representative, rather than a family member or friend.

- An elected official from the Student Union or Student Advisor
- A member of staff from SBBS

The Chair will attend every meeting to ensure continuity of procedure.

## SBBS Plagiarism Advisor

The School will nominate a Plagiarism Adviser. The nominee will:

- Carry out duties delegated by the Head of School.
- Being aware of the types, nature and outcomes of allegations of plagiarism that arise in the School.
- Advise academic staff who wish to consult on suspected or ongoing allegations of plagiarism.

## Academic Penalties from the Committee

If a case is referred to the Committee, then the module coordinator / examiner will provide a report. The Plagiarism Committee will decide on a penalty guided by a University approved tariff.

- Minor instances are likely to be addressed by Module Coordinators
- Direct that the student resubmit the work without further academic penalty.
- Permit the student to re-submit the assessment component, incurring a late submission grade penalty.
- Permit the student to re-submit the assessment component and direct that the grade be further capped or reduced.
- Direct that the grade for the assessment component be further capped or reduced without an opportunity to resubmit the assessment.
- Reduce the grade for the work to an NG (highest possible grade penalty).
- Refer the case to the Registrar for action under the University's disciplinary procedures.

## Report from Module Coordinator / Examiner

When submitting work to the Committee for investigation, the module coordinator must include a copy of the work in question with the passages highlighted and original sources identified such as a web page or the title of an article / book. For the report, a print out from an electronic plagiarism detection system will be acceptable as will handwritten notes on the work. Examiners do not have to use electronic systems. Also, a cover sheet must be completed, an example of which is presented at the end of this document. Without the report the Committee cannot investigate the case because it needs to be guided by the details provided by the academic in the subject area.

## Appeals Procedure

If a student wishes to appeal the decision of the Plagiarism Committee they can do so through the Assessment Appeals procedure. Details can be obtained from:

<https://www.ucd.ie/secca/assessmentappeals/>



## Appendix 1

### Plagiarism Declaration

#### School of Biomolecular & Biomedical Science

Module Name & Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Degree Programme: \_\_\_\_\_

Thesis title (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

The School of Biomolecular & Biomedical Science defines plagiarism as follows:

- a) Presenting work authored by another person: including other students, friends, family, or work purchased through Internet or other services.
- b) Presenting work copied extensively with only minor textual changes from the Internet, books, journals or any other source.
- c) Improper paraphrasing, where a passage or idea is summarised without due acknowledgement of the original source.
- d) Failing to include citation of all original sources.
- e) Representing collaborative work as one's own.
- f) Self-plagiarism, i.e., submitting the same (or closely similar) body of work for two different assessment in this, or any other, institution.

I certify that ALL of the following are true:

- a) I have read the above list and fully understand the definition and consequences of plagiarism as set out in the School of Biomolecular & Biomedical Science Policy on Plagiarism and the UCD Plagiarism Policy.
- b) I recognise that plagiarised work (in whole or in part) may be subject to the penalties as outlined in the School of Biomolecular & Biomedical Science Policy on Plagiarism and the UCD Plagiarism Policy.
- c) I have not previously submitted this work, or any version of it, for assessment in any other subject in this, or any other, institution.
- d) I have given my correct information on this Declaration and all details are the same as those on my student card.
- e) I have not plagiarised any part of this work.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Name (PRINT CLEARLY): \_\_\_\_\_

Student Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix 2

### Module Coordinator's Report to the UCD School of Biomolecular & Biomedical Science Plagiarism Committee

#### Undergraduate

Complete the following details where appropriate.

Name of programme:

Name of module:

Module coordinator:

Student's name and number:

Coordinator's contact details:

Additional Information:

- Were students provided with information about plagiarism in this module? Yes / No
- Did the student complete a plagiarism declaration? Yes / No
- Have you had a discussion with the student about suspected plagiarism in the attached work? Yes / No

Notes

Module coordinator's signature:

Date:

## Appendix 3

### Module Coordinator's / Supervisor's Report to the UCD School of Biomolecular & Biomedical Science Plagiarism Committee

#### Graduate

Complete the following details where appropriate.

Name of programme:

Name of module:

Student's name and number:

Thesis title:

Module coordinator / Supervisor:

Coordinator's / Supervisor's contact details:

Additional Information (please answer all three questions):

- Were students provided with information about plagiarism? Yes / No
- Did the student complete a plagiarism declaration? Yes / No
- Have you had a discussion with the student about suspected plagiarism in the attached work? Yes / No

Notes

Coordinator's / Supervisor's signature:

Date:

## Appendix 4

### Draft template email to student in suspected cases of plagiarism

Dear [insert name]

Your assessment [insert detail] in module [insert module code] has been referred to the [insert name] Plagiarism Committee as a suspected instance of plagiarism.

You are invited to meet the committee on [insert date] at [insert time] in [insert location]. You may, if you wish, bring a support person to the meeting with you (e.g. student advisor or student union representative).

If you cannot attend at the above time, please notify us by return email, and we will try to accommodate a change of date, however, if you do not respond to this invitation or do not attend the meeting, it will proceed in your absence and you will be informed of the outcome in due course.

I attach a copy of the UCD Student Plagiarism Policy for your information.

Yours

[Insert name]

[Insert position]

Appendix 5

Student Plagiarism Policy 2020

Process Map for School Investigation Procedure

Academic integrity is an essential value of the University as it underpins all academic activities. Suspected instances of student plagiarism in a module assessment should be reviewed within the School(s)\* and a determination made as to whether the matter may be addressed at School(s) level or whether a referral to the University Discipline Procedure is required.

\* For the purpose of this policy, any academic unit offering modules is referred to as a School

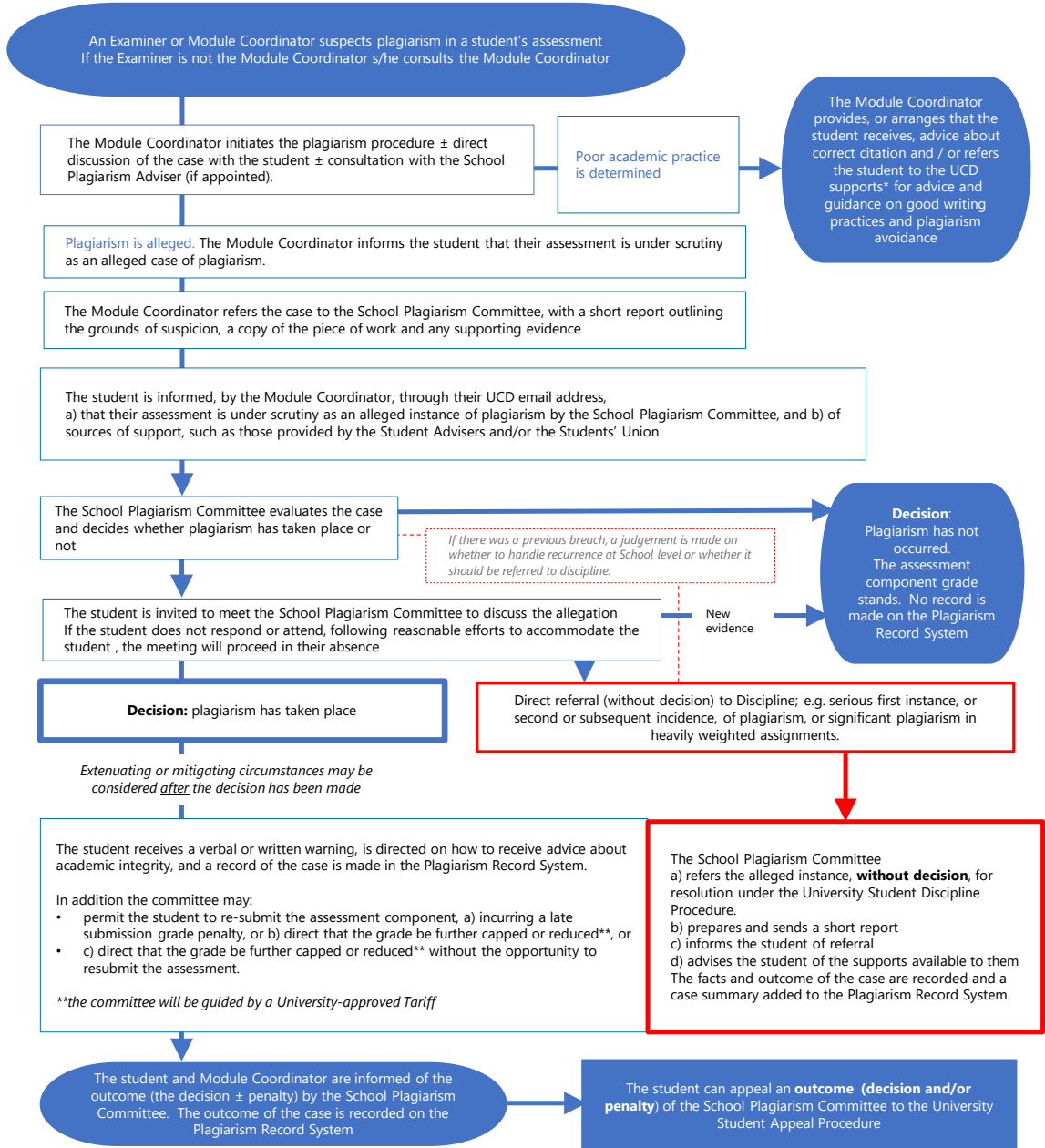
Start / end

Process

**Referral**

Outcome / decision

Before submission of assessments students receive advice and guidance on correct citation and referencing, on avoiding plagiarism, and on the potential consequences of plagiarism being identified in assessed work.



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