

PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism is defined as submitting as one's own work, irrespective of intent to deceive, that which derives in part or in its entirety from the work of others without due acknowledgement. It is both poor scholarship and a breach of academic integrity.

In the context of an examination, this amounts to **passing off the work of others as your own to gain unfair advantage.**

SUCH USE OF UNFAIR MEANS IS REGARDED AS CHEATING AND WILL NOT BE TOLERATED BY THE UNIVERSITY; IF DETECTED, THE PENALTY MAY BE SEVERE AND MAY LEAD TO FAILURE TO OBTAIN YOUR DEGREE.

1. The scope of plagiarism

a) Plagiarism may be due to:

- **Copying** (using another person's language and/or ideas as if they are your own);
- **Collusion** (unauthorized collaboration)

b) Methods include:

- *quoting directly* another person's language, data or illustrations without clear indication that the authorship is not your own and due acknowledgement of the source;
- *paraphrasing* the critical work of others without due acknowledgement – even if you change some words or the order of the words, this is still plagiarism if you are using someone else's original ideas and are not properly acknowledging it;
- *using ideas* taken from someone else without reference to the originator;
- *cutting and pasting* from the Internet to make a "pastiche" of online sources;
- *colluding* with another person, including another candidate (other than as might be permitted for joint project work);
- *submitting* as part of your own essay or dissertation someone else's work without identifying clearly who did the work (for example, where research has been contributed by others to a joint project).

c) Plagiarism can occur in respect to all types of sources and all media:

- not just text, but also illustrations, musical quotations, computer code etc;
- not just text published in books and journals, but also downloaded from websites or drawn from other media;
- not just published material but also unpublished works, including lecture handouts and the work of other students.

2. How to avoid plagiarism

The stylistic conventions for different subjects vary and appropriate guidance is provided by different faculties, especially in relation to referencing conventions for submitted coursework. Most courses will issue written guidance on the relevant scholarly conventions and you are expected to have read and to follow this advice. See the Undergraduate Handbook section: 'Notes on referencing of submitted coursework and dissertations' for the Faculty of Education guidelines.

However, **the main points to remember and act upon are:**

- when presenting the views and work of others, always include in the text an indication of the source of the material

e.g. ...as Sharpe (1993) has shown,....

and also give the full details of the work quoted in your bibliography;

- if you quote text verbatim, place the sentence in inverted commas and give the appropriate reference

e.g. ‘The elk is of necessity less graceful than the gazelle’ (Thompson, 1942, p 46)

and give the full details in your bibliography as above;

- if you wish to set out the work of another at length, - e.g. so that you can produce a counter-argument, set the quoted text apart from your own text (e.g. by indenting a paragraph) and identify it by adding a reference as above. Long quotations may infringe **copyright**, which exists for the life of the author plus 70 years. If you summarise an author’s argument in your own words then you must still acknowledge the original author.

- if you are copying text or when you are making detailed notes from published sources, keep a note of the author and the reference as you go along, with the copied text, so that you will not mistakenly think the material to be your own work when you come back to it in a few weeks’ time; this is essential as a means of avoiding unintentional plagiarism (which is still an offence);

- if you reproduce an illustration or include someone else’s data in a graph include the reference to the original work in the legend

e.g. (figure redrawn from Webb, 1976)

or (triangles = data from Webb, 1976)

- if you are in a situation involving **collaboration** with another person or persons on your project, you should check with your supervisor or Director of Studies whether and to what extent this might be allowed at the stage of conducting your research; usually each collaborator in such work is required to write up their own separate accounts;

- if you have been **authorised to work together** with another candidate or other researchers, you must acknowledge their contribution fully in your introductory section. If there is likely to be any doubt as to who contributed which parts of the work, you should make this clear in the text wherever necessary

e.g. I am grateful to A. Smith for analysing the sodium content of these samples;

- **be especially careful if cutting and pasting work from electronic media; do not fail to attribute the work to its source. If authorship of the electronic source is not given, ask yourself whether it is worth copying.**

- you are required to familiarize themselves with this guidance, to follow it in all work submitted for assessment, and may be required to sign a declaration to that effect. If you queries, clarification should be sought from her or his Director of Studies, Course Director or Supervisor as appropriate.

3. The Golden Rule

The examiners must be in no doubt as to which parts of your work are your own work and which are the rightful property of someone else.

Information and guidance given in this section is taken from the University-wide statement on plagiarism. Further information can be found at <http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/univ/plagiarism/>.