

# Plagiarism

## What is Plagiarism?

The Academic Senate has adopted the following definition of plagiarism: Plagiarism involves using the work of another person and presenting it as one's own. Any of the following acts constitutes plagiarism unless the source of each quotation or piece of borrowed material is clearly acknowledged.

- a) copying out part(s) of any document or audio-visual material (including computer based material);
- b) using or extracting another person's concepts, experimental results, or conclusions;
- c) summarising another person's work;
- d) in an assignment where there was collaborative preparatory work, submitting substantially the same final version of any material as another student.

Opportunities and temptations for plagiarism have increased with the spread of internet access. Plagiarism is a serious threat to the teaching and accreditation process, and seriously undermines the collegial and ethical principles which underpin the work of a University.

## The Dangers of Plagiarism and How to Avoid it

The integrity of learning and scholarship depends on a code of conduct governing good practise and acceptable academic behaviour. One of the most important elements of good practise involves acknowledging carefully the people whose ideas we have used, borrowed, or developed. All students and scholars are bound by these rules because all scholarly work depends in one way or another on the work of others.

Therefore, there is nothing wrong in a student using the work of others as a basis for their own work, nor is it evidence of inadequacy on the student's part, provided they do not attempt to pass off someone else's work as their own.

To maintain good academic practice, so that a student may be given credit for their own efforts, and so that their own contribution can be properly appreciated and evaluated, they should acknowledge their sources and they should ALWAYS:

- i) state clearly in the appropriate form where they found the material on which they have based their work, using the system of reference specified by the Division in which their assignment was set;
- ii) acknowledge the people whose concepts or results they have extracted,

developed, or summarised, even if they put these ideas into their own words;

iii) avoid excessive copying of passages by another author, even where the source is acknowledged. Find another form of words to show that the student has thought about the material and understood it, but stating clearly where they found the ideas.

If a student uses the work of another person without clearly stating or acknowledging their source, the result is falsely claiming that material as their own work and committing an act of PLAGIARISM. This is a very serious offence for which a student will be penalised.

### **Procedures that will be followed in cases of suspected plagiarism**

The Academic Senate has approved the following procedures to be followed in cases of suspected plagiarism.

The level of intent to deceive and the extent of the plagiarism should be the principal criteria for determining penalties. The staff member who suspects an instance of plagiarism will report the situation to the convenor of the unit involved, or to the Head of Department (if the staff member in question is the convenor). After discussion, if the Chair agrees that the case warrants more than a warning, the student will be informed in writing of the nature of the complaint and given an opportunity to respond in writing.

If the response indicates that there is a case to answer, it will be referred in writing to the Head of Division with a recommendation about a penalty.

The Head of Division may then call for further discussion, or sign off on the recommended penalty. This should be in writing.

Offences of plagiarism will attract penalties which may vary from counselling and a warning, the deduction of all marks for the assignment, to failure in the unit and reference to the University Discipline Committee. The penalty will depend upon the extent of the plagiarism, whether it is a first or repeated offence, whether there is evidence of deliberate deceit and whether advantage has been taken of another student.