<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Title</strong></th>
<th><strong>Plagiarism</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A handbook for staff at the University of Kent and Associate Colleges</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **Target Audience** | Academic staff engaged in setting and marking assessment tasks for students |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Aims of this handbook</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To give a clear definition of plagiarism as it is understood at the University of Kent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To give guidance to tutors on strategies to help students to understand what plagiarism is</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To give good practice examples of assessment tasks that are designed to deter and minimise the occurrence of plagiarism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To clarify the procedures staff should follow when they detect plagiarised work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To indicate further reading</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Learning outcomes</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>On completion of this handbook the reader should have:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• A working understanding of the University of Kent’s definition of plagiarism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• A number of strategies to use to help students to understand and avoid plagiarism in their subject area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Ideas of types of assessment tasks which are designed to prevent or deter students from plagiarising</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• A clear understanding of the rules and procedures at the University of Kent when plagiarism is detected</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Prepared by Louise Frith of the Unit for the Enhancement of Learning and Teaching, University of Kent.
Table of figures

The graphics used in this handbook have all been downloaded from Google graphics plagiarism website. The following addresses are their original source. Permission to use these images has been sought.

Student copying from textbook - Page 4
http://www.leander.lib.tx.us/LILT/citing/plagiarism.htm

Microscope over page - Page 6
http://muweb.millersv.edu/~jccomp/acadintegrity/plagiarismindex.htm

It's not plagiarism if the author's dead - Page 10
http://www.cmu.edu/teaching/resources/plagiarism.html

Cut & Paste - Page 14
http://sociology.camden.rutgers.edu/jfm/plagiarism/plagiarism-jfm.htm

My roommate gave me permission - Page 15
http://academic.udayton.edu/elearning/onlineTraining/Plagiarism/CombatPlagiarism/Faculty.htm

You only pretended to write this paper - Page 31
http://img.photobucket.com/albums/v116/ecrush/plagiarism.gif

PLAGIARISM

I. INTRODUCTION

II. THE UNIVERSITY OF KENT’S DEFINITION OF PLAGIARISM

1. DEFINITION

2. ACADEMIC DISCIPLINE AND OFFENCES
3. PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH ACADEMIC DISCIPLINARY OFFENCES 7
4. PENALTIES 7

III. HOW TO HELP STUDENTS TO UNDERSTAND PLAGIARISM AND LEARN THE SKILLS OF GOOD ACADEMIC WRITING 8

1. ACTIVITIES TO HELP EDUCATE AND RAISE STUDENTS’ AWARENESS ABOUT PLAGIARISM. 9
   Activity 1 Definition 9
   Activity 2 Why does it matter? 11
   Activity 3 Subtleties of plagiarism 12
   Activity 4 Scenarios for discussion 13
   Activity 5. How can I be sure what plagiarism is? 14
   Activity 5.1 How can I be sure what plagiarism is? Biosciences 16

2. STUDENT LEARNING ADVISORY SERVICE 17
   Activity 6: A preventive strategy for avoiding unintentional plagiarism, and unintentional mosaic plagiarism. 19

3. GUIDANCE FOR TUTORS TEACHING INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS 23

IV. HOW TO DESIGN ASSESSMENT TASKS WHICH PREVENT STUDENTS PLAGIARISING. 23

1. ASSESSMENT TOOLS WHICH MINIMISE OPPORTUNITIES FOR PLAGIARISM. 23
   Case Study 1: Assessment which uses individual data sheets 26
   Case study 2: Example of a student directed assessment 26
   Case Study 3: Assessment where students are given the same large data set, but have to define their own questions. 27
   Case Study 4: A range of assessment tools designed to minimise students’ opportunities to plagiarise. 28
   Case Study 5: Assessment based on 100% coursework designed to guard against plagiarism. 29
   Case study 6: Assessment which aims to give students applied skills and enable them to pursue their own interests in the field. 30

V. ACADEMIC DISCIPLINE: PROCEDURES. PROCEDURES FOR REFERENCES 31

VI. FINAL THOUGHTS 36

VII. REFERENCES 37

VIII. REFERENCES FOR STUDENTS 38
I. Introduction

Currently amongst academics there is a perception of what MacLeod calls ‘a rising tide of plagiarism, fuelled by easy Internet access’. (MacLeod 2004). In order to tackle such a problem it is useful to try to understand the reasons behind it. In the process of compiling this handbook many University of Kent lecturers have also said that they perceive an increase in plagiarism amongst students. Reasons for this increase, suggested by them, are many and varied:

- Students are taking on more paid work so have less time for study, some students in this situation resort to plagiarism.
- Many courses have a greater emphasis on coursework and group work which can be more open to plagiarism.
- Rapid increases in student numbers are resulting in less tutorial contact between students and lecturers, the system is more anonymous, and individual student needs are harder to keep track of.
- Modular courses can result in students being taught by many different tutors, making it more difficult for tutors to build a personal knowledge of each student’s work.
- Methods of learning and teaching in schools have changed. Many students are used to being asked to research something simply by looking on the Internet for lots of information on a topic, then bringing it in to share with the class.
- More students are coming to UK universities from diverse educational backgrounds, for example returning to study after a long break, international students, etc. These students often need greater induction into study at University level.
- Access to information on the Internet is easy and can be cut and pasted quickly into an assignment.
- Essay banks are readily available on the Internet.
- Pressures on students have increased. In the job market it is no longer enough just to have been to University. Students must have a good degree classification in order to compete for graduate jobs.
- Some students’ motivations for being at University have changed; in these cases they do not have a deep personal interest in the subject. They are more motivated by getting a qualification which gives them access to a higher level of employment.

This diversity of reasons for plagiarism suggests the benefits of tackling plagiarism in a variety of ways.

One of the features of University study is to use other people’s work to inform your understanding of a subject and this is where tensions arise. Students require training in how to select, use and reference sources to strengthen their argument. In group work the difference between collaboration and collusion needs to be made clear to students. Students also need opportunities to practise writing in order to find their own voice and write with academic integrity on a subject.
In addition to this, understandings of plagiarism can be subject specific; for example, an art student may be significantly influenced and inspired by the work of another artist. They may incorporate work from that artist into their own work but still produce an original piece. However, a politics student who uses one source too closely or paraphrases without acknowledging sources will be penalised for it.

This handbook is written from the perspective that it is important for staff to educate students to write with academic integrity and design assessment tasks which minimise opportunities for plagiarism as well as detect and punish cases of plagiarism. In order to deter plagiarism Carroll and Appleton (2001) suggest a ‘balanced approach’. This includes:

- Educating students about what plagiarism is, bearing in mind the diversity of students’ backgrounds, i.e. it is unlikely that one definition or session on plagiarism will be enough.
- Designing assessment tasks which deter plagiarism. This does not mean that unseen exams should be reintroduced. Student-centred assessment tools can be developed which feature checks against plagiarism.
- Having clear procedures for tutors to follow if plagiarism is detected. The University of Kent’s Code of Practice has been recently revised to clarify the definition of plagiarism and make procedures quicker to follow and clear to both students and tutors.
- The judicious use of plagiarism detection software. For example the Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC) Turnitin software
- Fair penalties for plagiarisers which take intention into account. The new guidelines in the Code of Practice set out a range of responses depending on the severity of the case.

Definitions of plagiarism and advice on how to avoid plagiarism are currently available on the University of Kent departmental websites and in course handbooks. However many students do not read information in this format. Therefore advice about what plagiarism is and how to develop a good writing style needs to be ‘brought to life’ by tutors, preferably at the beginning of a course/module so that students do not inadvertently plagiarise. In addition tutors need to be more explicit in the information that they give to students and ensure that students have engaged with the information. This can be done by providing accessible definitions of plagiarism, case studies to discuss and practice exercises. An intended outcome of this handbook is to stimulate discussion within departments about how students can be educated on good practice in academic writing so that they do not inadvertently plagiarise.

The handbook is intended to be a practical guide. Included in it are resources which can be used to educate students about plagiarism. These can be adapted to be more subject-specific. There are also examples, from the University of Kent, of assessment tasks which aim to deter students from plagiarising.

An ongoing outcome of this handbook is the setting up and monitoring of an electronic resource bank of materials to help students produce good academic writing without resorting to plagiarism, and examples of student-centred assessment tasks which guard against plagiarism. Any further examples generated by University of Kent lecturers can be sent to teaching@kent.ac.uk for inclusion in a resource bank available to all staff.
II. The University of Kent's definition of plagiarism

1. Definition

Senate has approved the following definition of plagiarism:

"Plagiarism is the act of repeating the ideas or discoveries of another as one's own. To copy sentences, phrases or even striking expressions without acknowledgement in a manner which may deceive the reader as to the source is plagiarism; to paraphrase in a manner which may deceive the reader is likewise plagiarism. Where such copying or close paraphrase has occurred the mere mention of the source in a bibliography will not be deemed sufficient acknowledgement; in each such instance it must be referred specifically to its source. Verbatim quotations must be directly acknowledged either in inverted commas or by indenting".

http://www.cs.ukc.ac.uk/teaching/student/PartII/9.html

2. Academic Discipline and Offences

Regulation V.3 of the University's General Regulations for Students states that students are required to act with honesty and integrity in fulfilling requirements in relation to assessment of their
academic progress. Plagiarism and duplication of material, as set out below, are cited in the regulations as examples of breaches of this Regulation:

**Plagiarism**: reproducing in any work submitted for assessment or review (for example, examination answers, essays, project reports, dissertations or theses) any material derived from work authored by another without clearly acknowledging the source.

**Duplication of material**: reproducing in any submitted work any substantial amount of material used by that student in other work for assessment, either at this University or elsewhere, without acknowledging that such work has been so submitted.

Conventions may be published which define the above offences more precisely for purposes of particular disciplines, programmes or types of assessment-work, provided such conventions have been approved by the appropriate Faculty Board, and a copy lodged with the Secretary to the Learning and Teaching Board (LTB).

---

3. Procedures for Dealing with Academic Disciplinary Offences

On the recommendation of the Working Group on Plagiarism established by LTB, Senate has approved revised procedures for dealing with breaches of Regulation V.3, including the offences of plagiarism and duplication of material, with effect from 1st September 2005. The revised procedures have been drafted in accordance with the guidance provided by the *JISC Good Practice Guide on Plagiarism* and they incorporate a number of changes designed to safeguard the University from legal challenge under natural justice and the Human Rights Act. Principally, it has proven necessary to (a) remove Boards of Examiners from the arena of disciplinary decisions; and (b) ensure that students accused of academic offences have opportunity to make a case for their defence in person against any such allegation. In full, the procedures have been devised so as to:

(i) Require the establishment of a Departmental Disciplinary Committee in every department, and so therefore place all student academic disciplinary matters in a forum designed and appropriate for that purpose;
(ii) Provide for cross-departmental consistency in the application of disciplinary procedures;
(iii) Allow students the right to make a case for their defence in person against any academic disciplinary allegation;
(iv) Allow for the ‘fast-tracking’ of uncontested cases;
(v) Offer more detailed guidance on a range of penalties;
(vi) Provide grounds for appeals consistent with the disciplinary context. The procedures may be found in part V of this handbook.

4. Penalties

Where a student is considered to be in breach of Regulation V.3, the penalties to be imposed should be in accordance with the guidelines outlined in the procedures. These penalties may however be varied where the Departmental Disciplinary Committee or the Chair (as appropriate to the case) feels that the suggested penalty would be too lenient or too harsh in the particular circumstances. In determining an appropriate penalty the following factors may be taken into consideration:

- The severity of the offence;
- Whether the student admits or denies the allegation;
- Evidence of intent to deceive;
• The number of previous offences;

• The effect of the intended penalty on the student’s progression or (potential) award. (The overall outcome should not be disproportionate to the offence).


III. How to help students to understand plagiarism and learn the skills of good academic writing

Many new University students are not used to writing in an academic style. At school students do not need to use research material in the way they are expected to at University. They may also be used to teachers asking them to research a topic on the Internet and simply bring in what they have found to share with the class. This suggests that the skills needed for correct citation and paraphrasing have not been developed at school and therefore should be taught explicitly for University study. This can be done by providing students with numerous opportunities to write academically and giving clear feedback and guidance on how to cite references, paraphrase and voice opinions. This allows writing to be viewed as a process as well as a product. For more information on supporting students’ writing see: http://www.thinkingwriting.qmul.ac.uk/getstart.htm

In addition there are significant differences in the writing style of academic work in some other countries. Some international students might be used to quoting large chunks of information directly and this may be good academic practice in the educational context to which they are accustomed. Therefore extra information and training could address additional needs of international students in the UK context.

Students receive a great deal of information at the start of their programme of study. Information about plagiarism is just a small part of this. In a limited time it is useful to plan exactly what you want to convey to students and provide handouts so that they can refer to the information again. Carroll (2001) recommends that it is good practice to develop a “culture of student involvement and interest” in departmental discussions about plagiarism. Ways in which this might be achieved are listed here:

• Ensuring that students and staff have a clear, shared understanding of the meaning of plagiarism. A useful exercise at the beginning of an academic programme could be to involve students in a general definition of what is and is not acceptable in academic writing, leading to a shared statement on plagiarism that will be in the students’ own words. Their participation in the construction process could be quite positive.

• Giving students clear guidance on the difference between collusion and collaboration.

• Linking academic conventions to the values that underpin them (Carroll 2002) i.e. a shared knowledge community which functions by respecting and acknowledging others’ work.

• Stressing the link between good marks and attributing ideas (Carroll 2002). Students should be aware that they are expected to refer to others’ work to support their own theories and arguments.

• Actively teach the skills of correct citation and paraphrasing and generate formative (non-assessed) opportunities to practise these skills. Different disciplines may have different ways of doing this, so it is important that in each subject area time is allowed at the start of a programme of study to encourage students to practise these skills. It might be useful to make sure that there is at least one piece of work which the students submit where they know citation and paraphrasing will be focused on explicitly; that they will not be penalised for mistakes but asked to re-do errors as part of the learning process. Tutors could provide students with a hard copy of the referencing system that they expect to see in students’ essays; a good referencing guide has been produced by Northumbria University called ‘Cite them Right’. http://online.northumbria.ac.uk/isd/site/ Alternatively the Student Learning Advisory Service http://www.kent.ac.uk/uel/learning/ produces a good referencing guide for students. Tutors could advise students to keep a copy to hand when they are writing their assignments so that they can easily check that their referencing is correct.
To guide students towards literature where they can find out more about referencing, citation and plagiarism. There is a significant amount of student-orientated literature and a list of this is included in the back of the handbook. The University of Kent Students’ Union is also building a resource bank of similar information aimed at students. Further information for students is available from the Student Learning Advisory Service.

Although ongoing feedback focused on the skills of academic writing is generally accepted as the most effective way of supporting students to write without resorting to plagiarism, there is a place for explicit awareness-raising and education for students at the start of a course or module. This will be more productive if done in a positive environment where "learning is valued for its own sake" (MacDonald Ross 2004). Tutors can do this by emphasising to students good practice techniques for academic writing, rather than focusing on what they should do to avoid accusations of plagiarism. MacDonald Ross provides an analogy with football to illustrate this: "you won’t train anyone to be a good footballer by concentrating on how they should avoid being off-side".

http://www.cmu.edu/teaching/resources/plagiarism.html

1. Activities to help educate and raise students’ awareness about plagiarism.

It can be confusing to students that there are so many different definitions of, and ways to understand, plagiarism. The language used to define plagiarism is often quite academic and may be impenetrable for new or international students. The following activity is adapted from a similar exercise which Race (2000) uses to enable students to set their own assessment criteria. It has been adapted here to help students take ownership of the meaning of plagiarism.

Activity 1 Definition

**Brainstorming:** ask students individually to jot down what they consider to be plagiarism in the context of academic study.

**Sharing:** get students to work in small groups of 3 or 4 to share and discuss their ideas.

**Collecting ideas:** Go around the groups asking them for their ideas. Write these so that all can see.
Introducing terminology: Write some key words connected with 'academic cheating' and copying which may not have been mentioned already for example:

![Diagram of terminology related to plagiarism]

Adapted from McDowell & Brown (2004)

Discuss this terminology, ensuring that students get a chance to think about their own understanding of each term.

**Definition:** Students work in small groups with their ideas and the terminology to write a definition of plagiarism.

**Sharing:** Each group writes their definition so that the whole group can see it. These definitions can later be collated by the tutor and made available to the students.

**Turning features into checklist questions:** Ask students in small groups to return to the original class list of 'academic cheating' with the purpose of producing a checklist of questions to ask themselves before handing in a piece of written work. For example, 'Have I used anyone else's ideas?' 'Have I referenced properly?' 'Have I expressed my own opinion?' 'Have I backed up my opinions with references to the literature?'

**Highlight the University of Kent's definition of plagiarism:** At the end of the session it is useful to give students the 'official' definition of plagiarism for them to compare with their own (see definition section 1).

**Discussion:** Give students an opportunity to talk about the ways in which the University of Kent tries to minimise opportunities for plagiarism and how proven cases of plagiarism are treated. Case studies, real or invented, could be used to stimulate discussion.
The following activity was written by Pauline Ridley for the University of Brighton’s ‘Plagiarism Pack for Students’ (2004). http://staffcentral.brighton.ac.uk/clt/resources/plagiarism.htm This exercise can be used in a large group by dividing students into smaller discussion groups and then asking them to share their responses at the end. It generates good discussion and can be used to get students to start thinking about definitions of plagiarism.

Activity 2  Why does it matter?

Take some time to think about the implications of each of these situations. Make brief notes of your responses and then discuss them with other students:

- A medical researcher falsifies the results of a new anti-cancer drug to make his discovery seem more important.

- A writer submits an idea for a series to a television company, which turns it down. A few months later, they broadcast an almost identical programme. She never receives any acknowledgment or payment.

- A historian publishes a book claiming that the Holocaust never took place. He makes lots of detailed assertions backed up by anonymous quotations but does not give any sources for this information.

- A minority of students at a particular University are acquiring essays via the Internet, and the University authorities have failed to stop the practice. This has led to a decline in the University’s reputation and all their graduates (even genuinely first-class students) are now finding it hard to get a job.

- A design student loses the portfolio containing all her sketches for her final project, and has to start again from scratch. At the final degree show, she finds that many of her original ideas have been used in another student’s work.
The next activity is useful to illustrate the subtleties of plagiarism definitions. The examples below are based on an exercise in ‘Academic Writing for Graduate Students’ by Swales and Feale.

Activity 3 Subtleties of plagiarism

Here are six ways to use sources. Example number one is plagiarism; example six is not. Where do you cross the line?

1. Copying a paragraph word for word from a source without acknowledgement.

2. Copying a paragraph and making small changes - e.g. replacing a few verbs, replacing an adjective with a synonym; acknowledgement in the bibliography.

3. Cutting and pasting a paragraph by using sentences of the original but omitting one or two and putting one or two in a different order, no quotation marks; with an in-text acknowledgement plus bibliography.

4. Composing a paragraph by taking short phrases from a number of sources and putting them together using words of your own to make a coherent whole with an in-text acknowledgement plus bibliography.

5. Paraphrasing a paragraph by rewriting with substantial changes in language and organisation; the new version will also have changes in the amount of detail used and the examples cited; citing in bibliography.

6. Quoting a paragraph by placing it in block format with the source cited in text & bibliography.

http://sociology.camden.rutgers.edu/jfm/plagiarism/plagiarism-jfm.htm

This activity was written by Alison Bone for the University of Brighton’s ‘Plagiarism Pack for Students’ (2004). It can be used as a way of beginning to talk to students about disciplinary procedures regarding cases of plagiarism.
Activity 4 Scenarios for discussion

Look at the following examples:

• Mary pays £100 for an outline for an essay from a commercial supplier and uses it as the basis of her own coursework.

• Nazeem and Daniel work together on a piece of coursework and submit very similar answers claiming in each case that it is their own work.

• Su, a first year student, finds a discarded copy in the print room of an answer done by a student who appears to be studying a similar course. The ideas are so good that she uses them for her work - they clearly cannot be improved upon. She does not know whose they are.

Questions to ask students:

1. Do they amount to plagiarism?

2. Which do you think is the most serious?

3. Why?

http://academic.udayton.edu/elearning/onlineTraining/Plagiarism/CombatPlagiarism/Faculty.htm
Activity 5. How can I be sure what plagiarism is?

Four students read the following text and used it in their essays in slightly different ways. Which would count as plagiarism?


‘Because women’s wages often continue to reflect the fiction that men earn the family wage, single mothers rarely earn enough to support themselves and their children adequately. And because work is still organised around the assumption that mothers stay at home with children, even though few mothers can afford to do so, child-care facilities in the United States remain woefully inadequate’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student A wrote:</th>
<th>Verdict: Plagiarism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Since women’s wages often continue to reflect the mistaken notion that men are the main wage earners in the family, single mothers rarely make enough to support themselves and their children very well. Also, because work is based on the assumption that mothers stay at home with children, facilities for childcare remain woefully inadequate in the United States</td>
<td>There is too much direct borrowing in sentence structure and wording. The writer changes some words, drops one phrase and adds some new language, but the overall text closely resembles May’s. There is no acknowledgement (citation) of it being May’s work. However, even if May were acknowledged this is still plagiarising because the lack of quotation marks indicates that it is paraphrased and in the student’s own words.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student B wrote:</th>
<th>Verdict: Plagiarism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>By and large our economy still operates on the mistaken notion that men are the main breadwinners in the family. Thus, women continue to earn lower wages than men. This means, in effect, that many single mothers cannot earn a decent living. Furthermore, adequate day care is not available in the USA because of the mistaken assumption that mothers remain at home with their children to care for them.</td>
<td>It shows good paraphrasing of wording and sentence structure, but May’s original ideas are not acknowledged. Some of May’s points are common knowledge (women earn less than men, many single mothers live in poverty), but May uses this common knowledge to make a specific and original point and her original conception of this idea is not acknowledged.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student C wrote:</td>
<td>Verdict: borderline plagiarism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As Elaine Taylor May (1997, p55) points out, ‘women’s wages continue</td>
<td>Although the writer now cites May and it is closer to telling the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to reflect the fiction that men earn the family wage’. Thus many single</td>
<td>truth about the text’s relationship to the source, it continues to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mothers cannot support themselves and their children adequately.</td>
<td>borrow too much language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Furthermore since work is based on the assumption that mothers stay home</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with children, facilities for day care in this country are still ‘woefully</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>inadequate’.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students D wrote:</th>
<th>Verdict: No plagiarism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Women today still earn much less than men, so much less that many single</td>
<td>The writer makes use of the common knowledge in May’s work, but</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mothers live at or below the poverty line. Elaine Taylor May (1997, p.588)</td>
<td>acknowledges May’s original conclusion and does not try to pass it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>argues that this situation stems in part from the fiction that men earn the</td>
<td>off as her own. The quotation is properly cited, as is a later</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>family wage’ May further suggests that the American workplace still works</td>
<td>paraphrase of another of May’s ideas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>on the assumption that mothers with young children stay at home to care for</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>them.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The following similar exercise is available to Bioscience students at the University of Kent.

Activity 5.1 How can I be sure what plagiarism is? Biosciences

Three students were given the following text and used it in their essays in slightly different ways. Which would count as plagiarism?


"Thus far, we have dealt with aneuploid conceptuses that have a uniform aberrant karyotype in all foetal cell lineages. A proportion, however, are 'mosaics', i.e., they have a mixed population of both normal and abnormal cells. Individuals with mosaicism typically display milder phenotypes than their counterparts with full-blown trisomy and often have a longer life expectancy. However, initial assumptions that any mosaicism in foetal tissues would usually be reflected uniformly throughout all cell lineages, surprisingly, proved to be inaccurate. That is, it was found that abnormal cells are more likely to be unevenly distributed among the various embryonic and extra embryonic cell lineages (see Wolstenholme, 1995)."

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student A wrote</th>
<th>Verdict</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Until now we have concentrated on aneuploid offspring that have the same karyotypes in all cells. This is not always the case; some have populations of both abnormal and normal cells, and are called 'mosaics'. Individuals displaying mosaicism often have milder symptoms including a longer life expectancy than those with full-blown trisomy. It was initially thought that mosaicism would be evenly distributed throughout all cell lineages, however, it has now been shown that it is mostly unevenly distributed (see Wolstenholme, 1995).</td>
<td>Blatant plagiarism, whether or not you have listed Griffin (1996) among the references at the end of the essay. The minor alterations, additions and omissions do nothing to disguise the source. No knowledge of genetics is required to do this.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student B wrote</th>
<th>Verdict</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mosaicism is a population of normal and abnormal cells distributed throughout the various extra embryonic and embryonic cell lineages. Those with the full-blown trisomy often have worse symptoms, and a shorter life expectancy than those displaying mosaicism who often have much milder symptoms. Mosaicism can arise by one of two ways, by mitotic non-disjunction of a normal cell lineage or by a mechanism termed 'trisomy rescue'. Most mosaics are now thought to have varying proportions of normal and abnormal cells among embryonic and extra embryonic lineages (see Wolstenholme, 1995). This is in contrast to earlier dogma, which assumed that there was a uniform distribution of normal and abnormal cells throughout foetus and placenta.</td>
<td>Unacceptable summarising. The writer has put considerable effort into trying to disguise the source e.g. the order has been changed. Suggests that the writer does at least have some knowledge of genetics (although, in practice, such attempts at additions often lead to 'howlers' precisely because the effort is being concentrated on the cosmetic operation rather than on comprehension and communication of the ideas). However, this is still plagiarism: the framework, organisation and style are still identifiably Griffin's despite the effort at concealment. It is abundantly clear that the relevant page has been open in front of the writer throughout the writing of the piece. If this sort of work predominates in the essay, a pass mark is unlikely, although some marks may be awarded.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student C wrote</th>
<th>Verdict</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Aneuploidy arises from errors in the gametes | This brings in some reading from other sources, the
(meiotic non-disjunction) and, for the most part, results in a conceptus with a uniform aberrant karyotype. However, modification of cells from aberrant embryos (trisomy rescue) or errors in cells from normal embryos (mitotic non-disjunction) can lead to populations of both normal and abnormal cells in the same conceptus. These are called ‘mosaics’. For no apparent reason, it was originally thought that, in any given mosaic, there would be the same proportions of normal and abnormal cells in each cell lineage. However, comparative studies of both foetus and placenta revealed widely varying proportions of normal and abnormal cells in different lineages of the same conceptus. For example, normal foetuses with abnormal placentas and vice versa are commonplace (Griffin, 1996).

References:

2. Student Learning Advisory Service

There is more information available for students from the Student Learning Advisory Service. Please see www.kent.ac.uk/uel/learning. Additional sessions for students on referencing and citations are provided. In all work with students, especially on essays and academic writing, the Student Learning Advisory Service seeks to develop an informed and practical awareness of plagiarism. Tips and techniques on avoiding plagiarism are provided. Books and leaflets available in the resource bank also offer advice and guidance on this issue. The following advice and activity was designed by Shaun Theobold who works in the Student Learning Advisory Service.

Unintentional plagiarism, and unintentional mosaic plagiarism.

Sadly, there will always be students who set out to ‘cheat’, or who simply can’t be bothered to understand the principles and practices of good academic study. There may be little that can be done to deter them, no matter how conscientious a lecturer is about forewarning them of the dangers of plagiarism.

However, many students seem to fall into the plagiarism trap through naivety or carelessness; or a lethal combination of the two. Accidental or unintentional plagiarism may prove a greater threat to academic integrity than deliberate plagiarism. This is particularly the case where students are preparing material for assignments and assessments, such as the traditional evaluative essay.

Here, problems may be compounded by the student’s inability to cope with academic reading; especially in Stage 1. Less secure students may find the transition to university study hard to manage, and feel bewildered by the range and amount of reading they are required to do. Reflex responses to managing reading often involve indiscriminate use of too wide a range of sources, or over-reliance on one source to the point where ideas and concepts in source material merge with the student’s own opinions. The writing that results from this kind of preparation is often a poorly expressed ‘sprawl’ of ideas. As well as showing problems with structure and analysis it is generally careless and will, not surprisingly, be full of unintentional plagiarism.

In addition, the student may be racing to complete an assignment on time. This again may be the case with less experienced Stage 1 students who are still refining their time management and organisational skills. Completing an assignment in a rush creates an even stronger temptation to cut corners and use reading
material and preparatory notes injudiciously. Students may fail to carry out meticulous editing, or to show due diligence with citations. ‘Undigested’ material may be imported from preparatory notes into the assignment, and there is a particular danger of ‘mosaic plagiarism’.

Mosaic plagiarism occurs where a student’s writing combines fragments of their own language with unacknowledged fragments from their source material. The ensuing text is, literally, a mosaic of acceptable paraphrase and argument plus unacceptable plagiarism.

Original text:

“There is nothing escapist about any of this; indeed, the great Odes of summer 1819 are permeated with an awareness of death. The important point is that, to Keats, the imaginative mind was diametrically opposed to the intellect’.

(Wu [2000] p1011)

Example of mosaic plagiarism:

Keats shows nothing escapist in both his aesthetics and the great Odes of 1819. On the contrary: he faced life with relentless courage even though the Odes are permeated with an awareness of death. The real point is that his creative and imaginative processes were diametrically opposed to rational and cognitive processes.

This kind of plagiarism is not as deliberate as direct plagiarism, but it may be widespread and pernicious. Certainly, it will be detectable by plagiarism detection software or perhaps even a quick preliminary check in Google. And if institutions are rigorous and consistent about plagiarism policies, the consequences for the student may be equally severe.

However, students may well express genuine surprise when challenged about their use of unacknowledged phrases from source material. They may have prepared their essay from a set of notes that fail to discriminate between their own words, and what should appear as a proper citation. Moreover, if the notes were set out some period in advance they may literally have forgotten the distinction between source material and their own language. Thus their response to plagiarism may consist more of emotional anger at an ‘unjust’ accusation, rather than sensible recognition of the nature of scholarly writing.

If all this seems very negative, the real point to make is that there are some simple, practical steps that a lecturer or seminar leader can take to prevent much of the above. These steps will not be unduly time-consuming, and will reduce the likelihood of unintentional plagiarism and unintentional mosaic plagiarism.

The fundamental issue is to spend a little time within a seminar, or at some point during a lecture, discussing the nature of effective note taking. This discussion should draw attention to appropriate conventions for citations, references and bibliographies and would, presumably, overlap with a broader discussion on the nature of plagiarism and the characteristics of proper academic study. The discussion could well be backed up with a short practical exercise in note taking.

The exercise could become an ‘organic’ part of existing good practice, such as encouraging students to prepare reading for seminar topics. It could even be formally assessed: 10% of marks for an assignment could be allocated to preliminary notes, still allowing 90% for the main writing.

To build on this, there are a few straightforward, and pragmatic, approaches to take. Firstly, the student can be encouraged to put the full bibliographical details of the source/text they are using on a sheet of paper or an index card that they keep in front of them as they work. If this becomes a habit, the information needed for correct citations and bibliographies is always available for the student. If the student is using Word to put together notes, then bibliographical details can be placed as a header or footer, automatically appearing on every page. Another approach is to use a red pen to mark off every reference in their notes. Again, the aim is to make references instantly visible.

Secondly, the student can be introduced to a few simple techniques for note taking that, again, inculcate habitual good practice. All of these techniques are concerned with differentiating the student’s own summary
words/notes from any actual citations. The important point is to foster a mind-set where the student is never tempted to blur the distinction between their own notes and their source material. Once instilled, the process becomes an automatic part of the student's note taking practice.

Note that all these techniques involve the student in structuring their notes 'on the page' in such a way that the language of the source material is typographically or spatially distinguished from the student's own language.

This approach to information-gathering and note taking processes is devised, primarily, to extend awareness of plagiarism. Putting in place this kind of strategy could prevent the lecturer from wasting time in correcting plagiaristic faults that might have been avoided. However, there are undoubted benefits for both staff and students in many other areas.

Students' note taking will become more timely and effective, especially if the discussion on note taking is broadened to include further advice on note taking techniques, such as the consistent use of effective abbreviations. The development of effective note taking from reading is likely to improve note taking in other circumstances such as lectures. (Several of the suggestions that follow are readily adaptable for other purposes.) Given greater control of the ways in which they record their reading, students may become more exploratory in their research habits, and be less daunted by reading lists. They may feel more confident about the overall processes of scholarship, and contribute more to group or seminar discussion. They will have a much stronger focus on the two basic questions that underpin all successful academic reading - Why am I reading this? What am I hoping to find out? - because they will feel more confident about their accompanying notes. In conjunction with other areas of their academic personal development, they will increase their understanding of the positive aspects of proper scholarly practice as well as the negative aspects of plagiarism.

The following extract is from a typical Stage 1 text for students of English. This is followed by some examples of note taking techniques to discuss with students, based on the extract. This material could be adapted for any subject.

Activity 6: A preventive strategy for avoiding unintentional plagiarism, and unintentional mosaic plagiarism.
‘And yet Keats was suspicious of Wordsworth’s ‘egotistical sublime’ (see p. 1042) - the tendency of Wordsworth to focus his attention on his own imaginative process. Why? Because Hunt had taught him one important lesson which he was never to relinquish - that it is not the poet’s task to impose a vision or interpretation on the outside world, but to immerse, and lose, the self in what is perceived. Where Wordsworth and Coleridge had placed all the emphasis on ‘the conferring, the abstracting, and the modifying powers of the imagination’ (p.413) - in other words, on a sustained analysis of the poet’s mental processes, Keats insisted that the imaginative process was more like a kind of dream: ‘A poet is the most unpoetical of any thing in existence, because he has no identity, he is continually in for - and filling - some other body. The sun, the moon, the sea, and men and women who are creatures of impulse, are poetical and have about them an unchangeable attribute; the poet has none, no identity - he is certainly the most unpoetical of all God’s creatures’ (p. 1042). In other words, the poet is capable of losing all sense of self in the contemplation of external reality, making it possible for him to ‘be’ anything he wants.

It would be interesting to know what Keats would have made of The Prelude, which remained unpublished until 1850.

Source:

Examples of note taking techniques:
These could be adapted for either ‘pen-and-paper’ notes, or the use of electronic media such as personal organisers/palm tops or word-processing software. They can be combined, and can be used with other note taking techniques not described here such as abbreviations, contractions and symbols. See Cottrell (1999 ); Fry (1997); Northedge (1990)

1. All quotations are underlined, anything else is the student's expression

Wordswth. concerned with his imagination:
the tendency of Wordsworth to focus his attention on his own imaginative process

2. One colour for student's summary, another for quotations

Hunt = gives K. crucially import. idea - applied throughout K’s writing life - Hunt had taught him one important lesson which he was never to relinquish.
3. Consistent use of quotation marks

Poet's main function: not to place self ‘over’ object/concept being seen/examined. Poet must submerge self - in object/concept. “[The poet's task is ] to immerse, and lose, the self in what is perceived.”

4. Dividing the page into vertical or horizontal sections. All quotations in one section; all summary words/notes in another.

Colr.dg. + Words. Stress imagination + scrutinising poets mind

5. Using bold to mark out all quotations.

For Keats, imagination = not imposing analytic framework at all: but rather DREAM-STATE the imaginative process was more like a kind of dream

References


Fry, Ron (1997) Take Notes London: Kogan Page


The texts above can be borrowed from The Student Learning Advisory Service at The University of Kent.

3. Guidance for tutors teaching international students

The English Language Unit gives all students enrolled on English language courses sessions on study skills. These include a session explaining what plagiarism is and showing students the skills of correct referencing and paraphrasing. However this only reaches those enrolled on the English courses. Tutors will need to make sure that they give extra feedback and clear information to international students. The following information and advice draws on the experience of staff at the English Language Unit.

http://www.kent.ac.uk/sec/elu/

International students are not a uniform group and many of them do have a very clear understanding of plagiarism. However for some international students plagiarism is a new concept so they need very clear guidance and examples of on what is acceptable at UK degree level. Also many students who have English as a second language feel a lack of confidence in their ability to express themselves in writing; they may use plagiarism as a coping mechanism because they feel that their own writing in English is not of a good enough standard to submit. The English Language Unit can address the needs of these students.

Conclusions

The aim of educating and raising students’ awareness about plagiarism is to try to prevent incidences of plagiarism. The job of educating and awareness-raising is best done by subject teachers, because for each subject there are different expectations of what is academic best practice. The most effective way of teaching students not to plagiarise is to give clear, consistent feedback on their written work which shows them when they are committing plagiarism, giving them opportunities to learn from their mistakes.

IV. How to design assessment tasks which prevent students plagiarising.

1. Assessment tools which minimise opportunities for plagiarism.

Much work has been done recently on ‘designing-out’ opportunities for plagiarism from assessment tasks (Stefani & Carroll, 2001; McDowell & Brown, 2003). It may be tempting to think that a way of preventing plagiarism is to revert to unseen exams as the main way to test students’ knowledge. However as McDowell and Brown (2003) note “unseen exams have many well known disadvantages... such as question spotting, memorisation, the testing of just a narrow set of skills and abilities”.
In Carroll's ‘Plagiarism. A good practice guide’ (2001) there are a variety of recommendations of how to design-out plagiarism from assessment tasks. These suggestions are not foolproof but do attempt to make the students approach tasks individually and lessen the opportunities for plagiarism to occur. The following bullet-points are adapted from Carroll (pages 9-12).

- **Analytical writing**: Instead of setting essays that ask students to explain, list or collect information, essays could encourage the integration of two ideas by asking them to analyse and contrast. For example, ask students to locate three web resources or printed texts that deal with a specific economic theory; then contrast the views expressed on those sites with the situation in country X, and drawing on all three, ask the student to make recommendations for the future.

- **Comparative writing**: Essays that compare two things are less likely to exist already and quickly unearth possible collusion. For example a general essay on George Eliot could be individualised by asking how an Eliot character dealt with a situation and how a recent public figure did so, leaving the student to select the figure.

- **Specific essay questions**: Word essay titles so that they have a very specific current reference which must be related to a particular theory. (Saalfeld personal communication Politics & International Relations Department 2005).

- **Information gathering skills**: These can be included as a learning outcome in their own right.

- **Essay banks and cheat sites as a teaching tool**: Ask students to mark an essay bank answer using agreed assessment criteria. This often has the added advantage of exposing essay bank answers as weak and sending a message to students that you are aware that such things exist.

- **Assess process in group work**: To help assessment of group work it is useful to assess the process which the group went through to achieve their results. This can be done by the students themselves and the tutor can assess their evaluations.

- **Reflective writing**: Students can be asked to keep a log of their group activity which can be referred to when writing a post-hoc reflective piece on each person’s contribution to the project. Alternatively for tasks which require students to reflect on work experience, they can be asked to keep a portfolio to provide evidence for work experience, and reflect upon that with reference to theories which they have also learnt.

- **Valuing reading**: Research suggests that readers don’t plagiarise (Evans 2000). ‘Readers tend not to cheat and cheaters tend not to read’. Therefore it is good practice to design-in requirements that the student should read and record reading. Sometimes, instead of essays, students could be asked to provide an annotated list of sources for assessment.

- **Identify sources that students must use in their work**: For some pieces of work students can be told the 3 or 4 main sources of information and given instructions just to rely on them and their interpretation of them to answer a question.

- **Supporting weaker students and helping students to manage their time**: Research carried out by Roig and deTommaso (1995) and Bannister and Ashworth (1998) found that plagiarism and cheating are more common amongst weaker students and students with poor time management skills. Therefore designing-in staging posts and requiring students to submit work for formative assessment might encourage forward planning.

- **Essay planning**: Ask students for an outline or essay plan and the three best resources that they would have used had the essay been written. This could be done formatively but directly linked to what will appear on a future timed piece of work. Note: It is important when setting intermediate tasks that you are clear which items of work will be assessed and which are just going to be checked. Recent research carried out at the University of Kent (Frith 2005) indicates that students do not welcome being required to submit pieces of work which will not be assessed. However if they can see a strong link between formative work and assessed work they might be more inclined to do it.

- **Mini essay**: (Parker 2005 personal communication Kent Business School) Get students to write just 800 words for an essay. This is enough to see the way that they are thinking but is so small that opportunities for plagiarism are minimised. Also the speed at which they can be written and marked, makes them good for providing students with formative feedback.
• **Front sheet disclaimer:** Humanities students at the University of Kent must sign a plagiarism disclaimer and hand it in with each assignment they do. This draws their attention to plagiarism each time they hand in work.

The following additional suggestions are adapted from ‘Assessing Students: Cheating and Plagiarism’, McDowell and Brown (2004).

• **Use 'open' rather than closed book exams:** If students are allowed to take material into exams you can more easily design questions that test their ability to apply, synthesise and evaluate knowledge.

• **Use vivas and orals:** Searching questions can be put to students to verify that the work they have submitted is their own. Vivas can be done on a random basis. If all students are informed at the start of a module that they may be asked to sit a viva this may discourage students from plagiarizing. This is currently done on philosophy courses at Kent.

• **Individualised assignments:** Allow students, under supervision, to choose their own essay title or research topic.

• **Design engaging assessment tasks:** Students may become demotivated by assessment tasks which are purely routine. Students value assessments which appear to have some meaning or relevance outside of academia. (University of Kent, Students’ Views of Assessment. 2005).

• **Assignments which are authenticated by a third party:** For example, an employer or work place supervisor.

• **Submission of sources:** Students can be asked to submit photocopied extracts of key sources that they used and indicate how they have used them.

• **Peer assessment:** Students who are involved in their own assessment are intolerant of other students’ cheating or plagiarising.

**Examples from the University of Kent.**

The following six case studies are examples of existing good practice at the University of Kent. A key element of the assessment is that it aims to engage students in meaningful tasks which not only test their understanding of the course, but also develop students’ skills. This contributes to students feeling that assessment tasks are relevant and useful for their own development as well as leading to a qualification.
Case Study 1: Assessment which uses individual data sheets

This example comes from Kent Business School and is based on traffic data. Students are given data and have to make calculations based on this. They then have to access individual data files and use this information to work out how many vehicles and at what speed they have crossed a line. They have to produce spreadsheets and an instruction sheet both of which must be uploaded onto WebCT. Everything is held in one place and the exact hand-in time is recorded. Then students calculate the percentage of vehicles that have exceeded the speed limit. Copying between students is eliminated because every student has their own data. This task is worth 10% of the overall mark for the module.

(Parker 2005)

Before the introduction of individualised data for this assignment students regularly handed in exactly the same answers as each other. Individualised data makes it impossible for students to copy answers. The fact that students have to upload their answers onto WebCT makes the administration of the assignment easier and ensures a record of students' work can be easily stored for future reference. Although some extra time is required to set up individualised data for each student, once that is done it is very effective at helping students to avoid inadvertent plagiarism.

Case study 2: Example of a student directed assessment

This example is from Kent Business School. This task is designed to be open-ended and students are credited for using their initiative. The task for the students is to work together as a team using a selection of spreadsheet information from a hotel website to predict the hotel's revenues for the next three years. This assessment is worth 40% of a 30 credit module.
1. Group report and presentation material 20%. The team has to produce visual material for a 20 minute presentation but does not have to give the presentation. The visual material may include; paper copies of OHT slides, a PowerPoint presentation, posters, flip-chart displays, handouts etc. This should be accompanied by a written report on the work that the group did (3 pages maximum). An element of this work will be peer assessed and each student is asked to comment on the individual performance of the members on the team that s/he worked with.

2. Individual reports 20%. Each student is asked to write an individual technical report which should include spreadsheets worked on and a brief description of the spreadsheets. Students need to make clear in their report who contributed to the work on the spreadsheets.

(Parker 2005)

This type of assessment guards against plagiarism by giving students an open-ended task in which they have access to a very comprehensive hotel web-site, and students are free to choose what to focus on. Although students are told what is expected of them they have a lot of autonomy within their groups to direct their work and to decide how they want to present it; this makes it obvious if they have been copying from each other.

The element of peer assessment in this task helps students to understand the marking criteria for the task and motivates them to impress their peers. There is also an opportunity to share learning.

The individual report gives students an opportunity to reflect on and show an understanding of the work done and to account for their contribution to it. The nature of this type of reflective writing makes it almost impossible for students to plagiarise work.

Case Study 3: Assessment where students are given the same large data set, but have to define their own questions

This example is taken from Kent Business School. The assessment tests students’ ability to apply statistics using computer packages. Students are given the same statistical socio-economic information. They then choose their own variables from the data to work on and devise questions based on the variables that they have chosen. For example they may want to predict income based on age and level of education, or marital status based on race and income level. When they have defined the questions they want to ask and applied the statistical information to them, they then have to write about why they chose those questions and what relevance they have to the real world. This assessment is worth 40% of the overall module.

(Parker 2005)

The element of choice contained in this assignment potentially gives students more interest and involvement in the assessment task. It also means that direct copying of each other will be detected. The written piece on why they chose the questions they did and their real world relevance engages the student in reflective writing which is very difficult to plagiarise.
Case Study 4: A range of assessment tools designed to minimise students' opportunities to plagiarise.

This example is taken from Politics POS84 Bargaining and Rational Choice Theory. The assessment for this module is broken down into four parts.

1. Very early on in the teaching of the module students are required to submit an essay outline of up to 500 words, which is worth 5% of the overall mark. It is designed to provide students with preliminary feedback, help them with time management and safeguard against plagiarism.

2. Later in the module students choose one essay question to respond to. The essay is approximately 3,000 words and the learning outcome which is particularly assessed is writing skills. This is worth 25% of the marks.

3. Oral presentation. Each student is required to give a 10-15 minute presentation on a topic set by the module convenor. The presentation is worth 20% of the marks.

4. At the end of the module students sit a 2 hour exam where they answer 2 out of 8 questions. This is worth 50% of the marks.

(Saalfeld 2005)

The variety of assessment tools used in this example minimises students' opportunities to plagiarise. The essay outline gives both the tutor and student a good early indication of problems and difficulties that lead to plagiarism, for example time-management or comprehension. The essay titles for this module are very specific; they require research into recent events and the application of general theories to those events. Oral presentations give students opportunities to show their knowledge using a different presentation method. They may give other students and the tutor an opportunity to ask immediate questions which can easily expose a student who has not done the work themselves, or who has copied work and not fully
understood it. The exam is another assessment tool which minimises opportunities for plagiarism, and the results can be compared with other marks to verify that the student is performing consistently.

Case Study 5: Assessment based on 100% coursework designed to guard against plagiarism.

This example is taken from Politics PO590 Specialist dissertation. The students choose a topic to research and the assessment is broken down into 5 stages.

1. Progress reports: Students must submit 3 progress reports (worth 10% in total) to their tutor to show their preparation for the high-stakes assessment that they are working towards.

2. Presentation at student conference: Each student gives a 15-20 minute presentation at a high-profile student conference (the conference is arranged to be as much like a professional conference as possible and all students taking the module are present). This is worth 15% of the final mark.

3. Participation in a discussion at student conference: Students have to respond (5 minutes) to a paper given at the student conference. This is worth 5% of the total marks.

4. Dissertation outline: Students have to prepare a 750-word outline of their dissertation. This is worth 10% of the mark.

5. Dissertation: Students have to write an 8000-word dissertation which is worth 60% of the total mark.

(Rossbach 2005)

This model of assessment for courses which use 100% coursework, or rely on an extended essay as the main method of assessment, is useful because it shows how smaller, low-stakes assessments can help support the students and minimise their opportunities to plagiarise. This assessment model also provides plenty of feedback opportunities for the students; this gives the students chances to improve their work and guards against plagiarism. The variety of assessment tools used in this example also gives students chances to display their other skills as well as essay writing: for example they have to practise time management, presentation, active listening and reporting.
Case study 6: Assessment which aims to give students applied skills and enable them to pursue their own interests in the field.

This example is taken from Physical Sciences - Forensic Presentations and Media Skills. This is a module run in the final year of a three year degree programme which aims to equip students with the skill of communicating their knowledge to a non-scientific audience. This module is 100% coursework and includes 5 different assessment tools:

1. Press release 15%: Students are required to read a journal article which interests them and they consider newsworthy and write a short press release about it.

2. Forensic Science article 25%: Students have to write a longer article suitable for publication in the 'New Scientist' or a broadsheet science supplement.

3. Poster 10%: Students must produce a poster about their work, based on the type of poster expected at a science conference. This element of the assessment includes peer marking. The students work closely with the marking criteria to assess each others’ work.

4. Presentations 20%: All students make a 15-minute presentation which is videoed.

5. Writing and defending an expert witness report 30%: Students have to write an expert witness account and defend it in a moot court in front of visiting professionals, for example, ex-head of toxicology at the Metropolitan Police laboratory, a self employed document examiner and a member of the Expert Witness Institute.

(Went 2005)

The different elements of this assessment provide plenty of opportunities to guard against plagiarism. The press release gives students early feedback on their work and enables the tutor to point them in the right direction for the next assessed task. The writing itself is student led; the students choose a topic to write on. This has the potential to "develop a culture of positive student involvement and self-motivation" which has been identified by Carroll (2001) among others as one of the most effective ways to deter students from plagiarising.

The poster presentation gives students an opportunity to develop other skills and this is in part peer-assessed. This is also designed to encourage student involvement in the learning process, and the fact that the poster is peer-assessed minimises the likelihood of plagiarism. McDowell and Brown (2004) point out, "Students... tend to be less tolerant of time-wasters [and] parasites."

The presentation element of the assessment is a good way of checking students' true understanding of a topic. It is almost impossible to speak with confidence on a subject for 15 minutes if one has not fully understood the subject. There is also an opportunity for 'on the spot' questions to be asked. The first presentation gives students valuable feedback on their presentation skills, especially since it is videoed. This helps them to prepare for the next part of the assessment: the expert witness account.

The final assessment task is a unique opportunity for the students to combine all the skills they have learnt in the module and present work which is academic but also highly personal. This has the effect that students are very unlikely to be able to plagiarise in this assessment situation.

Conclusion
A common feature of all the assessment examples given here is their clear attempt to involve students in a positive learning environment and develop their own interest in the subject. A key role of the lecturer is to develop the students' motivation. Students have different motivations for being at University. It may be that they have a particular interest in the subject and want to further their knowledge and understanding, or
it could be that they need a qualification to enter a profession or command a high salary. Student motivation is crucial to the way in which learning takes place. MacDonald Ross (2004) makes the point that "If [students] genuinely want to learn something - such as a foreign language or a musical instrument - then cheating is entirely irrelevant to the purpose".

These examples of assessment tools which map opportunities for plagiarism also have strong elements of student support through feedback and tasks which are broken down into manageable chunks. Some of the assessments profiled here have 100% coursework but still guard against plagiarism because of carefully worked out assignment titles, self-assessment, free choice, individualised data, etc. Designing assessment tasks which guard against plagiarism can be time consuming at the start, but these types of assessment tasks minimise the time taken investigating suspicions of plagiarism.

http://img.photobucket.com/albums/v116/ecrush/plagiarism.gif

V. Academic Discipline: Procedures. Procedures for references

Information for Students, Teachers and Examiners:

1. General Regulation V.3: Academic Discipline

1.1 For each Department there shall be a Departmental Disciplinary Committee to consider alleged breaches of General Regulation V.3, which shall consist of three academic members of the department, one of whom shall be the Head of Department or his/her nominee and shall be appointed as Chair. Each Department shall provide a Secretary to the Committee.

1.2 Regulation V.3 of the General Regulations for Students states:

Students are required to act with honesty and integrity in fulfilling requirements in relation to assessment of their academic progress.

Note: The following are some examples of conduct which will be regarded as a breach of this regulation:

- Cheating in examinations
- Attempting to influence an examiner or teacher improperly
• **Plagiarism**: reproducing in any work submitted for assessment or review (for example, examination answers, essays, project reports, dissertations or theses) any material derived from work authored by another without clearly acknowledging the source.

• **Duplication of material**: reproducing in any submitted work any substantial amount of material used by that student in other work for assessment, either at this University or elsewhere, without acknowledging that such work has been so submitted.

• Conspiring with others to reproduce the work of others without proper acknowledgement, including knowingly permitting work to be copied by another student

• **Falsification of data/evidence**

Alleged breaches of General Regulation V.3 will be dealt with in accordance with the following procedures:

1.3 In the event of an alleged breach of regulation V.3, the student concerned and the Chair of the Departmental Disciplinary Committee of the relevant department shall be informed of the alleged breach. The Chair shall be provided with full details and supporting evidence.

1.4 If the Chair considers prima facie that the allegation is without foundation, he/she shall so inform the student and no further action shall be taken.

1.5 Where the Chair considers there is a case for the student to answer, he/she will ask the Secretary to invite the student to respond to the allegation, either orally or in writing, within 14 days (or within a shorter period if this is necessary to ensure that the outcome can be made available to a meeting of the Board of Examiners).

1.5.1 The Secretary will arrange for the allegation, together with the supporting evidence and the response, if any, from the student, to be considered by the Chair.

1.5.2 If the student contests the allegation, the Chair will refer the case to a hearing of the Departmental Disciplinary Committee and the student will be invited to attend. The case will proceed as per 1.6.1 - 1.6.6 below.

1.5.3 If the student does not contest the allegation, the Chair shall determine whether, in his/her view, there has been a breach of Regulation V.3 and, if so, decide the penalty to be imposed. The Chair may consult other members of the Disciplinary Committee on the nature of the penalty if he/she considers this appropriate.

1.5.4 The Secretary shall inform the student and the Chair of the relevant Board of Examiners of the decision of the Chair. The student shall be informed of his/her right to appeal against this decision as per the procedure set out at 3. below.

1.6 Contested Offences

Where the student contests the allegation, the Chair will ask the Secretary to write to the student convene the Departmental Disciplinary Committee to hear the case.

1.6.1 The student shall be informed by the Secretary of the date on which the Departmental Disciplinary Committee will consider the case; that they may submit evidence to the Committee in writing and/or in person; that, except where the Chair decides that evidence provided by either party should be confidential to the Committee, they will each be provided with copies of the written evidence submitted by the other and that they will both be permitted to hear the other’s verbal evidence.

*Conventions may be published which define more precisely for purposes of particular disciplines, programmes or types of assessment-work, the offences denoted at * above, provided such conventions have been approved by the appropriate Faculty Board and a copy lodges with the Secretary to the Learning and Teaching Board.*
1.6.2 Where a student attends a hearing of the Departmental Disciplinary Committee, he/she may be accompanied by a member of staff or a student of the University or a member of staff of the Students’ Union or a relative. Such hearings are not legal proceedings and a student may not be accompanied by a legal representative, even if the legal representative is a member of staff or a student of the University or a member of staff of the Students’ Union or a relative.

1.6.3 A student who originally contested the allegation but who does not take up the opportunity of a Departmental Disciplinary Committee hearing will forego his/her right to such a hearing and will have no further right of redress within the University’s appeals procedures. Where non-attendance is thought to be for reasons beyond the student’s control, the Chair of the Departmental Disciplinary Committee will have discretion to proceed with the hearing in the student’s absence or to reconvene the Committee at a later date.

1.6.4 The Chair of the Departmental Disciplinary Committee shall have the right to decide that evidence submitted verbally or in writing should be ignored by the Committee on the grounds that it is irrelevant or inappropriate and shall give reasons for doing so.

1.6.5 The Departmental Disciplinary Committee will meet privately to determine whether, in its view, there has been a breach of Regulation V.3 and, if so, impose an appropriate penalty;

1.6.6 The Secretary shall inform the student and the Chair of the relevant Board of Examiners of the decision of the Departmental Disciplinary Committee. The student shall be informed of his/her right to appeal against this decision as per the procedure set out at 3. below.

1.7 The Secretary shall be responsible for ensuring that a confidential record is kept of all cases notified under 1.5 and 1.6 above. This is solely for the purpose of helping to identify those who may have been guilty of offences under the General Discipline Regulations; is to be used for no other purpose; and must be destroyed as soon as the students to whom such records relate are no longer registered for programmes of teaching or research at the University.

2. **Penalties**

Where a student is considered to be in breach of Regulation V.3, the penalties to be imposed should be in accordance with the following guidelines. These penalties may however be varied where the Departmental Disciplinary Committee or the Chair (as appropriate to the case) feels that the suggested penalty would be too lenient or too harsh in the particular circumstances. In determining an appropriate penalty the following factors may be taken into consideration:

- The severity of the offence
- Whether the student admits or denies the allegation;
- Evidence of intent to deceive;
- The number of previous offences;
- The effect of the intended penalty on the student’s progression or (potential) award (the overall outcome should not be disproportionate to the offence).

2.1 **Possession of Unauthorised Materials in Examination**

*First Offence:* Penalised mark for the examination appropriate to the nature of the offence, or a warning about consequences of further offences where the offence is considered inadvertent

*Subsequent Offences:* Mark of zero for examination in question
2.2 **Use of Unauthorised Materials / Devices**

*First Offence:* Mark of zero for examination in question

*Subsequent offence(s):* Terminate registration/ineligible for award or to resit examinations

2.3 **Communicating with another student**

*First Offence:* Minimum penalty - warning about consequences of further offence(s)

*Subsequent offence(s):* Mark of zero for examination in question

2.4 **Copying from another student**

*First Offence:* Mark of zero for examination in question

*Subsequent offence(s):* Terminate registration/ineligible for award or to resit examinations

2.5 **Impersonating another student/conspiring to impersonation**

Terminate registration/ineligible for award or to resit examinations

2.6 **Attempting to Influence a Teacher or Examiner Improperly**

The penalty may range from a mark of zero for a single piece of work to termination of registration depending on the circumstances of the case.

2.7 **Plagiarism / Duplication of material**

i) Where the work contains a component of plagiarised or duplicated material, but also contains sufficient evidence that the student has satisfied the requirements to Pass, either:

a. cap the mark for the piece of work at a minimum Pass; or

b. allocate a reduced final mark for the module overall proportionate to the offence, subject to a minimum mark of a minimum Pass, and return a mark for the piece of work based on the portion which is not plagiarised or duplicated; or

ii) Where the work contains a component of plagiarized or duplicated material which casts doubt on whether the student has satisfied the requirements to Pass, assign a mark of zero for the piece of work.

iii) For serious, substantial or repeat offences: termination of registration/ineligible for award or to resit examinations.

2.8 **Conspiring with others to reproduce the work of others, including knowingly permitting work to be copied by another student**

The penalty may range from a reprimand to a mark of zero for a piece of work, or for a number of pieces of work, depending on the circumstances of the case.

2.9 **Falsification of Data / Evidence in appeal**

The penalty may range from a mark of zero for a single piece of work to termination of registration depending on the circumstances of the case.

*These examples are not exhaustive and do not limit the application of this Regulation from other acts deemed to be in contravention of the Regulation.*

3. **Appeals**

3.1 Appeals shall be conducted according to the procedures set out in Annex 9 of the Credit Framework except insofar as they are amended below:

3.1.1 The student may appeal against a penalty made under these regulations on one or more of the following grounds, by writing to the appropriate Faculty Officer within ten working days of the date on which notification of the decision was sent:

a) that there is evidence of a failure to follow the procedures set out in these regulations, which casts reasonable doubt on the reliability of the decision; and / or
b) that fresh evidence can be presented, which could not reasonably have been made available before the decision was made, and which casts reasonable doubt on the reliability of the decision; 
and/or

c) that the decision was unreasonable or irrational given the evidence which was available at the time.

3.1.2 In considering cases referred under these regulations the remit of the Faculty Review Panel will be to determine one of the following outcomes:

   a) Confirm the original decision;
   b) Confirm that an offence has occurred, but amend the penalty;
   c) Decide that an offence has not occurred, and remove the original penalty.

http://ukc.ac.ukregistry/quality/creditcreditinfoannex5.html

Procedures for references

1. Penalties imposed for acts of plagiarism will be proportionate and will adequately cover the seriousness of the offences. To avoid double jeopardy, instances of plagiarism will not ordinarily be mentioned in references.

2. There may be occasions when the nature of the offence will be either directly relevant to the referee's calculation of the student's character and suitability for the position under consideration or so serious that it should be mentioned. Where it is necessary and appropriate within this context, mention may be made of the offences so long as these are proportionate, factual and not gratuitous. In such cases, the student must be informed of the referee's intention in advance.

3. When deciding whether to mention plagiarism, the referee's primary concern will be to reflect an appropriate balance between the University's duty of care to the recipient of the reference and the risks of defamation, negligence and misrepresentation against the subject of the reference. Other than in exceptional cases, acts of plagiarism will not be considered relevant to students' future prospects.

4. These policies apply equally to other academic and non-academic disciplinary matters, where these are in the student record.

5. This advice should be published on the Central Secretariat website.
VI. Final thoughts

Plagiarism is one issue in academic life. Although it is important there are many other issues that also demand attention, not least the need to ensure that the assessment tasks are aligned to the stated learning outcomes of the module, and are varied so that all students have an opportunity to display what they are good at, and are not discriminated against by over-dependence on one form of assessment.

Assessment tasks should also be engaging and relevant to the world outside University study. Students are likely to be motivated by thoughtful, skills based assessment tasks which apply knowledge to real world situations and develop a range of skills which may be of use in a future employment situation. A motivated student is less likely to resort to plagiarism.

Raising students’ awareness about plagiarism should not constrain them and make them fearful of using sources. It should give them the tools to use sources with confidence to back-up their theories and develop their own voice. Learning these skills is a process and students need to receive constructive feedback on work in order to develop their skills.

Plagiarism is not something that can be successfully tackled in isolation. Within departments tutors need to work together to support the education of students, assessment design, detection and procedures for dealing with plagiarism. The role of the institution is also critical in ensuring that official definitions are clear and procedures are straightforward and easy to follow.

Acknowledgements
In gathering information for this handbook I received a lot of help from many people. I particularly want to thank Malcom Dixon who wrote the information on definitions and procedures, Shaun Theobald who wrote the section on the Student Learning Advisory Service, University of Kent tutors who allowed me to use examples of their work as case studies or examples of good practice and colleagues at UELT who helped me to edit this handbook. I would also like to thank Louise Naylor and David Coombe for giving constructive feedback on the draft.
VII. References


University of Wollongong (2005) Designing assessment tasks to minimise plagiarism. [online] Available at: http://www.uow.edu.au/about/teaching/goodpractice/assessment/A2plagiarism.html [accessed 18.05.05]

Fitzpatrick, J. Plagiarism. Higher Education Research Opportunities in the UK (HERO) http://www.hero.ac.uk/sites/hero/uk/studying/plagiarism5846.cfm [accessed 05.06.05]


Saaifeld, T (2005) personal email

Frith, L (2005) 'Students’ Views of Assessment' Unit for the Enhancement of Learning and Teaching, University of Kent.


Swales and Feale (1993), Academic Writing for Graduate Students University of Michigan, cited by Jude Carroll in an online article on plagiarism at http://www.ilt.ac.uk/resources/JCarroll.htm [accessed 1.5.05]

Alison Bone for the University of Brighton’s ‘Plagiarism Awareness Pack’ http://staffcentral.brighton.ac.uk/clt/resources/plagiarism.htm [accessed 03.05.05]

VIII. References for students

The Students’ Union is running a campaign to raise students’ awareness of plagiarism and has additional information on plagiarism which students may find useful.


This is a very user-friendly guide which students should have next to them when writing. It gives clear instructions on how to reference all types of material. (£3.50 available at Blackwells on the campus and on loan from The Student Learning Advisory Service resource library.)


This includes a useful section on using the literature and gives details on how to cite sources


This explains plagiarism, defines degrees of plagiarism, talks about how students can ensure that they do not plagiarise and what is likely to happen to students if they are caught plagiarising.

4. UELT (2004) *Bibliographical References Harvard Style* 
F:\SLAS\leaflets\biblio ref Harvard style.doc
Useful, free guide to students about how to reference correctly.

5. UELT (2004) *Note Taking*  
F:\SLAS\leaflets\note taking.doc

Good ideas and suggestions of how to take notes effectively and save time later looking up references.

6. *Essay writing Introduction to Sociology Department of Sociology* [accessed 26.06.05] online available at http://www.kent.ac.uk/emerald/cbs-ug-modules/cb302/index.html Taken from the Department of Sociology at the Australian National University, Canberra. The original is available at http://arts.anu.edu.au/sss/SOCYEssayGuide.pdf

This shows an annotated essay with notes in the margin to indicate to students generic features of good academic essay writing.
The plagiarism handbook has been compiled by Louise Frith, Unit for the Enhancement of Learning and Teaching (UELT) and is written for the use of academic staff at the University of Kent and its Associate Colleges.

If you require help with any of the issues raised please contact teaching@kent.ac.uk.