

## Academic Integrity, Plagiarism and Honesty

### What is academic integrity?

While you are at university, you are expected and required to act honestly regarding the work you submit for assessment in your courses. General Regulation V.3: Academic Discipline states that: students are required to act with honesty and integrity in fulfilling requirements in relation to assessment of their academic progress.

General Regulation V.3 specifies that any attempts to:

- cheat
- plagiarise or duplicate previously submitted material
- improperly influence your lecturer's view of your grades
- copy other assignments (your own or somebody else's) or
- falsify research data

will be viewed as a breach of this regulation.

The full details of this regulation including disciplinary procedures and penalties are available at:

<http://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/qa/credit-framework/creditinfoannex10.html>

Most students do not have any problems understanding the rules and expectations about acting honestly at university, although some are not familiar with academic expectations and plagiarism.

### What is plagiarism?

General Regulation V.3 states that plagiarism includes (but is not restricted to): 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. **Different Schools use different definitions of plagiarism and impose different penalties.** It is thus **essential that you familiarise yourself with the definition of and procedures related to plagiarism as operated in BSIS**, as outlined below.

Common to all forms of plagiarism is that you intentionally or unintentionally present someone else's arguments, information, results or words as your own. **You plagiarise**, for example, **if**: 1) You **copy** sentences or parts thereof **verbatim** from any source **without quotation marks**, thereby suggesting that the copied words are your own when they are not. 2) You **paraphrase** sentences or paragraphs so **closely** that it is obvious that you did not structure the sentence(s), paragraph(s) or argument(s) yourself. 3) You **use** arguments, information or verbatim quotes from a source **without** acknowledging the source by providing a **reference every time** you use information, arguments or verbatim quotes from that source. Anything written or said by someone else is a **source**, including articles, books, lectures, lecture notes, web pages, dictionaries, speeches, interviews, radio and TV programmes, other students' essays, your own essays etc.

Just to make it absolutely clear:

- Every time you use a quote (i.e. you copy sentences or parts thereof verbatim) you have to **use quotation marks and provide a reference**, including the page number.
- Every time you state an argument or information from a source in your own words you have to provide a reference and usually also a page number. It is **not sufficient** to cite the source only the first time you use it.

Another type of plagiarism is 'mosaic plagiarism'. Mosaic plagiarism occurs when a "student mixes words or ideas of a source (unacknowledged) in with his or her own words and ideas, *or* mixes together uncited words and ideas from several sources into a pastiche, *or* mixes together properly cited uses of a source with uncited uses" (Harvey 1998: 23). Please note that mosaic plagiarism is still plagiarism and will incur the same penalties as other, more obvious forms of plagiarism.

**Duplication of material** is a lesser known academic offence which nevertheless carries the same penalties as plagiarism. Duplication of material refers to the submission for assessment of any work or substantial parts thereof **that you have previously submitted for assessment** at the University of Kent or elsewhere **without acknowledging** that you are doing so.

### **How to avoid plagiarism**

Further guidance on how to use and cite sources can be found in the following books:

- Booth, Wayne C., Gregory G. Colomb, and Joseph M. Williams. *The Craft of Research*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003.
- Greetham, Bryan. *How to Write Better Essays*. Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001.
- Harvey, Michael. *The Nuts and Bolts of College Writing*. Indianapolis: Hackett, 2003.
- Harvey, Gordon. *Writing with Sources: A Guide for Students*. Indianapolis: Hackett, 1998.
- Redman, Peter. *Good Essay Writing: A Social Sciences Guide*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. London: Sage, 2001.

There is a simple rule of thumb though: If in doubt, always cite your source!

And please remember that 'unintentional plagiarism' is still plagiarism!