

AVOIDING PLAGIARISM.

Study Guide

» INTRODUCTION

What is plagiarism?

Plagiarism can be defined as the unacknowledged use of the work of others as if it is your own original work. Plagiarism is also the failure to not credit correctly the work of others.

It is not wrong to use other people's words and ideas. It is, however, wrong to present these words and ideas as if they are your own.

Plagiarism is unethical and illegal and it calls into question the integrity of the person who has intentionally plagiarized the work of someone else. In the context of examinations plagiarism is a serious matter because it can reflect the fact that students are taking credit for the words, thoughts or ideas of others as their own work to gain an unfair advantage.

Technology such as the internet and the easy availability of material in electronic form has led to plagiarism becoming rife. There are for example many websites where you can buy ready-made essays. However, academic institutions are aware of the issue of plagiarism and they have methods of detecting it including using computer software that checks for plagiarism.

All of the following are considered plagiarism:

- › presenting the work of others as your own
- › the failure to give due credit when using someone else's words or ideas
- › not putting quotations in quotation marks
- › giving incorrect information about the source of a quotation
- › altering words but copying the sentence structure of a source without giving credit.

In most cases plagiarism can be avoided by citing sources and citing them correctly. It is usually enough to clearly indicate that the material has been borrowed and to provide readers with the information they need to find the source.

Using other people's work without simply copying it means you have to understand it well enough to explain it in your own words and use it in your own thought.

Plagiarism is a serious offence and there can be serious consequences if plagiarism is detected. For example students undertaking CMI courses may fail to obtain their qualifications if it is found that they are guilty of plagiarism.

This study guide has been produced to assist in understanding what plagiarism is and how to avoid it.

What constitutes plagiarism?

The act of plagiarism can occur when someone takes another person's writing or idea and attempts to pass it off as their own. Plagiarism can consist of copying exactly (such as cutting and pasting from the Internet) another piece of work or a close imitation of it without properly citing or crediting it.

Plagiarism can also include taking illustrations photographs, diagrams, data, drawings, web pages (including social media content) and not citing or acknowledging them correctly in your own work. Placing your name on someone else's essay is plagiarism as is using another person's text or purchasing essays on the internet and passing it off as your own work.

How to avoid plagiarising

- › plagiarism can be avoided by citing and acknowledging sources correctly. When you paraphrase, summarize, or use words, phrases, or sentences from someone else's work you must indicate the source of the information within your written work by using an internal citation
- › pieces of text should be written in your own words, you should then cite your sources
- › when taking notes for a piece of work, cite your sources so as to avoid getting confused later
- › if you are using the internet to research online, be sure to find the original source of the information (many websites plagiarise)
- › if you are in doubt, then cite. It is far better to have too many citations than too few
- › the use of synonyms or alternative word choices is not an excuse to justify plagiarism. Changing only the words of an original source is not enough to prevent plagiarism. Sources must be cited whenever you borrow ideas as well as words
- › if in doubt, ask your tutor for advice or to check your citations.

Further tips

- › take notes in your own words. Try reading, then putting your books away and thinking, then write your notes
- › if you use the ideas of other then be explicit about it. This will also be useful as it demonstrates that you are familiar with the background and that you have understood the material which is what study is all about
- › if you are paraphrasing then the part of the work from which this drawn from must be clearly indicated and a citation included in the text so that others can locate the source.

Some tips on citing sources

- › when you are presenting the work or the views of others, cite the source in ways such as '...as shown by Tredgold (2015)'
- › if you are quoting a secondary source then make this explicit in ways such as 'Bradt (2011) as discussed by Gillet (2015)'
- › when quoting text verbatim use quotation marks or indented text and a citation; e.g. "Nothing can put the brakes on a team effort faster than procrastinating on decision making" (Nir, 2014)
- › if you have collaborated with others then make clear in the text who contributed which parts for instance; 'Prof. A.J Berry provided the data on equality in table 2'
- › where sources are cited include the full bibliographic reference, including the title, journal, volume and page numbers at the end of your submitted work.

For more help with citations see our related study guide **References and Citations**.



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

BOOKS

How to cite, reference and avoid plagiarism at university, Kathleen McMillan and Jonathan Weyers
Harlow: Pearson Education, 2013
This book is available as an [e-book](#).

Cite them right: the essential referencing guide, 9th ed, Richard Pears, Graham Shields
Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013

The study skills handbook, 4th ed, Stella Cottrell,
Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013

Developing essential study skills, 2nd ed, Elaine Payne, Leslie Whittaker,
Harlow: Financial Times Prentice Hall, 2006

This is a selection of books available for loan to members from CMI's library. More information at:
www.managers.org.uk/library

INTERNET RESOURCES

Plagiarism.org is a free resource which has wide range of information on plagiarism
<http://www.plagiarism.org/>



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Revised February 2017