

PREVENTING AND DETECTING PLAGIARISM: COURSEWORK

INFORMATION FOR ACADEMIC STAFF

The *Student Plagiarism and Academic Misconduct: Coursework Policy* states that individual staff members have a responsibility to:

- (a) know the policies and procedures of the University, the Faculty and the School with respect to academic honesty, including Plagiarism and Academic Misconduct, Collusion, Legitimate Collaboration and Group work, and to apply them consistently;
- (b) explain to Students both good scholarly practice and the concept of Plagiarism and Academic Misconduct and play a central role in assisting the University to discharge the responsibilities listed above;
- (c) ensure that adequate information is provided to Students about referencing requirements and academic conventions for the use of others' work, as appropriate for the discipline;
- (d) take all reasonable steps to ensure that information presented is reliable;
- (e) inform Students of their obligations regarding acknowledgment of collaborative work, and give clear guidelines for Group work;
- (f) inform Students of the obligation to submit a signed and dated *Plagiarism Declaration Form* with every assessment task submitted for marking;
- (g) provide access to an appropriate *Plagiarism Declaration Form*, whether part of an e-submission system or otherwise, for Students to use;
- (h) provide Students with notification or fair warning if they believe any individual or group may be at risk of breaching guidelines relating to Plagiarism and Academic Misconduct, Group work, Collusion and collaboration, and reliability of information;
- (i) give clear feedback about referencing problems;
- (j) refer Students to sources of advice on academic writing;
- (k) ensure that allegations of Plagiarism and Academic Misconduct are based on evidence;
- (l) report cases in which there is evidence of Plagiarism and Academic Misconduct to the Head of School; and
- (m) check for Plagiarism in Student assessment submissions, using computer assisted and manual methods.

Practices to minimise opportunities for plagiarism and other misconduct:

- draw Students' attention to the concept of plagiarism and the policies relating to it in the orientation session for the unit, and on printed and electronic literature such as the course information, unit outline, assessment sheet etc;
- be available to give advice to Students on the issue;
- advise Students of the referencing style guide they should use, including the conventions of citing web-based material;
- advise Students of help that is available for referencing technique, e.g., through the University's Academic Skills Office and its associated print and online resources, and encourage students to take advantage of these resources;

- where coursework is concerned, include a *Plagiarism Declaration Form* to be signed by the Student [or acknowledged as part of an e-submission process] that the work does not include plagiarism on the cover sheet of assessments and essays;
- set assessments that are sufficiently unique that a web-published paper or a commercially available paper will not fulfill the requirements;
- weight assessment to give a heavier weight to assessments completed in class or under examination conditions; and
- draw Students' attention to the fact that staff will use electronic and manual means to identify Plagiarism.

Resources for detecting plagiarism:

- Many libraries have good web pages containing information and links about plagiarism, how to detect it and how to prevent and avoid it. Some useful websites include:
 - a major online resource for educators (subscription-based): <http://www.plagiarism.org/>
 - The University of Queensland Cybrary site: <http://www.library.uq.edu.au/training/plagiarism.html#what>
 - The University of New South Wales Learning Centre site: <http://www.lc.unsw.edu.au/onlib/plag.html>
 - JISC Plagiarism Advisory Service: <http://www.jiscpas.ac.uk/>
- Some basic tools are:
 - be aware of the primary and secondary references for the subject;
 - be aware of online sources of essays and papers (e.g., check the website: <http://www.essaybank.co.uk/University/>);
 - use software designed to detect plagiarism (e.g., visit the following website: <http://www.teach-nology.com/highered/plagiarism/detecting/software/>);
 - look out for dramatic variation in style, vocabulary or expression; and
 - look for inconsistencies in formatting that often occur when cutting and pasting from different sources, especially those available online.

Preventative steps for avoiding plagiarism and academic misconduct in units of study:

The following preventative steps **must** be undertaken as avenues for discouraging plagiarism and other misconduct:

- All Faculty Handbooks will contain a section pertaining to the issue of plagiarism and will review the definitions of what constitutes plagiarism and other misconduct as well as the *Student Plagiarism and Academic Misconduct: Coursework Policy*, including the potential range of actions and penalties. This section will also refer to the availability of computer software designed to detect electronic plagiarism and to

the fact that plagiarism from the Internet is now easily detected: <http://www.technology.com/highered/plagiarism/detecting/software/>

- Students will be advised, in their unit materials, about issues associated with and the seriousness of plagiarism and other misconduct. Unit Coordinators may find it useful to incorporate the document, *Avoiding Plagiarism and Academic Misconduct: Coursework* (www.une.edu.au/policies/), in their unit materials. Students will also be advised that, for their own protection against possible misuse of their submitted assessment by another student and against possible suspicion of plagiarism, if they have to resubmit an assessment claimed as having 'gone astray', they should retain a hard (paper) copy of each written assessment task they submit, which they would be able to produce as needed, without undue delay, if the original has been lost, stolen or damaged. If the assessment task is not in written form or is in some other form, the Student will retain notes sufficient to show he or she has produced the work him or herself.
 - The messages contained in the unit materials will be further reinforced, at an appropriate time and place, by the Unit Coordinator through a discussion of the seriousness of the issue of plagiarism and misconduct, definitions, examples and a review of the *Student Plagiarism and Academic Misconduct: Coursework Policy*, including the potential range of penalties. This discussion will also refer to the availability of computer software designed to detect electronic plagiarism and to the fact that plagiarism from the Internet is now easily detected. Further, students will be advised of the availability of student support services designed to help acquaint them with appropriate academic conventions or to help them cope with assessment tasks should they begin to feel the need to shortcut work or reduce stress by contemplating plagiarism or other misconduct. Students may be referred to the following websites or academic units for further advice and assistance:
 - UNE Referencing Guide <http://www.une.edu.au/tlc/referencing.pdf>
 - eSKILLS UNE Keeping Track: <http://www.une.edu.au/library/eskillsune/keeping/>
 - The UNE Academic Skills Office <http://www.une.edu.au/tlc/aso/>
 - Relevant fact sheets from Academic Skills Office:
 - Avoiding plagiarism <http://www.une.edu.au/tlc/aso/pdf/plagiarism.pdf>
 - Footnoting <http://www.une.edu.au/tlc/aso/pdf/footnote.pdf>
 - Author-date referencing examples <http://www.une.edu.au/tlc/aso/pdf/au-date.pdf>
 - Electronic referencing examples <http://www.une.edu.au/tlc/aso/pdf/electr.pdf>
- These are all available from: <http://www.une.edu.au/tlc/aso/resources.htm>
- All Students, internal and external, will be required to include, with each piece of assessable unit work they submit in hard copy, a *Plagiarism Declaration Form* containing a *signed* declaration regarding knowledge of the *Student Plagiarism and*

Academic Misconduct: Coursework Policy and certifying that the assessment they are submitting is entirely their own work. If a unit permits electronic submission of assessments, the completed form must still be included with each assessment, but by hitting the 'Send' or 'Submit' button to submit the assessment electronically, the student is deemed, in effect, to have signed the declaration. Unit Coordinators will retain the signed or submitted form for any instance of student work where plagiarism has been suspected.

- Students studying UNE units at partner institutions as described in Section 1.4 of the *Student Plagiarism and Academic Misconduct: Coursework Policy* will be required to submit a similar style *Plagiarism Declaration Form* with each assessment. The partner institution shall retain the signed form for any instance of student work where plagiarism or misconduct has been suspected. The relevant UNE Head of School shall have the right to access this signed form if and when a case for plagiarism or misconduct arises within a specific unit of their School.
- Colleges will be expected to run awareness sessions for their student residents and review what avenues are available within the college system to help students cope with assessment work without resorting to plagiarism or other misconduct.

Counselling a Student who has been found to have plagiarised unintentionally.

In the case of an allegation of plagiarism that has been deemed unintentional, Academic staff will be expected to give a warning to the Student and counsel him or her to prevent further occurrences (see the *Student Plagiarism and Academic Misconduct: Coursework Policy* 7.2.) This means that Academic staff will be expected to provide information to the Student about why the allegation of plagiarism was made, and provide advice and guidance about how the Student could avoid plagiarism in the future. The list of practices to minimise opportunities for plagiarism and other misconduct, the preventative steps for avoiding plagiarism and misconduct in units of study, above, as well as the suggestions provided in the document, *Avoiding Plagiarism and Academic Misconduct: Coursework*, could form a basis for any discussion you might hold with the student.