

AVOIDING PLAGIARISM & ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

(Coursework)

INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS

You are plagiarising if you give the impression that the ideas, words or work of another person are your ideas, words or work, even if this is done unintentionally.

Good scholarship requires building on and incorporating the work of others. This use must be appropriately acknowledged. Whenever you employ the thoughts, words, drawings, designs, statistical data, computer programs, performances or other creative works of others, either by direct quotation, by paraphrasing or by the use of another's ideas, you must clearly identify the author and the source through the use of proper referencing. Your acknowledgment of the contributions of others is not solely a matter of honesty. It also shows the extent to which you have consulted appropriate references and source materials during preparation of their work for submission. It thus plays a very positive role in academic assessment, by demonstrating how well you have taken into account work already done in the relevant field.

Failure to acknowledge sources appropriately or to use paraphrasing or direct quotations appropriately constitutes plagiarism and may attract significant penalties such as failure in the unit or exclusion from the University.

Plagiarism includes:

- copying any material from books, journals study notes or tapes, the web, CD-ROMs, the work of other students, or any other source without indicating this by quotation marks or by indentation, italics or spacing;
- directly quoting or rephrasing ideas from books, journals, study notes or tapes, the web, CD-ROMs, the work of other students, or any other source without acknowledging the source of those ideas by footnotes or citations; or
- unauthorised collaboration with other students in producing an assessment task.

Plagiarism involves not only written works, but also material such as data, graphs, images, music, formulae, websites and computer programs.

Aiding another student to plagiarise your work is also a violation of the *Student Plagiarism and Academic Misconduct: Coursework Policy* and may invoke a penalty.

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

- (a) read, understand and comply with this policy;
- (b) familiarise themselves with the conventions of referencing for the discipline;
- (c) avoid acts which could be considered Plagiarism or Academic Misconduct;
- (d) seek assistance from appropriate sources and support services on becoming

- aware they need more knowledge and skills;
- (e) include a *Plagiarism Declaration Form* as part of every assessment task submitted; and
 - (f) be aware that when they submit an assessment task electronically, they are deemed to have signed the *Plagiarism Declaration Form* as at the date of submission of the assessment task.

In addition, the *Student Plagiarism and Academic Misconduct: Coursework Policy* states that you have a right to

- be informed of the policies of the University, the Faculty, and the School with respect to academic honesty including Plagiarism and Academic Misconduct, Collusion, Legitimate Collaboration, and Group work;
- (b) be provided with clear guidelines on academic styles required in each unit;
- (c) receive practical comments which assist them to review their work;
- (d) expect clear guidelines relating to all aspects of Group work and Legitimate Collaboration;
- (e) expect notification or fair warning in the case where an academic believes a Student or group of Students may be at risk of breaching guidelines relating to Plagiarism, Academic Misconduct, Collusion and collaboration;
- (f) participate in appropriate learning experiences designed to improve competency in writing and study skills, understanding of the requirements of Group work and Legitimate Collaboration, and development of personal attributes, in particular, ethical behaviour;
- (g) expect consistent interpretation of this policy; and
- (h) be aware that each assessment task will not be marked unless a *Plagiarism Declaration Form* has been received.

Finally, you need to know your rights if you find an allegation of plagiarism or academic misconduct has been made against you:

If an allegation of plagiarism or academic misconduct is made against you, you will be advised in writing of:

- (a) the nature of the allegation;
- (b) the right to present a case in writing or orally to the Head of School;
- (c) in the case of an allegation of Plagiarism, the fact that the signed *Plagiarism Declaration Form*, submitted with the alleged plagiarised work, has been retained as evidence for the investigation;
- (d) the Student Support available; and
- (e) the fact that upon completion of the investigation by the Head of School in relation to the case, the Student will receive a written statement as to the outcome of the investigation and the decision as to any penalty.

The following guidelines will help you to avoid plagiarism:

- be familiar with the style of acknowledgment that is recommended for use in each of your units, including the referencing techniques required for information sourced from the internet;

- write the source on any notes or copies you make from any document or electronic sources such as the internet. The habit of copying or ‘cutting-and-pasting’ text directly from a source as you read is very dangerous. It is easy to forget that the notes you make or excerpts you have ‘cut-and-pasted’ are not your own and to later write them into an essay or report as if they were your own words. Keep details of the sources you have relied upon for each assignment throughout the unit. Plagiarism is often the result of lack of care, poor study and/or poor referencing methods;
- acknowledge all sources containing the concepts, experiments, performances or results from which you have extracted or developed your ideas, even if you put those ideas into your own words;
- always use quotation marks or some other acceptable indicator of quotation when quoting directly from a work. It is not enough merely to acknowledge the source;
- avoid excessive paraphrasing and quoting, even where you acknowledge the source. Instead, read your sources then put them out of sight. Think about the meaning that is important and relevant to you and your task, then write this in your own words. This approach will help improve your writing generally;
- be aware of the rules regarding groupwork and collaboration. Collaboration (appropriately acknowledged) is permitted in the case of team or group projects. It is also permitted in the more general case when the collaboration is limited to the discussion of general strategies or help of a general nature. If you have any doubt about what constitutes authorised (legitimate) and unauthorised collaboration (collusion) for specific assessment tasks, seek advice from your Unit Coordinator;
- understand that the distinction between what needs to be acknowledged and what is common knowledge is not always clear. As you gain experience you will learn the acceptable practices for acknowledgment in the disciplines in which you study, but while you are learning, always play safe and acknowledge;
- keep a printed (hard) copy of all of your submitted work to assist you in case you ever need to answer an allegation of plagiarism. This is important for your own protection against possible misuse of your submitted assignment by another student and against possible suspicion of plagiarism if you ever have to resubmit an assignment that has ‘gone astray’. If your original assignment has been lost, stolen or damaged, you must be able to produce it again as needed, without undue delay.

Referencing and Research Guidelines:

Students should refer to the following websites or academic units for further advice and assistance regarding referencing styles and rules and as well as advice on avoiding plagiarism and misconduct:

- UNE Referencing Guide <http://www.une.edu.au/tlc/aso/students/factsheets/#ref>
- eSKILLS UNE Keeping Track:
<http://www.une.edu.au/library/infolit/keeping.htm>
- 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/students/factsheets/>

In addition, individual Schools at UNE may have their own documentation regarding plagiarism and referencing issues and you should approach your Unit Coordinator for information on these specific documents.

Advice on Use of Internet Sites

Cyberspace contains both useful information and traps for the unwary. Unfortunately, many websites do not name the author of the textual material included. This means that the text carries little authority. As with a book or journal article, we need to know "Who wrote this?" and "Where did they get that piece of information from?"

Questions to ask about any site on the WWW:

- Is the author named?
- If so, does the site tell you about the author's credential and experience?
- Can you confirm the information from books, journals or other websites?
- Be aware that the website may be as biased as any other source. Who owns/runs the website and what are they promoting?
- Has the website been updated recently? Is it out of date?

You should be aware that, in general, research essays must be based on data that is the work of acknowledged authors, and on data with verifiable origins. The advantage of academic books and journals is that the material has been reviewed in manuscript form by experts in the field before publication, and has often been subjected to a further review in academic journals after publication. Sometimes, however, information is posted on websites before publication or instead of publication through regular channels. This means that it is not always clear as to whether or not it is appropriate to employ web-based resources in the production of assignments. If in

doubt, you should always closely examine the explicit requirements for an assessment task and/or consult your Unit Coordinator before incorporating web-based references in an assignment.

You should also be aware that the Internet now has extensive and very powerful resources, which university teachers can use to detect electronic plagiarism. UNE staff have access to these resources and will use them, so do not be misled by the ease with which information can be downloaded from the web and incorporated into an assignment - the risk of discovery is VERY high.

The solution for you is simple and automatically safeguards your integrity: when referencing information in work that you submit, always treat information downloaded from the web with the same caution, respect and proper acknowledgment as you would information from any printed source of other media (e.g., CD-ROM, radio, TV).

Referencing the WWW

Information from the WWW should be cited just like any other source. Find out how to reference information from the WWW using the referencing styles and rules recommended for use in each of your units. Instructions and examples are available also from the UNE Referencing Guide (author-date system) and from the Academic Skills Office fact sheets listed above.