

Plagiarism in Coursework

<http://www.une.edu.au/rmo/policies/polACAD.html>

A Fact Sheet for Academic Staff

To help you advise students, this Fact Sheet uses the policy to provide brief information about

- defining plagiarism
- how to best assist students to avoid plagiarising, and
- dealing with occurrences of plagiarism

How is plagiarism defined at the University of New England?

Students are plagiarising if they give the impression that the ideas, words or work of another person are their ideas, words or work, even if this is done unintentionally.

On page 2, in section 3.1 of the *Policy*, plagiarism is clearly defined:

Plagiarism is intentionally or unintentionally using the work of other persons, copying (in whole or in part) the work or data of other persons, or paraphrasing closely or presenting substantial extracts from written, printed, electronic or other media in a student's written work without due acknowledgment. Plagiarism involves giving the impression that a student has thought, written or produced something that has, in fact, been taken from another.

Intentional plagiarism is an act defined in 3.1 that arises from an intention to deceive.

Unintentional plagiarism is an act defined in 3.1 that arises from lack of knowledge or understanding of the concept of plagiarism, or lack of preparation, skill or care.

What are the responsibilities of academic staff?

The Plagiarism Policy specifies that we, as academic staff, have a number of responsibilities aimed at reducing the incidence of plagiarism. We should all become familiar with the policy and our responsibilities. Also, we should be aware that students from other cultures may have differing perspectives on plagiarism and may need extra support and guidance.

To assist us, Academic Board has identified practices to minimise opportunities for plagiarism as well as resources and tools for detecting plagiarism.

In *Preventing and Detecting Plagiarism – Coursework*, academic staff are advised to

- 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, assignment 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 that the work does not include plagiarism on the cover sheet of assignments and essays;
- set assignments 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 assignments completed in class or under examination conditions.

In relation to misuse of material sourced from the Internet, you may wish to alert students that plagiarism from the Internet is now easily detected by software such as that available from:
<http://www.technology.com/highered/plagiarism/detecting/software>

How do I help students to avoid plagiarism?

There are a number of actions that academic staff **must** undertake to assist students to avoid plagiarism. We all need to ensure that these measures have been implemented.

<http://www.une.edu.au/rmo/policies/acad/preventplagiarismcwstaff.pdf>

Avoiding unintentional plagiarism

Cases of unintentional plagiarism often result from students' poor writing and referencing techniques. In addition to the strategies listed in *Preventing and Detecting Plagiarism*, academic staff may assist students to develop appropriate scholarly practices by

- discussing discipline-appropriate referencing techniques with students
- requesting Academic Skills Office staff to conduct a plagiarism workshop for students
- advising students to consult Fact Sheets available from the Academic Skills Office and/or the Referencing Guide to the author-date system, where appropriate www.une.edu.au/aso
- providing explicit feedback, including examples, when marking assignments
- referring students to the UNE Libraries *e- skills* pages for further information <http://www.une.edu.au/library/infolit/keeping.htm#referencing>
- referring first year internal students to the Faculty Mentor and external, second and third year and post graduate students to other staff of the Academic Skills Office, www.une.edu.au/aso/staff.htm who can assist with advice about academic writing skills. A referral form for inclusion with a marked assignment is available from <http://www.une.edu.au/aso/pdf/referral.pdf>
- warning students that poor referencing skills could result in an allegation of plagiarism against them and requesting that they become familiar with their responsibilities as outlined in *Avoiding Plagiarism & Academic Misconduct(Coursework) Information For Students*.

For additional ideas the Australian Universities Teaching Committee has included a section on minimizing plagiarism as part of the project resources in the *Assessing Learning in Australian Universities* Project: <http://www.cshe.unimelb.edu.au/assessinglearning/03/plagMain.html>

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://online.northumbria.ac.uk/faculties/art/information_studies/Imri/Jiscpas/site/jiscpas.asp

What do I do if I think plagiarism has occurred?

There is an agreed process to follow. It is documented in *Plagiarism/Academic Misconduct Procedures- Coursework* and includes forms, letters and a flowchart.

<http://www.une.edu.au/rmo/policies/acad/plagprocedurescw.pdf>