



# Plagiarism:

Essential information for avoiding plagiarism

## Examples of plagiarism

### Using the internet appropriately

A first year student handed in an assignment where she had copied from a website. Her lecturer realised she didn't understand you have to reference websites in the same way you reference books and journal articles. The lecturer explained how to reference and sent her to a workshop at the Learning Centre to help her improve her skills.

### Working together on a math assignment

A group of Mathematics students worked together on an assignment when they had been told this was not allowed. All questions where the students had worked together were given zero, and this led to some student failing the assessment.

### No referencing in an assessment

A third year student submitted a major assessment that included material from a journal article published in Canada. When his essay was submitted into Turnitin, it let the academic know that the student didn't reference the material. The student was given zero for the essay, and because it was worth 50 per cent he failed the course.

### Copying design work

A final year design student used images of someone else's designs in her work and he said the designs were his own. The matter was formally investigated by his Faculty and he was found to have committed academic misconduct and failed the course.

## Further information and assistance

If you would like further information or assistance with avoiding plagiarism, you can contact the Learning Centre. The Learning Centre at The University of New South Wales has two locations:

### UNSW LEARNING CENTRE

Lower Ground Floor, North Wing, Chancellery Building  
(C22 Kensington Campus – near Student Central)

**www.lc.unsw.edu.au**

**Phone:** 9385 2060

**Email:** [learningcentre@unsw.edu.au](mailto:learningcentre@unsw.edu.au)

### Opening Hours:

Monday to Thursday: 9am - 5pm and

Friday: 9am - 2.30pm

### COFA CAMPUS LEARNING CENTRE

**Email:** [cofalearningcentre@unsw.edu.au](mailto:cofalearningcentre@unsw.edu.au)

**Phone:** 9385 0739



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## What is plagiarism?

Plagiarism is presenting someone else's thoughts or work as your own. It can take many forms, from not having appropriate academic referencing to deliberate cheating.

UNSW groups plagiarism into the following categories:

- **Copying:** using the same or very similar words to the original text or idea without acknowledging the source or using quotation marks. This also applies to images, art and design projects, as well as presentations where someone presents another's ideas or words without credit.
- **Inappropriate paraphrasing:** changing a few words and phrases while mostly retaining the original structure and information without acknowledgement. This also applies in presentations where someone paraphrases another's ideas or words without credit. It also applies to piecing together quotes and paraphrases into a new whole, without referencing and a student's own analysis to bring the material together.
- **Collusion:** working with others but passing off the work as a person's individual work. Collusion also includes providing your work to another student before the due date, or for the purpose of them plagiarising at any time, paying another person to perform an academic task, stealing or acquiring another person's academic work and copying it, offering to complete another person's work or seeking payment for completing academic work.

- **Duplication:** submitting your own work, in whole or in part, where it has previously been prepared or submitted for another assessment or course at UNSW or another university.

## Where can I find out more information?

In many cases plagiarism is the result of inexperience about academic conventions. The University has resources and information to assist you to avoid plagiarism. The first place you can look is the section about referencing and plagiarism in each Course Guide, as this will also include information specific to the discipline the course is from. There are also other sources of assistance at UNSW:

- **How can the Learning Centre help me?**

The Learning Centre assists students with understanding academic integrity and how to not plagiarise. Information is available on their website: [www.lc.unsw.edu.au/plagiarism](http://www.lc.unsw.edu.au/plagiarism). They also hold workshops and can help students one-on-one.

- **How can Elise help me?**

ELISE (Enabling Library & Information Skills for Everyone) is an online tutorial to help you understand how to find and use information for your assignments or research. It will help you to search databases, identify good quality information and write assignments. It will also help you understand plagiarism and how to avoid it. All undergraduate students have to review the ELISE tutorial in their first semester and complete the quiz, but any student can review it to improve their knowledge: <http://elise.library.unsw.edu.au>

- **What is Turnitin?**

Turnitin is a checking database which reviews your work and compares it to an international collection of books, journals, Internet pages and other student's assignments. The database checks referencing and whether you have copied something from another student, resource, or off the Internet. Sometimes students submit their work into Turnitin when they hand it in, but academics can also use it to check a student's work when they are marking it. You can find out more about Turnitin here: <http://telt.unsw.edu.au/turnitin>.

## What if plagiarism is found in my work?

If plagiarism is found in your work when you are in first year, your lecturer will offer you assistance to improve your academic skills. They may ask you to look at some online resources, attend the Learning Centre, or sometimes resubmit your work with the problem fixed. However more serious instances in first year, such as stealing another student's work or paying someone to do your work, may be investigated under the Student Misconduct Procedures.

Repeated plagiarism (even in first year), plagiarism after first year, or serious instances, may also be investigated under the Student Misconduct Procedures. The penalties under the procedures can include a reduction in marks, failing a course or for the most serious matters (like plagiarism in a honours thesis) even suspension from the university. The Student Misconduct Procedures are available here [www.unsw.edu.au/studentmisconductprocedures.pdf](http://www.unsw.edu.au/studentmisconductprocedures.pdf).