

## USE OF UNFAIR MEANS IN THE ASSESSMENT PROCESS PLAGIARISM AND COLLUSION – ADVICE TO STUDENTS

When preparing essays, projects or other work, you will read widely and become familiar with the work of others. You should ensure that the materials you prepare for submission would be accepted as your own original work. A lecturer or tutor who is assessing your work is interested in your understanding of an idea and you should use your own words to demonstrate your understanding. The selective quoting of material from books and articles is permissible, but the material must always be attributed to its sources by means of quotation marks. In assessed essays, a footnote or brackets naming the author and the title of the text plus the dates of publication would be required, as would a bibliography that provides full references of all the material consulted or used.

The basic principle underlying the preparation of any piece of academic work is that **the work submitted must be your own original work**. Plagiarism and collusion are not allowed because they go against this principle. Please note that the rules about plagiarism and collusion apply to all assessed and non-assessed work, including essays, experimental results and computer code. Cutting and pasting from web sites would also be considered unacceptable.

**Plagiarism** is passing off others' work as your own, whether intentionally or unintentionally, to your benefit. The work can include ideas, compositions, designs, images, computer code, and, of course, words. This list is not exhaustive. The benefit accrued could be, for example, an examination grade or the award of a research degree.

- If a student submits a piece of work produced by others, or copied from another source, this is **plagiarism**.
- If a student produces a piece of work which includes sections taken from other authors without attribution, this is **plagiarism**. The length of the copied section is not relevant, since any act of plagiarism offends against the general principle set out above. When copying sections from other authors it is not sufficient simply to list the source in the bibliography.
- The selective quoting of material from books and articles is permissible, but the material must always be attributed to its sources, both within the text and within a bibliography. However, in general, extensive use would not be acceptable, even if acknowledged.
- If a student paraphrases from another source without the appropriate attribution, this is **plagiarism**. Paraphrasing should use a student's own words to demonstrate an understanding and accurately convey the meaning of the original work, and should not merely reorder or change a few words or phrases of the existing text.
- If a student copies from or resubmits his or her own previous work for another assignment, this is **self-plagiarism**, and is not acceptable.

**Collusion** is a form of plagiarism where two or more people work together to produce a piece of work all or part of which is then submitted by each of them as their own individual work.

- If a student gets someone else to compose the whole or part of any piece of work, this is **collusion**.
- If a student copies the whole or part of someone else's piece of work with the knowledge and consent of the latter, then this is **collusion**.
- If a student allows another student to copy material, knowing that it will subsequently be presented as that student's own work, then this is **collusion**.
- If two or more students work on an assignment together, produce an agreed piece of work and then copy it up for individual submission, then this is **collusion**. When producing a piece of work arising out of groupwork, students should seek the advice of the tutor setting the assigned work regarding the acceptable limits of collaboration.

**Both plagiarism and collusion are strictly forbidden. Students are warned that the piece of work affected may be given a grade of zero, which in some cases will entail failure in the examination for the relevant unit or research degree. The student may also be referred to the Discipline Committee.**

You should follow any guidance on the preparation of material given by the academic department setting the assignment. If in doubt, consult the member of academic staff responsible for the unit of study. There is unlikely to be any objection to you discussing the subject of an essay or project with fellow students in general terms, or to quoting from various sources in the work submitted. However, if you have any problems with an assignment you should always consult your tutor, who will give general advice and help.