

Plagiarism

Victoria University defines plagiarism as the copying of ideas, organisation, wording or anything else from another source without appropriate reference or acknowledgement so that it appears to be your own work.

This includes published and unpublished work, the Internet and the work of other students and staff.

Famous Plagiarists who got caught



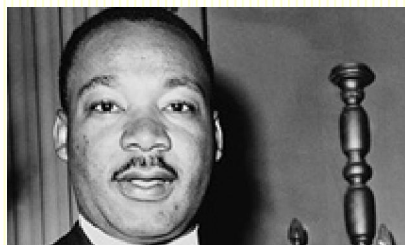
Feb 2013 German minister of Education Annette Schavan stripped of doctorate and resigns.



Nov 2012 German defence minister Karl-Theodor zu Guttenberg resigned after multiple instances of apparent plagiarism in his 2007 dissertation emerged.



Oct 2012 Victor Ponta, Romanian prime minister accused of plagiarising his PhD from Bucharest University 2003.



Martin Luther King. An academic inquiry concluded in October 1991 that portions of his dissertation had been plagiarized

Deliberate Plagiarism

Plagiarism is presenting someone else's work as if it was your own, **whether you meant to or not.**

Someone else's work means anything that was not your own idea, **even if it is presented in your own style.**

Avoiding Plagiarism

Question:

Is it plagiarism if you submit an answer your friend wrote, with their permission, of course?

Answer: Yes.

Excuse: But I didn't steal anything!

Reason:

You are putting forward another person's work as your own, and that is plagiarism.

Avoiding Plagiarism

Question:

Is it plagiarism if I let someone else copy my assignment?

Answer: Yes.

Excuse: But I didn't plagiarize anything!

Reason:

You are enabling someone else to do plagiarism, so you get the same punishment.

Avoiding Plagiarism

Question:

Me and my friend worked on this together. Is plagiarism to hand in the same answer?

Answer: Yes.

Excuse: It's our work!

Reason:

If you put both your names on it, then it is not plagiarised. But, it is also not what is required. There are no marks available for shared work.

You must hand in your own unaided work. You can work with your friends on finding sources, discussing ideas, planning answers, you can get them to read your work and suggest improvements – in fact you are encouraged to do so. But what you hand in, the expression of your research, must be all your own work, in your own way, in your own words. Even if your friend has the same ideas and the same answer, we want to hear your expression of those ideas, your interpretation, your personal view.

Avoiding Plagiarism

Question:

My English isn't good. The source has perfect English, and I couldn't say it better myself. Why can't I just use what they said?

Answer: Because it is still plagiarism.

Excuse: But it's the best answer I can find to what you asked!

Reason:

We are not interested in someone else's answer. We already know what the answer is, that is not the point. We want your answer. We want to know if you can think. We want you to bring your unique point of view to it.

You can quote other people's words, as long as you acknowledge them. But if you keep doing that you will never improve your own way of expressing your ideas, and you will never discover if you actually have any new ideas.

Avoiding Plagiarism

Question:

Is it plagiarism if you submit the same answer to two different courses?

Answer: Yes.

Excuse: But it is my own work!

Reason:

In each of your classes you are supposed to be acquiring new knowledge. Reusing previous material is frustrating the learning goals.

Avoiding Plagiarism

Question:

Is it plagiarism if you take a paragraph from a source and use a dictionary to change every big word?

Answer: Yes.

Excuse: But the words I changed are now my own words!

Reason:

Plagiarism includes the phrasing, structure and expression as well as the exact words. Substituting a few different words is still plagiarism.

Avoiding Plagiarism

Question:

Is it always wrong to copy and paste from a website, or to use the words of someone else?

Answer: No.

Excuse: But it's copying!

Reason:

If you state exactly where the words came from, in a way that will let the reader find the material if they need to, then it is OK to copy as much as you want. It won't get you many marks, but it is not plagiarism either.

Avoiding Plagiarism

Question:

Is it plagiarism if you give the name of the original author but use their exact words without quotation marks?

Answer: Yes.

Excuse: But I acknowledged the source!

Reason:

If you use the exact words, ie cut and pasted, then you must show that you have used their words.

You show them by

putting quotes around the copied words,

and naming the source,

and giving the page number where they are found.

Avoiding Plagiarism

Question:

What happens to people who are caught plagiarising?

Answer: In this course, the first time you will get zero for the assignment. We will assume you don't know the rules and you will be told where to get information about how to not do it again.

The second time you get an interview with the course coordinator and a chance to re-examine your career choices.

In other courses, the penalties range from losing all marks, being made to take a trimester off, to being dismissed from the whole degree, including all the courses you have already passed.

The higher the qualification the more severe the penalty is. If you have plagiarism on your record, no other university will accept you.

Excuse: There isn't one!

Reason:

Plagiarism is considered the most serious crime in the academic community: you are cheating other students.

Avoiding Plagiarism

Source statement:

The major concerns of Dickinson's poetry early and late, her "flood subjects," may be defined as the seasons and nature, death and a problematic afterlife, the kinds and phases of love, and poetry as the divine art.

Plagiarized:

The chief subjects of Emily Dickinson's poetry include nature and the seasons, death and the afterlife, the various types and stages of love, and poetry itself as a divine art.

(Wrong: Gives the impression that you have thought this up yourself)

Acceptable

Gibson and Williams (1998) suggest that the chief subjects of Emily Dickinson's poetry include nature, death, love, and poetry as a divine art.

(Right: Present the information and acknowledge the authors):

Avoiding Plagiarism

Source statement:

This, of course, raises the central question of this paper: What should we be doing? Research and training in the whole field of restructuring the world as an "ecotopia" . . . will presumably be the goal. (From E. N. Anderson, Jr., (1974) "The Life and Culture of Ecotopia," in Dell Hymes (Ed) *Reinventing Anthropology*, New York: Vintage-Random, 275.)

Plagiarized:

Humankind should attempt to create what we might call an 'ecotopia'.

(Wrong: Gives the impression that you have thought this up yourself)

Acceptable:

Humankind should attempt to create what E. N. Anderson, Jr., has called an 'ecotopia' (Anderson, 1974).

(Right: Present the information then acknowledge the authors):

Detecting Plagiarism

Question:

What happens when a student copies bits from other web pages and writes sentences to link them together?

Answer:

It doesn't work.

Every bit of work for INFO is put through Turnitin.

If you can find it, the lecturer can find it.