

How to avoid Plagiarism and be citation wise

What is plagiarism?

Here at De Montfort University we define plagiarism as follows:

- The deliberate attempt to gain advantage by presenting someone else's work as if it were your own.
- The substantial duplication of another's work without acknowledgement of the original source.
- This definition also applies to non-written works such as presentations, performance, design and the production of objects.
- Sources of another's work include published material, the work of other DMU students, the work of students at another institution or that of contracted third parties.
- The University reserves the right to test any student's work for plagiarism. This includes the submission of student work via "Turnitin" software.

How can I avoid plagiarism?

Remember, the responsibility to avoid plagiarism lies with the writer, so

- **Cite and reference everything used and studied for your assignment.**
- Always put quotes in quotation marks and indent quotes of significant length so they stand out from the rest of the text. This marks them as not your own words.
- Always acknowledge the source within the text and in full within the bibliography at the end.
- Where paraphrasing an individual always acknowledge them as the source of the ideas.
- Do not leave your work until the last minute, in order to avoid panic plagiarism.
- Always ask your tutor for clarification if you are unsure of an assignment.
- See your student handbook for guidance regarding the favoured reference and citation conventions for your subject area.

What's the point of referencing and citing my sources?

- This is good academic research practice and avoids plagiarism.
- It is a graduate skill which will enable you to show that you have considered the research and thoughts of others.
- It will help you to assimilate these ideas within your own thinking and arguments whilst acknowledging their influence.
- Referencing and citation will aid the production of a good, well-based argument, supported by the work of other researchers in the field.
- The breadth of your research and effort will be reflected in your bibliography.
- By citing all material used in your work you will not only avoid plagiarism but also help to develop further research in that area. Other academics or students can trace the original material which led to the development of your ideas and argument. This in turn will help to develop the academic debate or argument in that subject area.
- Your marks will reflect this good academic practice.

What is Bad Academic Practice?

DMU also operates a policy of identifying 'Bad Academic Practice'. This recognises that plagiarism may not be intentional and may arise from a lack of understanding and inefficient working/study practices. Where plagiarism is first suspected, this policy allows the student to rectify their mistakes regarding their lack of correct citation and referencing and allows them to resubmit work but with a penalty. The expectation is that this policy will mainly be applied to first year students. By levels 2 and 3 you will be expected to be familiar with the academic and referencing conventions required by your subject area. Make a point of familiarising yourself with these conventions during your first year.

How is plagiarism detected?

All work is now submitted using the "Turnitin" software which compares your work with a huge database of journal articles, ready made essays from the internet and the work of other students at this and other institutions. Tutors will also use their experience of your writing and performance, their knowledge of the rest of the student cohort and their expectations of your work style in order to make a judgement on originality.

Remember, the penalty for plagiarism is severe. If you are found to have committed plagiarism you will fail or, at worst, you may be thrown off your course. You can avoid this, however:

Remember Be Citation wise, plagiarism aware:

- Always acknowledge all of your sources, citing them correctly in both the text and the bibliography.
- Always put things in your own words, unless you are using a direct and correctly acknowledged quotation.
- Never try to pass someone else's work off as your own.

Useful sources:

DE MONTFORT UNIVERSITY LIBRARY SERVICES (2007) *The Harvard system of referencing*, Leicester, De Montfort University. Available at all De Montfort University libraries or in electronic format on the library web page (www.library.dmu.ac.uk).

http://www.hero.ac.uk/uk/studying/studying_and_learning/plagiarism.cfm This is the website of the Higher Education and Research Opportunities in the United Kingdom organisation. It gives a useful definition of plagiarism and lots of hints and tips as to how to avoid it.

<http://www.uwe.ac.uk/hsc/learnteach/studyskills/writing/plagiarism.htm> Another useful web site which clarifies plagiarism and gives help as to how to avoid it.

Other sources used in the development of this leaflet:

DAVIES, J (1993) *Are you a plagiarist?* Leicester, De Montfort University

DE MONTFORT UNIVERSITY, *DMU General Regulations and Procedures Affecting Students 2006/2007, Chapter 4. Academic offences*, <http://balrog.dmu.ac.uk/regulations/general/mled2r.jsp?xml=regs&xml=genregs&p=42>, accessed 12/07/07

HARRIS, ROBERT (2004), *Anti-plagiarism strategies for research papers*, Virtual salt <http://www.virtualsalt.com/antiplag.htm>, accessed 10/07/07

JISC PLAGIARISM ADVISORY SERVICE (2006) *Why do students plagiarise?* www.jiscpas.ac.uk

PEARS, R. and SHIELDS, G. (2005) *Cite them right: the essential guide to referencing and plagiarism*, Newcastle upon Tyne, Pear Tree Books

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