

Referencing, note-taking and avoiding plagiarism

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You can find this presentation at:

- <http://www.york.ac.uk/depts/biol/skillsdev/PhDpages/documentbank.htm>

i.e. biology home page →

PhD students →

transferable skills →

documents and links bank →

In less than an hour...

You'll learn how to organise your notes
and reference properly to avoid plagiarism

In this session

- What is plagiarism?
- University penalties for plagiarism
- Organising your work
- Proper referencing
- Plagiarism software
- Plagiarism exercise

What is plagiarism?

The (intentional or otherwise)
passing off of someone else's
work as your own

So why do people still plagiarise?

- Incorporation into note-taking
- Poor referencing
- General lack of care in the final write-up
- Not realising that diagrams count too

- Intentional

Penalties for plagiarism

- Severe
- Not cheating, but stealing
- Failure of the PhD
- Job references

Penalty formula

- Penalty points for the affected module (i.e. proportion of the work that's affected and the proportion of the degree that the piece of work counts for)
- Multiplier – usually 1.0 but used to increase or decrease penalty
- Final penalty

Organising your work

- 2 years on, you may accidentally plagiarise from bad notes
- Make your note-keeping as organised as your final work
- Distinguish your ideas vs quotations and citations in your notes
- Note source of diagrams and tables

Organising your work

Plagiarism from note-taking:

1. Notes don't distinguish between your thoughts and the author's thoughts
2. Notes that are paraphrases - work may end up in the thesis improperly referenced

Organising your work

- Bibliographic software (endnote or reference manager)
- photocopying extracts from books!!!
- Note **all** info you'll need to reference (don't plan on looking it up later)
- Identify others' ideas e.g. coloured pen or [square brackets]
- Note source of diagrams too

Proper Referencing

A 'proper' reference answers the following questions:

1. Who wrote, produced or edited it?
2. When was it published?
3. What's it called?
4. What is it? (book, article)
5. Where was it published?
6. Who published it?
7. What page is the relevant material on?

Proper Referencing

Referencing actually has 2 parts:

1. Attribution (the bit in the text)
2. Documentation (the bibliography)

If you do one and not the other, you're plagiarising

Proper referencing

- Examiner should be able to find every quote/idea you discuss
- ‘Whole book’ citations not appropriate
- Include page numbers
- Also avoid ‘White *op.cit*’ or ‘White *loc cit*’ (which means, ‘the same as previously cited’)

What the University says:


“Bibliographical references

A bibliographical reference shall be given for every work, published or unpublished, cited in the text.

References may be identified by one of two methods, either:

1. by numbers typed as superscripts or, if on the line, in brackets, immediately following the relevant word or phrase in the text; or

Vancouver or
numeric system



2. by citing the author's name and the date of publication in brackets immediately following the relevant word or phrase in the text. The bibliography, if present, shall list all sources referred to or consulted in writing the thesis, but not necessarily all material relevant to it. Entries in the bibliography shall be given either in alphabetic order of originators' names or, if the bibliography is long, according to a conventional bibliographical system. A consistent form of presentation shall be used for all bibliographical references throughout the thesis.'

Harvard system



2. Harvard referencing system

Has two elements:

- In-text reference: surname, year of publication, page number details; all enclosed in brackets
- Single, integrated bibliography at the end of the thesis

1. Numeric/British Standard system

- Citations in your text are given a number in brackets or superscript and starting at one. This number corresponds to the source in your reference list. The same source is given the same number.

“This is an example of a citation using Numeric style” (1)

P or pp?

- Page numbers from books = single p
- Page numbers from journals = pp

The hot potato: How to reference websites

- Try to find an original source if there is one – your web source may be plagiarised!
- Otherwise, answer as many of the 7 questions as you can
- Also include the date you visited the website (e.g. accessed 1/4/2005)

1. Who wrote or edited it?
2. When was it published?
3. What's it called?
4. What is it? (book, article)
5. Where was it published?
6. Who published it?
7. What page is the relevant material on?

Common Knowledge?

- Reference not necessary
- But what is common knowledge???
- Wikipedia definition:

Common knowledge is what "everybody knows", usually with reference to the community in which the term is used.

- If in doubt, check with your supervisor.

Common Knowledge?

If you were writing about the effect of transport on the environment, you could mention that ***emissions from cars are known to have a detrimental effect on the environment*** without providing a reference because this information is well known in the public domain.

If you then went on to state ***the exact quantity of carbon dioxide produced from car emissions*** then you would need to provide a reference because this is a detail which is not commonly known to people.

Adapted from: <https://ilrb.cf.ac.uk/plagiarism/tutorial/common.html> accessed 14/03/2007

SafeAssignment Software

- Submitted work is passed through plagiarism detection software
- Compares to all published work
- Also other students' work that has passed through the software
- You can use it as a check – ask your supervisor

Plagiarism exercise

Read through the exercise. In your groups, decide which of the examples are plagiarism.

Summary

- Plagiarism is the passing off someone else's work as your own
- Whether it's intentional or not is **irrelevant**
- The University takes plagiarism seriously and has harsh penalties – ultimately you might not get your PhD
- If in doubt – check with your supervisor, make use of SafeAssignment

Further information

- <http://lrweb.beds.ac.uk/help/gen-research/guide-to-ref>
A useful guide on how to reference different types of material
- <http://libweb.anglia.ac.uk/referencing/harvard.htm#1.3>
detailed information about the Harvard system
- <http://www.york.ac.uk/admin/gso/Procedureacademicmisconduct.htm>
University of York's policy and procedure relating to plagiarism
- Academic misconduct handbook
- Speak to your supervisor