Plagiarism and collusion

This section covers:

- Definition of plagiarism – page 1
- Intent – page 2
- Policy and penalties for plagiarism – page 2
- How to avoid plagiarism – page 2
- Collusion: definition and penalties – page 3
- Further information about plagiarism and how to avoid it – page 3

Academic honesty is fundamental to the values of Education for Health. We are committed to promoting an ethos of academic integrity and ensuring that this ethos is consistently respected and upheld.

As part of this commitment, we provide students with guidance on how to prevent unintentional plagiarism, and regard with severity any unfair means to enhance performance.

**Definition of plagiarism**

Plagiarism is the practice of presenting another person’s work or ideas, whether published or not, as if this material were your own, without acknowledging the source.

Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to:

- copying word-for-word from a text, printed or electronic, without enclosing the words in quotation marks and acknowledging the source
- paraphrasing - that is, using different words to express the ideas of others - without acknowledging the source(s)
- summarising another person’s work, including if a few words or the order of words has been changed, without acknowledging the source
- citing facts or statistics from another person or source without acknowledgment
- copying or downloading figures, photographs, pictures or diagrams without acknowledging the source(s)
- generating text by combining short extracts from other sources, perhaps changing or inserting a few words in the process, without proper acknowledgment
- copying, imitating or paraphrasing another student’s work
- copying, paraphrasing or using information from module learning materials without acknowledgement
- purchasing or otherwise obtaining a submission, in whole or in part, from a third party, website or other source
- submitting work that is identical or similar, in whole or in part, to work that has already been submitted for assessment at Education for Health or elsewhere. This is known as self-plagiarism.
Student Guide

**Intent**
Plagiarism may occur intentionally. However, it may also occur unintentionally, such as when a student submits work that contains the words or ideas of others without realising that this material needs proper acknowledgement.

It is important to note that a piece of coursework that contains plagiarised material will be subject to a penalty **irrespective of whether or not there was an intent to plagiarise.**

**Policy and penalties for plagiarism**
Plagiarism amounts to academic misconduct: it is a form of cheating. It is therefore treated very seriously and students who plagiarise are subject to our disciplinary procedures.

For further information, see our ‘Promoting Best Academic Practice Policy’. The policy includes details of our procedure for investigating all potential cases of plagiarism. The policy also addresses the ‘Plagiarism Reference Tariff’, which is what we use to determine the penalties for confirmed cases of plagiarism. The policy is available on our website at: https://www.educationforhealth.org/education/student-support/regulations-policies/.

**How to avoid plagiarism**
Make sure that you always acknowledge the source of any information you include in your work. This also strengthens the evidence base of your thinking. It needs to be clear to the person reading your work exactly which parts come from the work of someone else.

Do not do any of the following **without acknowledging the source(s):**
- Copy word-for-word directly from a text, printed or online
- Paraphrase or summarise ideas from a text, printed or online
- Copy or paraphrase extracts from various works and join them together with some of your own words
- Use facts or statistics from another source
- Copy pictures, words or other information and paste them into your work.

**To avoid intentional or unintentional plagiarism:**
- When you write notes about articles, books or other material, be sure to clearly distinguish between
  - ideas or information presented in these sources
  - your own ideas about what you read
- In your notes:
  - Write the source next to any quotation or piece of information immediately
  - Make sure you write down full reference information for your sources, including page numbers for quotes.
  
  You will need this information later when you write your work, plus you will avoid ever being tempted to save time later by using a source without acknowledgement
- If you want to copy a passage from a source, make sure you flag this clearly to yourself, for example using highlighter, to avoid any possible confusion later about where the passage came from
- If you use someone else’s views or ideas rather than their exact words in your writing, use a phrase such as ‘Weller (2013) claims...’ or ‘Booker (2014) argues...’, again referring to the source in your reference list
• If there are sources that you have used or considered but not directly cited, it is good practice to list these in a Bibliography.

You will not be penalised for having more references than is indicated in the assignment brief.

It is good practice to keep all materials you used when writing coursework, including notes and drafts, until after your work has been marked and you have received your results for the module.

**For further information and guidance:**

• the ‘Referencing’ section of the Student Guide addresses how to cite sources in your work
• ‘Writing for Success’, also in the Guide, has examples and exercises to support correct academic practice.

**Collusion: definition and penalties**

We require all work submitted for assessment to be a student’s own independently prepared work, unless the assessment brief specifically gives other instructions.

Collusion is when two or more people actively work together to mislead markers or examiners about the source of work. This includes:

• a student copying, or imitating in close detail, another student's work with their consent
• two or more students going through an assignment brief, collectively deciding how to answer the topic(s) and then using this information to separately write up their answer(s)
• two or more students dividing the elements of an assignment among themselves and copying or imitating in close detail one another’s answers.

Collusion is an example of academic misconduct since, like other forms of plagiarism, it is an attempt to deceive by disguising the true authorship of an assignment. Students are expected to take reasonable steps to safeguard their work from improper use by others, just as they are expected to undertake work independently.

Collusion should not be confused with peer discussion or group work in which students learn from one another, sharing ideas, as part of developing their knowledge and understanding, including as they consider how to independently undertake an assignment. Input from Education for Health staff or trainers is also not considered collusion.

Where a student is found to have engaged in collusion, this will be treated as plagiarism and the same process and penalties as for plagiarism will apply.

**Further information about plagiarism and how to avoid it**

In addition to our Student Guide and ‘Promoting Best Academic Practice Policy’, useful resources about plagiarism and how to avoid it include:

• Public Health eLearning Toolkit of the UK Health Forum. This has a section on ‘Avoiding plagiarism’. See http://www.ukhealthforum.org.uk/prevention/public-health-elearning-toolkit-phelt/
Student Guide

- Plagiarism information in the Open University’s ‘Being Digital’ resource. ‘Being Digital’ focuses on finding and using information in the digital age and covers a range of topics in addition to plagiarism. See http://www.open.ac.uk/libraryservices/beingdigital/pathways/13/6

If you are in any doubt about whether your actions might involve plagiarism or collusion, please contact the Student Support Service for advice. Contact details are in the ‘Key Contacts’ section.