

DIVISION OF STUDENT AND STAFF SERVICES



STATEMENT AND DEFINITION OF PLAGIARISM AND RELATED FORMS OF CHEATING

Authorised by: University Council 6/90

Date of authorisation: June 1990

Date of reviews: January 2003

Replaces:

APPROVED: DEPUTY VICE-CHANCELLOR (EDUCATION)

17 January 2003

Any person who requires assistance in understanding any aspect of this document should contact Policy and Appeals on 8303 7503.

This statement should be read by students and academic staff in conjunction with the University's *Rules for Examinations and Other Forms of Assessment (based on existing Statute Chapter 17)*, and *Rules for Student Conduct* or *Rules for Student Misconduct on Roseworthy Campus*.

1. Introduction

Plagiarism is expressly forbidden under the University's *Rules for Examinations and Other Forms of Assessment (based on existing Statute Chapter 17)*, which states that:

"2. No candidate shall submit for assessment, whether by examination or otherwise, any piece of work which is not entirely the candidate's own, except where either:

- (a) the use of the words or ideas of others is appropriate and duly acknowledged, or
- (b) the examiner has given prior permission for joint or collaborative work to be submitted.

3. No candidate shall submit as if they were genuine any data or results of laboratory, field or other work that are fabricated or falsified.

4. No student shall assist any candidate in an examination or other piece of assessed individual work, and no candidate shall accept assistance in such an examination or other piece of assessed individual work, except in accordance with approved study and assessment schemes.

5. No candidate shall submit the same piece of work for assessment in two different courses, except in accordance with approved study and assessment schemes."

2. Defining Plagiarism

a) Plagiarism consists of a person using words or ideas of another as if they were his or her own. The University regards plagiarism as a very serious offence. At the very least it is a misuse of academic conventions. Where it is deliberate and systematic, plagiarism is cheating and false pretences. It is the obligation of every member of the University to understand and respect the rules concerning plagiarism. The excuse of ignorance is not acceptable.

(b) Plagiarism can take several forms:

- i Presenting substantial extracts from books, articles, theses, Internet websites and other published or unpublished works such as working papers, seminar and conference papers, internal reports, lecture notes or tapes, and other students' work, without clearly indicating their origin with quotation marks and references such as footnotes;
- ii Using very close paraphrasing of sentences or whole paragraphs without due acknowledgement in the form of reference to the original work;
- iii Quoting directly from a source and failing to insert quotation marks around the quoted passages. In such cases, it is not adequate merely to acknowledge the source.

Note to Students: Be careful when taking notes in lectures or tutorials/seminars/demonstrations, because plagiarism can arise completely inadvertently. Make sure that quotations and paraphrasing are clearly marked in your notes, so that you do not later mistake the work of another for your own, and so that you can provide full details of the source of the work in your final draft.

(c) Related forms of cheating that will be treated in the same way as direct plagiarism include:

- i Submitting under your own name an essay or assignment written by somebody else on your behalf;
- ii Submitting another student's work whether or not it has been previously submitted by that student;
- iii Two students separately submitting the same piece of work on which they have illicitly collaborated.

Note to Students: Students can and do work together on projects or assignments. However the work of each student that is submitted for assessment must be the work of that student alone, except for material that is acknowledged as being derived from another – even another student. It is perfectly legitimate to study together and discuss your assignment with others – but ensure that the work you submit is your own. Do your writing independently. When in doubt, consult your course co-ordinator and if appropriate, get written permission to work together on projects or assignments.

- iv A student submitting a piece of his or her own work for two (or more) different courses.

3. Managing Plagiarism

The University is very aware of the negative impacts the occurrence of plagiarism can have, both on the study experience of honest students, and on its academic standards and reputation in the wider community. Plagiarism has the potential to devalue the worth of all University parchments already issued to graduates, as well as those that will be issued to current students when they graduate. As a result, all Departments and Schools have a strong, vested interest in preventing, detecting and penalising instances of plagiarism.

3.1 Prevention

Department Handbooks and preliminary course materials and lectures are designed in part to prevent students committing plagiarism by alerting them in advance to:

- What plagiarism is;
- How serious an offence plagiarism is; and

- Ways of avoiding plagiarism.

Course co-ordinators also help to prevent plagiarism by:

- Setting new or substantially different assignments each year;
- Limiting the number of group-work assignments;
- Designing assignments that require highly individualised responses so that instances of plagiarism are relatively easy to detect.

3.2 Detection

All teaching staff members are involved in the detection of plagiarism, and have a wide range of detection instruments from which to choose. For example:

- Random sampling of each lot of essays/assignments for similarities;
- Having each marker peruse the other markers' essays/assignments;
- Looking for large differences in the marks of individual students across different assessment tasks within the same course;
- Where examination questions are based on assignments, cross-checking examination results against assignment results;
- Using supervised examinations or test sessions to check on the development of particular sets of skills or knowledge;
- Using copy-detection software programs designed to pick up tracts of text within essays that have a pre-set percentage of similarity with tracts of text appearing anywhere on the Internet.

3.3 Penalties

The penalties for plagiarism are designed both to impose sanctions on offenders that reflect the seriousness of the offence, and to deter other students from contemplating or committing plagiarism. As such, the penalties are necessarily severe.

Penalties range from having to rewrite and resubmit the assignment, to fines of up to \$200 and/or receiving zero marks for the assignment (which can result in an overall Fail grade and the need to repeat the course) or the whole course, to being expelled from the course, the program or the University. The Board of Conduct keeps a central register of cases of student plagiarism to assist in the detection of students committing multiple offences in different courses. (For more information on plagiarism penalties and procedures, refer to the University's *Rules for Student Conduct*, or *Rules for Student Misconduct on Roseworthy Campus*.)