

## Guidance on being honest in your work

### Introduction

Being honest in your work is at the heart of studying and working at university. To be honest in your work you must acknowledge the ideas and work of others you use, and you must not try to get an advantage over others by being dishonest. It is important that you understand what it means to be honest in your work. Although there is general agreement within the UK academic community about the types of activity that are unacceptable, this does vary slightly between institutions, and may be different from where you studied before.

We have developed this guidance to help you understand what it means to be honest in your work, and what you should do to make sure that you are handing in work that meets our expectations. This means we can make sure that we can maintain reliable standards for our academic awards, and students continue to enjoy studying for academic qualifications that have a good reputation. In this guidance we will:

- clearly define what being honest in your work and good practice mean, and how you can achieve this;
- define 'assessment offences', including plagiarism, cheating and collusion;
- identify the resources, help and advice available to help you learn the academic skills you need to avoid committing assessment offences;
- explain how we expect you to behave; and
- describe what happens if we think you have committed an assessment offence.

### Being honest in your work and good practice

You can show good practice when you do your work independently, honestly and in a proper academic style, using good referencing and acknowledging all of your sources.

To show good academic practice you must:

- show you understand the literature;
- use research from academics and others in your area of study;
- discuss and evaluate ideas and theories;
- develop your own independent evaluation of academic issues; and
- develop your own arguments.

To support your own good practice you will need to develop your:

- skills at studying and getting information (for example, reading, taking notes, research and so on);
- skills in looking at an argument and making your own evaluation (for example, having a balanced opinion, using reasoning and argument);
- writing skills for essays, reports, dissertations and so on;
- referencing skills (how you include your sources of information in your work); and
- exam techniques (for example, revising and timing).

Achieving good practice is not as complicated as it may appear. You need to do the following.

- Know the rules.
- Make sure you reference all of your information sources. Poor practice or dishonesty in your work (such as plagiarism, cheating, fraud and so on) can be a result of you not knowing what you are allowed to do.
- Develop your own style. Sometimes students include too much original text from the work of others, as they believe that they cannot 'put it any better'. Although you should try to express ideas in your own words, quoting or summing up ideas from academic sources is fine, as long as you say where you have taken this from. You must also reference other people's performances or art in your own work. It is fine to use other people's performances and art, but you must be completely clear about why you are using that work, and make sure it is obvious that it isn't your own.

## Definitions of assessment offences

### Plagiarism

Plagiarism is when you present someone else's work, words, images, ideas, opinions or discoveries, whether published or not, as your own. It is also when you take the artwork, images or computer-generated work of others, without properly acknowledging where this is from or you do this without their permission.

You can commit plagiarism in examinations, but it is most likely to happen in coursework, assignments, portfolios, essays, dissertations and so on.

Examples of plagiarism include:

- directly copying from written work, physical work, performances, recorded work or images, without saying where this is from;
- using information from the internet or electronic media (such as DVDs and CDs) which belongs to someone else, and presenting it as your own;
- rewording someone else's work, without referencing them; and
- handing in something for assessment which has been produced by another student or person.

It is important that you do not plagiarise – intentionally or unintentionally – because the work of others and their ideas are their own. There are benefits to producing original ideas in terms of awards, prizes, qualifications, reputation and so on. To use someone else's work, words, images, ideas or discoveries is a form of theft.

### Collusion

Collusion is similar to plagiarism as it is an attempt to present another's work as your own. In plagiarism the original owner of the work is not aware you are using it, in collusion two or more people may be involved in trying to produce one piece of work to benefit one individual, or plagiarising another person's work.

Examples of collusion include:

- agreeing with others to cheat;
- getting someone else to produce part or all of your work;
- copying the work of another person (with their permission);
- submitting work from essay banks;

- paying someone to produce work for you; and
- allowing another student to copy your own work.

Many parts of university life need students to work together. Working as a team, as directed by your tutor, and producing group work is not collusion. Collusion only happens if you produce joint work to benefit of one or more person and try to deceive another (for example the assessor).

### **Cheating**

Cheating is when someone aims to get unfair advantage over others.

Examples of cheating include:

- taking unauthorised material into the examination room;
- inventing results (including experiments, research, interviews and observations);
- handing your own previously graded work back in;
- getting an examination paper before it is released;
- behaving in a way that means other students perform poorly;
- pretending to be another student; and
- trying to bribe members of staff or examiners.

### **Help to avoid assessment offences**

Most of our students are honest and want to avoid making assessment offences. We have a variety of resources, advice and guidance available to help make sure you can develop good academic skills. We will make sure that we make available consistent statements about what we expect in this document, and in student handbooks and module guides. You will be able to do tutorials on being honest in your work from the library and other central support services and faculties, and you will be able to test your written work for plagiarism using 'Turnitin@UK' (a software package that detects plagiarism).

You can get advice on how to honestly use the work of others in your own work from the library website ([www.libweb.anglia.ac.uk/referencing/referencing.htm](http://www.libweb.anglia.ac.uk/referencing/referencing.htm)) and your lecturer and personal tutor.

You will have an opportunity to do a 'formative' assignment before you finish and hand in your first 'summative' assignment. A 'formative' assignment is one in which you can talk about your work thoroughly with your tutor to make sure that you are working at the correct level for your award, and that you understand what is meant by good practice. (A 'summative' assignment counts towards the assessment for your course.)

You will be able to use 'Turnitin@UK', a special software package which is used to detect plagiarism. Turnitin@UK will produce a report which clearly shows if passages in your work have been taken from somewhere else. You may talk about this with your personal tutor to see where you may need to improve your academic practice. We will not see these formative Turnitin@UK reports as assessment offences.

If you are not sure whether the way you are working meets our requirements, you should talk to your personal tutor. They will be able to help you and tell you about other resources which will help you develop your academic skills.

### **What we expect from you**

We will make sure you have the chance to practice your academic skills and avoid accidentally breaking our Academic Regulations. On page nine of the Student Charter (see

[http://web.anglia.ac.uk/anet/students/pdfs/09\\_student\\_charter.pdf](http://web.anglia.ac.uk/anet/students/pdfs/09_student_charter.pdf)), it says you have to 'be aware of the academic rules relating to your studies'.

To make sure that you are aware of the rules, we expect you to agree to:

- read this guidance and make sure you thoroughly understand it;
- work through 'PILOT', the online tutorial available on our library website (<http://libweb.anglia.ac.uk/pilot/>), which aims to help you learn good practice and has a useful section on plagiarism;
- make sure that you are familiar with how to reference (acknowledge other people's work);
- correctly reference all the sources for the information you have included in your work;
- identify information you have downloaded from the internet;
- never use someone else's ideas for a performance, film or TV programme, their artwork, graphics (including graphs, spreadsheets and so on and information from the internet) as if they are yours;
- only hand in your own original work;
- never use another person's work as if it were your own; and
- never let other students use or copy your work.

## What we will do for you

To help you avoid making assessment offences, our staff will:

- make sure they are familiar with the guidance on being honest in your work and the Academic Regulations;
- tell you clearly about the guidance on being honest in your work and any guidelines on misconduct, and record the dates for future reference;
- arrange library information sessions for you;
- promote the resources on the library website and put links to them in module guides and student handbooks;
- include statements on academic honesty in each module guide, making sure they are consistent throughout our university;
- make you aware of the punishments for misconduct early in the course;
- give you effective guidance on how you should acknowledge the information you have used;
- tell you, in writing if possible, how far you may work with other students in your coursework;
- plan procedures for assessing work in a way that reduces plagiarism, cheating and collusion;
- be aware that you may have worked differently in the past and make sure that you are aware of good practice in the UK;
- familiarise themselves with 'Turnitin@UK' and its reports; and
- report all suspected misconduct using the proper disciplinary procedures.

## Procedures for assessment offences

An assessment offence is the general term used to define cases where a student has tried to get unfair academic advantage in an assessment for themselves or another student.

We will aim to give you as much help as possible to avoid an assessment offence. We listed a number of possible assessment offences earlier in the document. These, and any relevant breaks of the Academic Regulations are dishonest, unacceptable and not allowed. We will fully investigate all cases of suspected assessment offences. If we prove that you have committed an assessment offence, we will take action against you using our disciplinary procedures.

For full details of what punishments you may receive for assessment offences, see the Academic Regulations, section 10 ([www.anglia.ac.uk/academicregs](http://www.anglia.ac.uk/academicregs)).

## And finally

One of the main aims of university is to give you the ability to learn, have independent judgment, academic rigour and intellectual honesty.

You should encourage people to ask questions, to show personal and professional honesty, and have mutual respect.

You, university teachers and support staff are responsible for working together to achieve this aim.

## References

Adapted from Scott, M, (2000), Academic Misconduct Policy. A model for the FE Sector. (Copyright \_ Association of Colleges 2000)

## More information

Academic Regulations, section 10 ([www.anglia.ac.uk/academicregs](http://www.anglia.ac.uk/academicregs))

PILOT, the online tutorial in academic practice ([www.libweb.anglia.ac.uk/pilot/](http://www.libweb.anglia.ac.uk/pilot/))

Referencing procedures (<http://libweb.anglia.ac.uk/referencing/referencing.htm>)

RefWorks, a bibliographic management service that allows you to create a personal database and collect bibliographies in a variety of styles ([www.libweb.anglia.ac.uk/referencing/refworks.htm](http://www.libweb.anglia.ac.uk/referencing/refworks.htm))

The Student Charter ([http://web.anglia.ac.uk/anet/students/pdfs/09\\_student\\_charter.pdf](http://web.anglia.ac.uk/anet/students/pdfs/09_student_charter.pdf))