Dishonest Practice and Plagiarism – A Brief Guide for Students

Before submitting your work, make sure you have:
- Clearly identified and referenced quotations, images, figures or diagrams taken from another source
- Paraphrased correctly
- Acknowledged ideas belonging to others
- NOT used copy and paste to take text from another source unless it is a direct quotation and you have referenced it
- Included a complete and accurate reference list of all work cited
- NOT used another student’s work or submitted someone else’s work as your own
- Submitted a draft assignment through Safe Assign if available
- Asked for help if you are not sure (prior to the due date!)

What is Dishonest Practice?
Dishonest Practice is:
- Plagiarism (copying someone else’s work without properly referencing it)
- Copying from another student or allowing your work to be copied.
- Submitting the same or very similar assignment for more than one paper
- Working on an assignment with other students where an individual answer is required
- Assisting someone else to commit dishonest practice by writing their assignment, giving answers in a test or examination or impersonating someone else in a test or examination
- Taking unauthorised material into a test or examination
- Making up data or information
- Getting someone else to do your assessment on your behalf

Where Do I Get Help?
- Seek help from the Student Learning Centre or Library
- Take an online tutorial at http://hedc.otago.ac.nz/hedc/learning/resources/
- Make use of the resources at the International Office
- Visit the University of Otago dishonest practice website at www.otago.ac.nz/study/plagiarism/
- Talk to your lecturer or tutor
- Read your course outline or guide. These almost always include information about plagiarism and referencing

But I Didn’t Mean To
Plagiarism can be unintentional or intentional. Unintentional plagiarism may be caused by a lack of understanding about how and when to acknowledge the work of others, however even if you didn’t mean to, it is still considered to be plagiarism.

All students have a responsibility to be aware of acceptable academic practice in relation to the use of material prepared by others and take the steps necessary to ensure no breach of acceptable academic practice occurs.
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**When Do I Have To Reference?**
Make sure you provide a reference when you:
- Copy other peoples work word for word
- Use your own words to paraphrase or summarise other’s work
- Borrow someone else’s ideas
- Use facts that are not common knowledge
If you are unsure about when to refer to a source, include a reference.

**Avoiding Plagiarism**
Plagiarism can be avoided by adopting good academic practices such as:
- Referencing correctly
- Planning
- Having good time management
- Accurate note-making
- Being discriminating about your use of the internet

**Unauthorised Collaboration**
Unauthorised collaboration is when you work with other’s on an assessment but is designed as a task for individuals and in which individual answers are required.

While it can be useful to discuss ideas with others to help you better understand, it is important that you write your answers individually in your own time and own words.

**Safe Assign**
Safe Assign is a plagiarism prevention tool available through Blackboard for lecturers to use. When assignments are submitted to Safe Assign they are checked for plagiarism against a database of source material as well as assignments submitted by other students.

In some papers you will have access to submit ‘draft’ assignments and ‘final’ assignments. Draft assignments allow you to check that all your work is correctly referenced before it is marked. Final assignments are sent to your lecturer for assessment.

More information on Safe Assign is available at [www.otago.ac.nz/study/plagiarism/otago006309.html](http://www.otago.ac.nz/study/plagiarism/otago006309.html)

**Penalties for Dishonest Practice**
There are two levels of plagiarism at the University of Otago:

**Level One** relates to a first offence where you might not know or understand acceptable academic practice. Level One cases are dealt with by the Head of Department.

**Penalties** for Level One cases range from receiving a written or oral warning to receiving zero marks for the work submitted.

**Level Two** relates to a repeat offence, deliberate plagiarism or in circumstances where you could reasonably be expected to understand acceptable academic practice. Level Two plagiarism and all other dishonest practice complaints are dealt with by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor of the Division.

**Penalties** for Level Two cases can be more severe, including:
- Zero marks for the paper
- Cancellation of any pass for other parts of your course taken in the same semester
- Exclusion from the University