

**Academic Honesty and Plagiarism:**  
**Information for students in the Faculty of Science, ANU.**

Science is the process of building our understanding of the world around us. Our understanding of the world is due to the work of a great many people. Even when a new experiment is done for the first time, understanding the results of the experiment relies on previous knowledge. We build our knowledge and understanding from generation to generation, and hence it is appropriate to acknowledge those that have gone before us and whose work we build on.

**What is plagiarism?**

Plagiarism is the appropriation, by copying, summarising or paraphrasing, of another's work, without acknowledgment. Put simply, using someone else's work without acknowledging it.

When you write an essay or a report you should read from several sources of information so that you can write an informed essay or report. The sources you use may include books, journals and websites, lecture notes and more. The essay itself should be your own work, and not constructed by piecing together sections of other peoples work, rather you should read widely, think about what you have read, and then write your own words to express your own understanding and / or opinions.

It is very important to ensure that you have properly acknowledged your sources in any essay or assignment. Any information, quote, diagram or idea taken from a reference source and included in your essay or assignment without acknowledgement is termed plagiarism. The only exception is when you state or use the accepted, common knowledge or concepts within the discipline you are writing in.

Some common forms of plagiarism are described below.

**Copying** is the quotation of another author's text, word for word, without acknowledgment. If you directly quote any source, you must indicate the part which is quoted by using quotation marks or indentation, and the source of the quotation must be acknowledged by exact references. Generally you should not quote more than a few sentences.

**Summarising:** To summarise the argument of other authors (for example, by isolating main points and tracing connections) is legitimate, provided it is made clear this is being done, in other words you must reference the work you are summarizing. However, to summarise another's arguments, ideas or information as though they were your own is plagiarism.

**Paraphrasing** means putting an author's meaning into different words. This is permissible only if full and exact references are given. A common form of plagiarism combines copying with paraphrase, repeating some words of the original text and substituting different words for others. The more the wording is changed, the more fully the copyist may have understood the material, but it is still necessary to give the source of the ideas and of any direct quotations.

When you write an essay or report you should read as many sources as you reasonably can, and then put together the ideas you have read, along with your own ideas, into an essay written in your own words. While assembling or constructing an essay or report from direct quotations or paraphrasing other peoples work may not be plagiarism if you fully reference everything, it is still very bad academic practice. The purpose of assessment tasks such as essays and reports is to help you to develop your own understanding and/or opinions. If you merely repeat the words of others, even paraphrasing, you are less likely to develop your own understanding.

### The Importance of Referencing

Any argument, quote, diagram or idea taken from a reference source and included in your essay or assignment must be referenced. The only exception is when you state or use the accepted, common knowledge or concepts within the discipline you are writing in. For example, within physics it is not necessary to reference the idea of conservation of energy as it is part of the common knowledge of the discipline.

Referencing is done by putting a short reference in the text of your essay or report, at the point where you have used someone else's work. A complete detailed list of references is then given at the end of your report.

A short guide to referencing is given at the end of this document.

For further information you should talk to your lecturers or contact the Academic Skills and Learning Centre, <http://www.anu.edu.au/academicskills/>

### Students' Responsibilities

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[http://info.anu.edu.au/policies/Codes\\_Of\\_Practice/Students/Other/Academic\\_Honesty.asp](http://info.anu.edu.au/policies/Codes_Of_Practice/Students/Other/Academic_Honesty.asp) .

It is the responsibility of each individual student to ensure that:

- Work submitted for assessment is genuine and original;
- Appropriate acknowledgement and citation is given to the work of others;
- He or she is familiar with the expectations for academic honesty both in general, and in the specific context of particular disciplines or courses, where these expectations are clearly outlined in faculty and course guides and handbooks;
- He or she declares his or her understanding of and compliance with the principles of academic honesty on appropriate proformas and cover sheets as required by the academic area, or by a statement beginning the presentation of a thesis;
- He or she does not knowingly assist other students in academically dishonest practice.

What are the penalties for plagiarism?

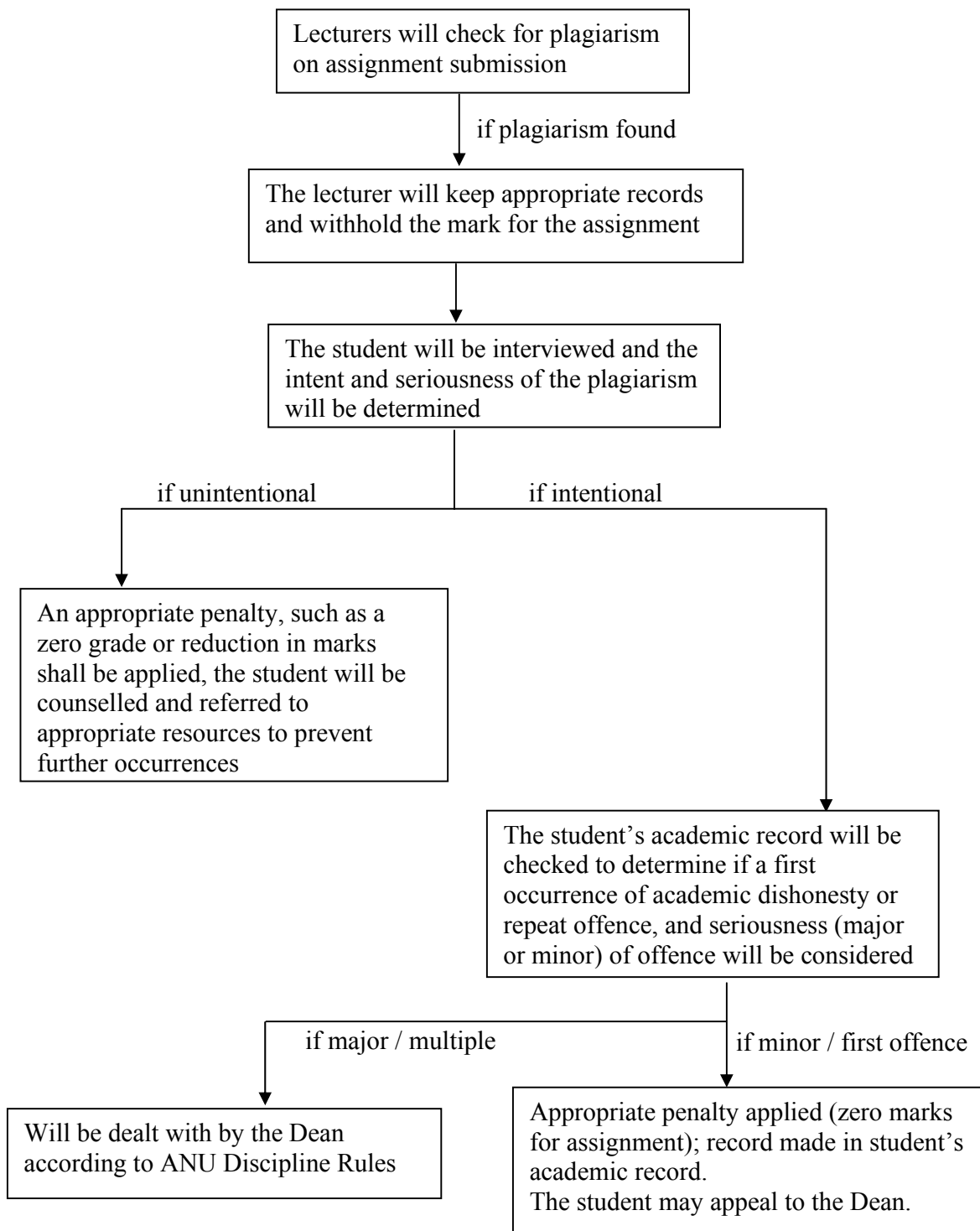
Plagiarism is regarded as a serious example of “academic misconduct”. Plagiarism is a most serious academic offence, and severe penalties will be imposed on anyone found guilty of it.

Students may sometimes offend in this way inadvertently, through inexperience or failure to understand the aims and methods of university study. Hence it is important that you understand what plagiarism is and how to avoid it. If you are unsure, please talk to your lecturer, or the Academic Skills and Learning Centre, [www.anu.edu.au/academicskills/](http://www.anu.edu.au/academicskills/), which is available to help students.

In no case can work that is plagiarised be taken into account in determining assessment for a course. If plagiarism is detected in an assignment, that assignment will generally be failed, and will typically receive a mark of zero, and disciplinary action will be taken. Student Administration records will record all instances of plagiarism. Consultation of the records will occur if any accusation of breach of academic honesty is being made against a student and records may be used in making a decision under the ANU Discipline Rules. Repeated instances of plagiarism will result in temporary or permanent exclusion from the university. The ANU guidelines on academic honesty are available at [http://info.anu.edu.au/policies/Codes\\_Of\\_Practice/Students/Other/Academic\\_Honesty.asp](http://info.anu.edu.au/policies/Codes_Of_Practice/Students/Other/Academic_Honesty.asp).

A flow chart of the normal procedures that academic staff will follow in cases of plagiarism is shown below.

The procedure normally followed when plagiarism is detected:



## **A Short Guide to Referencing for Science Students:**

Referencing is done by putting a short reference in the text of your essay or report, at the point where you have used someone else's work. A complete detailed list of references is then given at the end of your report. There are three main ways in which referencing is done in science:

1. using numbered references with a superscript number
2. using numbered references with a number in square brackets
3. using the authors name and the year of publication.

### 1. Using superscript numbering:

In the text you should indicate other people's work by a superscript number. The number refers to the number in the reference list at the end of your report. For example, in your report you might write:

These results agree with those of Smith and Brown<sup>1</sup>. Nieboer and Richardson<sup>2</sup> have recently attempted to classify environmentally important metal species.

You should number references consecutively in the order in which they are first mentioned in the text.

If you use another person's words, you should always include the quotation in quotation marks and number the reference or refer to the original author by name.

For example:

In a recent article, Tarr<sup>1</sup> notes "Incorporating a realistic problem involving common topics (soda, arsenic, poisoning) dramatically improved the students' interest and enthusiasm".

### 2. Using bracketed numbering:

For example:

...as has been shown for other rare earth perovskite cobaltates [1], the observed mass loss is therefore apportioned to the change in oxygen content as the Co<sup>n+</sup> in the as-synthesised sample is reduced to Co metal.

### 3. Using author name and publication year: (this method is always used in Psychology)

For example:

The methodology broadly follows an action research approach for higher education, in which there are repeated cycles of action, observation, reflection/analysis, and planning for the next semester's activities (Zuber-Skerritt, 1992).

The way references should be laid out varies from journal to journal. Refer to a major journal in your discipline for guidelines. If your course requires a particular format, follow that advice. The following examples are often encountered in the physical sciences.

**To reference a standard journal article:**

**Authors (last name first), Title of article, *Journal*, Publication year, *Volume*, Page numbers.**

For example:

Tarr, M. A., Solving a Mock Arsenic-Poisoning Case Using Atomic Spectroscopy, *Journal of Chemical Education*, **2001**, 78, 61-2.

*[Note: The titles of articles are usually **not** listed in the references given in journals of chemical sciences. However, including the title will help us in the assessment of your work and help you check your references.]*

**To reference a book:**

**Authors (last name first), *Title of book*, Edition; Publisher, Publication year.**

For example:

Fleming, G. R., *Chemical Applications of Ultrafast Spectroscopy*, 1<sup>st</sup> ed.; Oxford University Press: New York, 1986.

**To reference a web site:**

**Web address, Title of web site, Author, Revision date, Access date.**

For example:

<http://www.startrek.com/>, Official Star Trek Home Page, Paramount Pictures, 10/3/01, 12/3/01.

**To reference a personal communication or unpublished work:**

**Authors (last name first), Unpublished work.**

For example:

Gustafson, T. L.; Poizat, O. Unpublished Work.

If you read something in your preparation for writing an essay or report, but do not directly use it, you may include it in a bibliography or suggested readings section at the end of your essay if you think the reader of your essay would find it interesting or informative. However anything you do use directly must be correctly referenced within your work and full details given at the end of the work.

For help with referencing, contact the Academic Skills and Learning Centre, <http://www.anu.edu.au/academicsskills/>