



To: All Students
From: The Provost, Fremantle Campus
Subject: Important Information on Plagiarism

Academic writing, which includes your assignments at University, has the convention that ideas, phrases, thoughts should be attributed to the person where those ideas originate.

Academics take this very seriously. Failing to properly indicate the source of such material is considered akin to stealing. It is considered seriously by Universities as you will note in the [Policy on Academic Misconduct \(Plagiarism\)](#)

Your lecturers expect that you will reference the source of ideas and phrases. The exact method of referencing varies from School to School as different disciplines have differing conventions. A referencing guide is available through the Library web pages and in the notes supplied in many of your units, the Unit outlines, or in School regulations.

Your teachers expect that you will comment on your thoughts on these thoughts of others – it is not that you need to be developing new knowledge as such, though that is welcome. What is asked of you is that you say where ideas you discuss come from, and that you then comment on your own opinions concerning that. It is alright to use other peoples' work as long as it is referenced properly - lecturers/tutors expect this in addition to the student's own ideas and comments. Don't, however, expect a high level of success if you only quote others with no input or opinion of your own.

It is my experience that some students deliberately plagiarise, and I will comment on that later, but in many it comes about because of other reasons – that you can avoid.

The most common situation I see is the student who has left their assignment so late that they really don't have time to do it properly, and they copy material from other sources to get it done and in on time. Commonly this comes from the internet but also from texts or notes of prior students. It is also my experience that your teachers are good at remembering texts, prior student work, and they can certainly Google paragraphs and sentences from your assignment as well as you can.

So the answer here is not to put yourself in a situation so tight that you have little choice but to plagiarise; rather organise yourself to get the work for assignments done on time. Invest in a diary. Do plan your time.

It is true that some students directly from School think that an assignment is really presenting 'the right answers' rather than thinking and presenting their own thoughts. This is not, however, an excuse for University students beyond very introductory levels.

We know that some students buy essays from the internet (we know because we have caught them – your teachers can spot the suspicious signs, and we do buy the essays ourselves if we need to check). There can be no doubt in these circumstances that the work is submitted fraudulently – and very serious penalties will be appropriate.

In this also note that while some such 'internet groups for hire' say that they are 'checking and polishing the material' you are attesting that the work is your own when you submit the cover sheet.

Academic writing workshops are available for those students who struggle with writing assignments, including those whose first language is not English. Talk to staff at the Student Life Office.



So

- Plagiarism is viewed very seriously at University.
- You should reference the ideas and words of others in the format that your School advises
- What we want is your thoughts and comment on those ideas and words
- If you copy material there is now a high likelihood that you will be caught, and that action will be taken
- A common reason is running out of time to do an assignment properly – plan your time
- If you need help - talk to your teachers, go to the Student Life Office, attend academic writing workshops