

Plagiarism- summary statement for Part II/BBS students Department of Pharmacology

In general, plagiarism can be defined as: **the unacknowledged use of the work of others as if this were your own original work.**

In the context of an examination, this amounts to: **passing off the work of others as your own to gain unfair advantage.**

A copy of the Faculty of Biology's statement on plagiarism can be found here:

<http://www.bio.cam.ac.uk/sbs/facbiol/plagiarism.html>

and the University's statement here:

<http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/univ/plagiarism/students/>

and is also covered extensively in the Part II/BBS handbook:

<http://www.phar.cam.ac.uk/docs/handbooks/partii%20CourseBrochure%202008.pdf>

Such use of unfair means will not be tolerated by the University; if detected, the penalty may be severe and may lead to failure to obtain your degree.

Note that the use of essays purchased from any source or copied from other students is unacceptable regardless of whether the source is acknowledged.

It is an essential part of your scientific training that, in writings, you ensure you are following best practice regarding avoiding plagiarism. It is an important aspect of academic integrity to cite all sources on which you base our work (even if it is not copied directly from them), be they published in hard copy or web based.

Written unseen examinations

Full citation is not expected in written unseen examinations such as those taken at the end of the year for Part II.

Use of TURNITIN

The Teaching Committee of the Department of Pharmacology has agreed that in the coming academic year 2010-11 the following procedure agreed by the Biological Sciences Committee of the NST will be applied to submitted work by BBS students.

If, during marking by an examiner, plagiarism is suspected in a piece of submitted work, the work will be marked as normal and then turned over to the Senior Examiner. The electronic version will then be passed on to the Scrutiny Officer within the Department/course for checking with Turnitin. If analysis by Turnitin supports initial suspicions of plagiarism, the Chair of Examiners will be informed, who will proceed as per advice given at:

<http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/univ/plagiarism/examiners/>

To facilitate use of Turnitin all BBS students will be asked to sign a form that gives permission for their dissertations to be submitted to the Turnitin system should the examiners require this. This form will be distributed by the Faculty during Michaelmas term and you will be asked to sign and return it for our files. A copy of the form can be found here

[Consent form for the use of Turnitin UK text-matching software](#)

The golden rule

The examiners must be in no doubt as to which parts of your work are your own original work and which are the rightful property of someone else.

The scope of plagiarism

1. Plagiarism may be due to:

- **copying** (using another person's language and/or ideas as if they are your own);
- **collusion** (where collaboration is concealed or has been expressly forbidden, in order to gain unfair advantage).

2. Methods include:

- **quoting directly** another person's language, data or illustrations without clear indication that the authorship is not your own and due acknowledgement of the source;
- **paraphrasing** the critical work of others without due acknowledgement - even if you change some words or the order of the words, this is still plagiarism if you are using someone else's original ideas and are not properly acknowledging it;
- **using ideas** taken from someone else without reference to the originator;
- **cutting and pasting** from the Internet to make a 'pastiche' of online sources;
- **colluding** with another person, including another candidate (other than as might be permitted for joint project work);
- submitting as part of your own report or dissertation **someone else's work** without identifying clearly who did the work (for example, where research has been contributed by others to a joint project)
- submitting work that has been **undertaken in whole or in part by someone else on your behalf** (such as commissioning work from a paper mill or 'ghost writing service', or buying work from an essay bank);
- submitting work you have submitted for a qualification **at another institution** without declaring it and clearly indicating the extent of overlap;
- **deliberately reproducing someone else's work in a written examination.**

3. Plagiarism can occur in respect to **all types of sources and all media**:

- not just text, but also illustrations, musical quotations, computer code etc;
- not just text published in books and journals, but also downloaded from websites or drawn from other media;

- not just published material but also unpublished works, including lecture handouts and the work of other students.

How to avoid plagiarism

The stylistic conventions for different subjects vary and you should consult your course director or supervisor about the conventions pertaining in your particular subject area. However, the main points are:

- when presenting the views and work of others, you must give an indication of the source of the material; conventions for this vary, but one approach would be to write: '*... as Sharpe (1993) has shown*', and give the full details of the work quoted in your bibliography;
- if you quote text verbatim, make this completely evident; again conventions will vary but you might say: '*The elk is of necessity less graceful than the gazelle*' (Thompson, 1942, p 46) and give the full details in your bibliography as above;
- if you wish to set out the work of another at length so that you can produce a counter-argument, set the quoted text apart from your own text (e.g. by indenting a paragraph) and identify it in a suitable way (e.g. by using inverted commas and adding a reference as above). NB long quotations may infringe **copyright**, which exists for the life of the author plus 70 years.
- if you are copying text, keep a note of the author and the reference as you go along, *with the copied text*, so that you will not mistakenly think the material to be your own work when you come back to it in a few weeks' time;
- if you reproduce an illustration or include someone else's data in a graph or table, include the reference to the original work in the legend, e.g. '*(figure redrawn from Webb, 1976)*' or '*(₁ = data from Webb, 1976)*;
- if you wish to **collaborate** with another person on your project, you should check with your supervisor whether this might be allowed and then seek permission (for research degrees, the permission of the Board of Graduate Studies must be sought);
- if you have been **authorised to work together** with another candidate or other researchers, you must acknowledge their contribution fully in your introductory section. If there is likely to be any doubt as to who contributed which parts of the work, you should make this clear in the text wherever necessary, e.g. '*I am grateful to A. Smith for analysing the sodium content of these samples*';
- be especially careful if **cutting and pasting** work from electronic media; do not fail to attribute the work to its source. If authorship of the electronic source is not given, ask yourself whether it is worth copying.

Information taken from Cambridge University guidelines

<http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/univ/plagiarism/students/statement.html>

What is Common Knowledge? How to Avoid Accidental Plagiarism

As a general rule, a fact can be said to be 'common knowledge' when:

- it is widely accessible - you may not know the total population of China, but you would be able to find the answer easily from numerous sources.
- it is likely to be known by a lot of people
- it can be found in a general reference resource, such as a dictionary or encyclopedia.

For example:

Pterosaurs were the flying reptiles of the dinosaur age 'Everyone' knows this, so no citation is needed.

But...

Even the largest pterosaurs may have been able to take off simply by spreading their wings whilst facing into a moderate breeze. Wilkinson, M.T., Unwin, D.M. and Ellington, C.P. (2005). High lift function of the pteroid bone and forewings of pterosaurs. Proc. R. Soc. Lond. B

Within particular disciplines, the boundaries of what is 'common' knowledge and what is 'expert' knowledge can be ambiguous, especially the further you get into your studies. If it isn't common knowledge, you'll always need to reference your source. If you are in any doubt, ask your tutor or supervisor.

Information taken from University guidelines

<http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/univ/plagiarism/students/referencing/commonknowledge.html>