Attribution and Collaboration

1 – Overview

During this course you are assessed solely on your own work but:

- Your work is in the context of other people, you have to use previous results of your own work or other people’s work to present your new ideas.
- Also, during your own work you work with other people such as your supervisor, other staff and students.

How can you make sure that, in your submission, your own work is:

- Clearly identified?, and
- Other people’s work is clearly distinguished?

How can you include or mention other peoples work without plagiarism?

2 – Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the presentation of other people’s work as your own.

2.1 – Components of plagiarism

Plagiarism is:

- Dishonest – lying about who has done the work.
- Unprofessional – it shows a severe lack of professional integrity.
- Regarded as an act of cheating – trying to avoid work you should be doing.
- Regarded as an act of theft – stealing the work of other people without their knowledge.

Important to realise that even if you unintentionally pass of someone else’s work as your own it is your responsibility. Plagiarism may be unintentional but this is not an excuse.

2.2 – Student responsibilities

- At the start of the work you submit you must sign a statement that the work you submit is your own.
- It is your responsibility to make sure that any work that is not your own work is clearly identified in the work you submit.

2.3 – Detecting plagiarism

Plagiarism is very easy to detect.

- Markers read many different student submissions at the same time and can therefore spot patterns and similarities between different submissions. If different students submit the same work it will be detected.
• Markers can spot changes in written styles of English and program source code. If a student has copied material or cut and pasted sections of material this will be detected.
• Markers can spot if the style a student uses changes during their work. Markers often paste sections of text into an internet search engine to search if it has been published elsewhere.
• Plagiarism detection software exists; several markers use this as it has been developed specifically to identify plagiarism.

2.4 – Punishing plagiarism

Plagiarism is strongly punished

People who plagiarise might:
• Lose all of the marks for the submission.
• Lose all of the marks for the entire module.
• Have to repeat the academic year.
• Be forced to leave the University without a qualification.

The University regulations and School handbooks outline the possible consequences of plagiarism explicitly.

3 – Using Other People’s Work

Why can’t I include other people’s work in my submission if past work is relevant?
• You can use other peoples work, we are happy to know that you are researching what other people have done. It is the deception that is the problem, if you attempt to pass of someone else’s work as your own then that is plagiarism.
• You may feel that experts present the work better than you can. This may be the case but we want to see how you present the work so that we can ensure that you understand it.
• You may think that everyone already knows this information or technique. A lot of people may already know it; we want you to tell us how you know it.

3.1 – Three steps to avoiding plagiarism
• Think of how to build on other people’s work without plagiarising it.
• Think of how to make use of source material without simply copying it.
• Remember that if you work with other people you cannot claim joint work to be your own.

3.2 – Citation and reference

Citations must allow somebody else to find the material you use. When you refer to the work of others you must include:
• Citation – full publication details presented in the text, footnote or bibliography.
• Reference – a unique identifying link in the text leading to the full citation in a footnote or bibliography.

3.3 – Introducing the work of others

Cannot just drop it down boldly in the middle of what you are submitting. There are several ways of introducing a reference:

• X says [reference].
• According to Y [reference].
• Z argues that [reference].
• A notes that [reference].

And so on. X, Y, Z, and A are the names of the people whose work is referred to. It is usual to include a date if it is not in the reference.

3.4 – Using the work of others

3 ways of using the work of others:
1. Quoting – you actually physically include the work of others in your own work.
2. Precis – you write a shortened version of the work in your own words.
3. Summary – you list the main points of the work in your own words.

3.4.1 – Quoting

Quoting is where most plagiarism is detected; it is the use of other people’s work without properly referencing it. When quoting you must explicitly distinguish quoted material from your own work. Short quotations should be placed in the main text in quotation marks i.e. “quote”. Substantial quotations should be placed in the work as a separate paragraph. Quotes may be placed in italics and each quote must be accompanied by a reference.

3.4.2 – Precis

Precis is a continuous text summary of the original work. Precis should not contain any phrases from the original work and must include a reference, as with quoting.

3.4.3 – Summary

Summary is a list of the main points, often numbered or bullet points. Often phrases rather than continuous text. A summary should not contain material from the original text unless it is quoted and must include a reference, as with quoting and précis.

4 – Example

This example is from a paper by Alan Turing in 1950 called “computing, machinery and intelligence”. This example lists:
1. The original text.
2. An example of quoting.
3. An example of precis.
4. An example of summary.
5. quotes from original
6. An example of quoting quotes listing the original.
7. An example of quoting quotes listing the quote.

4.1 – Original text

The idea of a digital computer is an old one. Charles Babbage, Lucasian Professor of Mathematics at Cambridge from 1828 to 1839, planned such a machine, called the Analytical Engine, but it was never completed. Although Babbage had all the essential ideas, his machine was not at that time such a very attractive prospect. The speed which would have been available would be definitely faster than a human computer but something like 100 times slower than the Manchester machine, itself one of the slower of the modern machines. The storage was to be purely mechanical, using wheels and cards.

The fact that Babbage's Analytical Engine was to be entirely mechanical will help us to rid ourselves of a superstition. Importance is often attached to the fact that modern digital computers are electrical, and that the nervous system also is electrical. Since Babbage's machine was not electrical, and since all digital computers are in a sense equivalent, we see that this use of electricity cannot be of theoretical importance.


4.2 – Example of quoting

In considering whether electricity is important for relating human brains to digital computers, Turing [Turing, 1950] argues that:

“The idea of a digital computer is an old one. Charles Babbage, Lucasian Professor of Mathematics at Cambridge from 1828 to 1839, planned such a machine, called the Analytical Engine, but it was never completed. Although Babbage had all the essential ideas, his machine was not at that time such a very attractive prospect. The speed which would have been available would be definitely faster than a human computer but something like 100 times slower than the Manchester machine, itself one of the slower of the modern machines. The storage was to be purely mechanical, using wheels and cards. The fact that Babbage's Analytical Engine was to be entirely mechanical will help us to rid ourselves of a superstition. Importance is often attached to the fact that modern digital computers are electrical, and that the nervous system also is electrical. Since Babbage's machine was not electrical, and since all digital computers are in a sense equivalent, we see that this use of electricity cannot be of theoretical importance.” (page 16)

with a Bibliography including the citation:


4.3 – Example of precis

Turing[Turing, 1950] argues that as Babbage’s Analytic Engine was a purely mechanical digital computer, and because all digital computers are equivalent, then the dependence of both human brains and modern computers on electricity is not relevant when comparing their properties.
4.4 – Example of summary

Turing [Turing, 1950] argues that:
1. Babbage’s Analytic Engine was a digital computer;
2. the Analytic Engine was mechanical;
3. all digital computers are equivalent;
4. so electricity is irrelevant when comparing brains and digital computers.

4.5 – quotes from original

May need to include a quote from someone who also quotes a third party
• include references for both
• X [reference X] discussing Y [reference Y] says: “…”

4.6 – Quoting quotes original

Again from:
Our most detailed information of Babbage’s Analytical Engine comes from a memoir by *Lady Lovelace*. In it she states, "The Analytical Engine has no pretensions to originate anything. It can do whatever we know how to order it to perform" (her italics).

with original bibliography entry:
Countess of Lovelace, *Translator's notes to an article on Babbage's Analytical Engine Scientific Memoir* (ed. by R. Taylor), vol. 3 (1842), 691-731.

4.7 – Quoting quotes quote

• Turing [Turing, 1950], in discussing Lady Lovelace’s objection to machine intelligence [Lovelace, 1842], says that:
  “Our most detailed information of Babbage’s Analytical Engine comes from a memoir by *Lady Lovelace*. In it she states, "The Analytical Engine has no pretensions to originate anything. It can do whatever we know how to order it to perform" (her italics).” (page 26).
• with Bibliography including (2 references):


5 – Using Other People’s Program Code

To use or include another person’s program source code you must:
• Clearly identify in the program listing where the code is not your own by identifying the source of the work, possibly by citation.
• Leave the original statement of ownership in the source code, if it has one.
• Explicitly explain in the main text where you have used code that is not you own. If possible, identify the source by using a reference or citation.

6 – Collaboration

When collaborating with others there are three steps you must follow, these involve:
1. Acknowledging.
2. Identifying.
3. Building.

6.1 – Acknowledging

If you work with others you must acknowledge who helped you. You must do this in the acknowledgements section at the start of your submission by saying exactly how they helped you. This is important because it is honest and it is important that people who have helped you feel appreciated by you for helping you. People who helped you may be:
• Your supervisor(s).
• Other Lecturers.
• Other Students.
• Members of academic support staff.

6.2 – Identifying

You must identify clearly any work carried out with others. Joint work must clearly identify which is yours and which is that of others. If you have worked as part of a team you must identify:
• Other members of the team.
• What the other members of the team did, by explicitly stating their contributions clearly.
• What contribution you made to the work.

6.3 – Building

If your work builds on the work of others you must clearly acknowledge what work was there for you to build on. From the work which was already there you must clarify:
• How you changed what they did and why you changed it.
• How you extended what they did and why you extended it.

7 – Conclusion

• all research depends on that which preceded it
• to carry out your own work, you must build on the work of others
• you must appropriately identify, cite, reference and acknowledge the work of others