AVOIDING ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

What is academic misconduct?
UWA defines academic misconduct as ‘any activity or practice engaged in by a student that breaches explicit guidelines relating to the production of work for assessment, in a manner that compromises or defeats the purpose of that assessment’1.

At UWA, it includes but is not limited to cheating or attempting to cheat by:
- collusion
- inappropriate collaboration
- plagiarism
- misrepresenting or making up data, results or assessable work
- sourcing electronic data inappropriately
- breaching exam rules to compromise the assessment.

What is collusion?
It’s when two or more students work together and submit the same or similar work for assessment as if it were the independent work of the student submitting it.

What is inappropriate collaboration?
Working with someone else on an assignment or lab when the lecturer has specified that the work should be done individually. Examples include:
- sharing information
- dividing up work so each only does a portion of the assignment/lab, etc.
- using someone else’s work from a previous year
- discussing with others in-class or take-home exam

What is plagiarism?
The unattributed use of someone else’s words, creations, ideas or arguments as one’s own. Within the UWA context it is extended to include paraphrasing which is too close to the original. (See Survival Guide RT4.1 Avoiding plagiarism.)

How do you attribute use?
You attribute use by referencing the words, creations, ideas, diagrams, etc. of authors/others that you have used in your assignments and/or thesis. Use your discipline’s preferred referencing style.

What is misrepresenting data?
It includes:
- distorting results or a data set by claiming it indicates something that it does not.
- interpreting results inaccurately due to your own biases.
- representing results or a data set selectively to suit your argument.

What is sourcing electronic data inappropriately?
It could involve including in an assignment
- a clip of music or film obtained through an illegal torrent website where you can bypass any fees payable
- an illegally copied picture.

What is breaching exam rules to compromise the assessment?
It includes
- sitting an exam for someone else
- taking unauthorised materials into an exam, e.g. notes
- communicating with others also doing an exam.
- having your electronic devices switched on.

Did you know?

Ignorance is no excuse
It is your responsibility to understand and comply with the University’s policies on ethical academic conduct.
What else is academic misconduct?

It is plagiarism to
- buy an assignment written by someone else and submit it as your own work
- write an assignment, whether you get paid for it or not, for someone else who will present the work as their own.

How do you reference?
Depending on the referencing style used in your discipline, you reference using footnotes\(^1\) or in-text citations (e.g. Jones 2011) to link the ideas, diagrams etc. of others to your ideas (see RT4.2 Quoting and RT4.4 Paraphrasing).

There are many referencing styles used at UWA. Find out which style is commonly used in your discipline.

All creations, ideas, diagrams, texts, etc whatever their source, must be attributed to their creator/author.

Ways to avoid academic misconduct — develop safe study practices
- Record all bibliographic details, including page numbers, as soon as you start taking notes.
- Distinguish your ideas and paraphrases from direct quotes when making notes.
- Change words and if possible the structure of sentences when paraphrasing but keep the same logic and meaning.
- Reference all of your drafts. Don’t decide to leave putting your references in until the final draft.

Tip
- If you consider the ideas in your assignments as part of a conversation with other authors and thinkers, it will be natural to show, by referencing correctly, how your ideas build on, compare with, differ from and/or are influenced by theirs.

The library has a range of referencing styles available on its website. [http://www.library.uwa.edu.au/students/guides](http://www.library.uwa.edu.au/students/guides)

Resources used in preparing this Guide
UWA Law School academic misconduct policy [www.uwa.edu.au/__data/assets/rtf_file/.../academic_misconduct_policy.rtf](http://www.teachingandlearning.uwa.edu.au/staff/policies/conduct)

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