Plagiarism and Malpractice

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• This presentation is
  – to raise your awareness of academic malpractice and its consequence
  – to point you the important information to read
  – to offer advice on general writing

• After the presentation, you will need
  – to take an online training course "Academic Malpractice Awareness" via Blackboard
  – to **pass** the “Academic Malpractice Driving Test” (you need to achieve 100% to pass)

**Attention**: Complete the Self Declaration Form (previously hidden, made visible after you pass the test) to confirm you have completed the course.
Academic Malpractice

• Definition: “Academic malpractice is any activity – intentional or otherwise – that is likely to undermine the integrity essential to scholarship or research.” [3][4]

• You will learn from the online training course what academic malpractice includes, and be able to understand and demonstrate:
  – plagiarism,
  – collusion,
  – copying,
  – falsification and fabrication of results.

• You need to know: “(a) Acts of academic malpractice are not acceptable in any circumstances, and (b) where such acts are shown to have occurred, an appropriate penalty will always be enforced.” [3][4]
### Definitions of common forms of academic malpractice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Plagiarism</td>
<td>To use another person's idea or a part of their work and pretend that it is your own.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collusion</td>
<td>When one student produces work and allows another student to copy it. If both students submit the work, BOTH students will be deemed to have colluded.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Falsification of results</td>
<td>Falsification is the practice of omitting or altering research data in such a way that the results are no longer accurately reflected in your research record (your lab book or thesis for example).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fabrication of results</td>
<td>Fabrication is the practice of inventing data or results and recording and/or reporting them in your research record (your lab book or thesis for example).</td>
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All of these will be covered in detail with examples shortly.
Do NOT Do It!

• The university takes malpractice very seriously!
  – An easy way to fail your MSc.
  – Submitted work is systematically and automatically checked by tools and by hand for plagiarism and collusion.
  – Possible penalties:
    • mark of 0 (if resits are allowed, the mark will be capped at the lowest passable mark)
    • reduced class of degree
    • expulsion from the university
Do NOT Do It!

- Cases of academic malpractice will be considered by School and Faculty panels.

The document “Academic Malpractice: Guidelines on the Handling of Cases” [3] available in your online training course explains official University policy on how cases of academic malpractice are handled.
Plagiarism

- Defined in university guidance [3][4]:

“Plagiarism is presenting the ideas, work or words of other people without proper, clear and unambiguous acknowledgement. It also includes ‘self plagiarism’ (which occurs where, for example, you submit work that you have presented for assessment on a previous occasion), and the submission of material from ‘essay banks’ (even if the authors of such material appear to be giving you permission to use it in this way).”
Our Advice

• This applies to your lab works, coursework, exams, essays, homework, exercises, reports, dissertations, . . . . Everything!

• We want
  – Your work
  – Your words/sentences
  – Your thoughts
  – Your structure
  – . . . if it is somebody else’s, make this obvious!
Our Advice

• Please **DO:**
  
  – Study background material and take notes.
  
  – Present background material in your own words but still **include references** to material on which your exposition is based.
  
  – Attribute all ideas to **original** authors, unless it is your own idea or common knowledge.
  
  – All diagrams, figures and tables taken from external sources should be **referenced in the caption**, if you modified them use e.g. (adapted from [...]).
  
  – In rare cases you may need to use exact sentence from a source usually for critically analyse the statement. In this cases use both **quotes “ ...”** and **references [...].**
Our Advice

• **Do NOT**
  
  – *cut and paste or copy.* You need to demonstrate your understanding of the material and present it in your own words.
  
  – *weak paraphrase* (e.g., paraphrase without acknowledging the original source). It is treated similar to copying in cases.
  
  – *construct large chunks of documents* from a string of quotes with no substance to justify. It is a bad practice and would result in low mark!

• If you are not sure, ask your supervisor.
Our Advice

How to go about writing?

• Read
• Think
• Take notes/draw pictures/structure your thoughts
• Plan your work (essay, code, report, dissertation)
• Build your own storyline/narrative/structure
• Refine
• Refine some more
• Repeat
• Done
Common Issues

• Fail to reference and/or quote.
• Use references but fail to quote sentences taken from external sources. (Avoid copying all together).
• Text full of quotes without proper presentation by the student.
• Poorly paraphrased sentences (treated as copying).
• Fail to reference diagrams, figures and tables in the caption.
• Material taken from textbooks without proper reference.
• Copying quoted material together with analysis from external sources.
What to Read?

[1] Blackboard malpractice online course

[2] MSc handbook: Guidance on Plagiarism and Other Forms of Academic Malpractice

[3] University policy: Academic Malpractice: Guidelines on the Handling of Cases (link is provided in your online course under the section of “16 Penalties”)

[4] The University of Manchester Guidance to students on plagiarism and other forms of academic malpractice (link is provided in MSc handbook)