

Student guidance on Academic Honesty and Integrity

Summary

Plagiarism is something that you will hear talked about a lot on your programme of study and it is something that King's takes very seriously. On your programme of study you can expect to be taught what plagiarism is, why you mustn't do it, and how to avoid it, and the following is an aid to be used during your time at King's.

What is plagiarism?

Plagiarism is when you hand in a piece of work which is not completely your own, but which you are presenting as your own. This may, for example, be an essay or assessed presentation that includes someone else's work, or has been written for you (this also includes using translation software). It may be work that includes sections copied from the internet or books written by other people but which you are presenting as your own work (perhaps by not making clear to the marker where these sections have come from). To avoid plagiarism you must properly reference other people's work. All of the above scenarios are serious academic offences.

The College's definition of plagiarism does not include intention because this is difficult to identify. This means if you submit a piece of work which, for example, contains ideas from other sources which you have not referenced, or includes the exact words of others without putting them in quotation marks, it would still be considered as plagiarism regardless of whether you intended to do so. It is important therefore that you fully understand plagiarism and how to reference correctly to ensure it doesn't happen by accident.

Students can also accidentally plagiarise if they run out of time to complete their work to their usual standard and do not leave enough time to proof-read and check all source material is quoted and referenced appropriately. Managing your time and aiming to finish all coursework assignments in advance of the deadline will ensure you can check your work afterwards.

If you are experiencing any personal or medical difficulties which are preventing you from completing your work in time and causing you to rush, **please do seek advice from KCLSU Advice (advice@kclsu.org) about how to apply for an extension.**

Once you have submitted your academic assignments, tutors will check for plagiarism using software called Turnitin (see further below). Everybody has a very individual style of writing and your tutor will become very familiar with yours. When marking your assignments, they will therefore be able to detect very easily any work which is not your own.

At university you are expected to refer often to the articles, research and books you have read in your own writing, but you must also reference other people's work to support your own arguments, and not the other way around.

Many students sometimes find it difficult to express other people's ideas in their own words (paraphrasing), but it is one of the most important skills that you will have to acquire. It is also a learned skill, and therefore one that you can certainly improve and develop with practice.

Your personal tutor, course/subject tutor and module leader are usually your first point of contact for helping you to develop academic skills such as paraphrasing.

The Library Study Skills team: <http://libguides.kcl.ac.uk/studyskills> and the English Language Centre's Study Skills support sessions: <http://www.kcl.ac.uk/study/english-language-centre/academic-english.aspx> can help you to develop your ability to paraphrase too.

Academic Misconduct

Academic misconduct at King's is categorised into three areas: plagiarism, collusion and cheating through deception and fraud. It is College policy that all allegations of academic misconduct will be thoroughly investigated and may result in action being taken under the College's [Misconduct Regulations](#). If found guilty the penalties range from an admonishment to expulsion depending on the severity of the act or if it is a repeated offence.

An explanation of what is meant by the different types of Academic Misconduct is given below:

Collusion

Includes: collaborating with other students in preparing a piece of work and submitting it in an identical or similar form and claiming it to be your own, obtaining unauthorised co-operation of any other person when preparing work which you present as being your own, allowing someone to copy your work which they then present as being their own.

Cheating

Includes: communicating with any other student in an examination, copying from any other student in an examination, bringing any unauthorised material into the examination room, and copying another person's coursework. Purchasing an essay and presenting it as your own is also against College regulations

Fabrication

Refers to research or experimental work, when unjustifiable claims are made to have obtained certain results.

Plagiarism

Includes: creating the impression that someone else's work is your own, quoting someone word for word, or summarising what they say without acknowledging them in a reference.

Examples of what plagiarism looks like:

- **Copying** – a student should not copy someone else's work or thoughts and pass this off as their own, even if s/he has permission without the correct referencing;
- **Copy and paste** – a student may not copy text verbatim and pass this off as their own, without using quotation marks and citing the original source;
- **Paraphrasing** – avoid closely paraphrasing someone else's work (e.g. by changing the order of the words slightly); either quote the work directly using quotation marks or put the ideas completely in your own words. Remember either way you must acknowledge the source using the appropriate citation conventions;
- **Self-plagiarism** – when students submit the same piece of work (or a significant part thereof) for different assessments – students can only be given credit once for any piece of work, even if it is from another institution or examining body (such as from A levels or previous awards);

King's statement on plagiarism

The College statement on Plagiarism is given in Appendix 1. You must submit a signed 'Plagiarism Declaration' at the start of your studies; this declaration will cover all your work for that period.

Every department requires every student to sign a plagiarism statement at the beginning of the programme of study to record that the student understands the nature of plagiarism and will make every effort to avoid it. In addition, the department requires the submission of a signed plagiarism statement with every piece of assessment work.

Students should be aware that academic staff have considerable expertise in identifying plagiarism and use the electronic detection services of Turnitin to assist them.

If you are in doubt about what is or is not permissible you should consult your tutor or course organiser as soon as possible.

Plagiarism detection (Turnitin)

Turnitin is a plagiarism detection and avoidance tool. When used in the correct way it can help you avoid plagiarism. It also assists tutors in identifying work that has been plagiarised.

Turnitin creates a plagiarism report when work is submitted, giving you and academic markers an overall percentage (your Originality Score), and also a detailed report showing where it has identified matched text between your submission and a variety of sources.

It is important to remember:

- Your plagiarism score will never be 0% and you should not aim for this. There will always be coincidental matches between your work and other submissions, and also 'false' readings on quotations, footnotes etc. **When you submit your work to Turnitin, go through the essay as a whole rather than just the report showing the scores.** Use this as an opportunity to see which sentences have been highlighted by Turnitin and **check whether you have referenced the ideas of others, and put any direct quotations in quotation marks.**;
- There is not a set percentage above which your work is considered 'plagiarised'. Turnitin is an additional tool used by tutors to help them identify cases of plagiarism, and will always be used in conjunction with their own knowledge and experience (academic judgement);

It is important that you:

- Use the material provided by the College to help you follow good academic practice;
- Use the library's webpages that contain [further information on Turnitin](#) and on citing references.
- **Leave yourself plenty of time to check your coursework via Turnitin before submission.** Planning your schedule in advance and developing your time management skills will help with this.
- **Seek help from your Personal Tutor and/or course/subject tutor** who can offer support with developing time management skills.
- **Ask for help if you experience any difficult circumstances (such as medical or personal problems)** that prevent you from having sufficient time to work on your

essay and check it thoroughly, and do contact KCLSU Advice (advice@kclsu.org) for advice on applying for a deadline extension.

Plagiarism summary

- It is very important that you refer correctly to studies and publications that you have read and included in your coursework assignments;
- **Plagiarism can occur accidentally (when you did not intend to present others' work as your own)** – this can happen through incorrect referencing, poor note-taking practice, a lack of understanding of plagiarism and not checking your essay thoroughly. **It is your responsibility to ensure you understand how to avoid plagiarism;**
- You will be reminded that all work submitted must be your own, and must not be as a result of collaborating with anyone else;
- You must use your own words at all times. If you wish to use a quote from a paper or article, remember it must be placed in quotation marks, and the author and year given;
- Submitting the same piece of work (or a significant part thereof) twice for assessment will be regarded as cheating. This practice is known as 'self-plagiarism'.

Common Examples of Plagiarism and How to Avoid Them

Examples	How to Avoid
Copying – inserting the writing or thoughts of others, either published or unpublished, and passing off as your own.	Ensure all extracts and ideas are correctly referenced. Ensure to expand on the ideas of others to show how it applies in your situation.
Copy and Paste – copying text verbatim and passing off as your own work	Ensure that quotation marks are used where taken directly from another's work, and cite original source material
Paraphrasing – re-ordering the words of another to avoid direct quotation.	Quote the work directly or use your own words to communicate the idea and cite the source.
Allowing another student to submit your work as their own.	Ensure you do not share copies of your work with other students for payment or otherwise.

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Sanctions

The College has revised its guidance so that instances of '**major offences**' will be dealt with by the Misconduct Committee. All other offences will be dealt with at Faculty level with the option to refer sufficiently serious cases at the discretion of the sub-assessment board for consideration by the Committee.

Examples of major offences include but are not limited to:

- Where there are serial occasions of academic misconduct offences;
- All plagiarism offences submitted at level 3 unless there is evidence of plagiarism amounting to less than 49% of the totality of the work and/or it is a repeat offence;

- Where a student has inserted the writing or thoughts of others into their written work without the correct referencing (omitted from reference list) unless there is evidence that this constitutes less than 49% of the totality of the work and/or it is a repeat offence;
- A student who substantially copies (49% or more of the totality of the assignment) someone else's work or thoughts and clearly attempts to pass this off as their own including using images and audiovisual presentations without acknowledgement;
- A student who copies text verbatim (49% or more of the totality of the assignment) and clearly attempts to pass this off as their own, without using quotation marks and citing the original source;
- Undergraduate Level 6 or Postgraduate taught level 7 essays containing work undertaken at a previous institution;
- Where a student submits an MA, MSc or MPhil thesis containing work previously submitted in support of pursuit of the subject of the thesis (such as from an undergraduate or postgraduate taught research project);
- Where a student makes up or falsifies data for a final year assignment such as a research project;
- Where a student takes unauthorised material into the examination hall/room;
- Where a student takes and uses unauthorised aids (e.g. a calculator or an iPhone) during an examination when not expressly permitted;
- When students collaborate, without permission, to produce individual assignments/portfolios at level 6 or level 7 that when compared significantly overlap in content, order, structure and/or format;
- When a student submits a summative assignment that has been written by a third party or obtained from a professional writing 'service';
- When medical conditions or evidence are falsified to gain an advantage (e.g. deadline extension);
- Where a student allows another student to submit their work (in part or as a whole) as their own.

Examples of other offences include but are not limited to:

- All plagiarism offences submitted at level 3 unless there is evidence of plagiarism of 49% or more of the totality of the work and/or it is a repeat offence;
- Where a student has inserted the writing or thoughts of others into their written work without the correct referencing (omitted from reference list) unless there is evidence that this constitutes 49% or more of the totality of the work and/or it is a repeat offence;
- Where a student closely paraphrases small sections of someone else's work (e.g. by changing the words or the order of the words slightly) without using the appropriate citation conventions.¹
- When students collaborate, without permission, to produce individual assignments/portfolios at level 3 or level 4 that when compared significantly overlap in content, order, structure and/or format;
- When undergraduate level 3 -5 and postgraduate taught assignments (that contribute 25% or less of the mark for the module) are submitted containing work undertaken at a previous institution, including A-Level work unless there is evidence that this constitutes 49% or more of the totality of the work and/or it is a repeat offence;
- When the student does not comply with the instructions given in the examination hall on an examination paper;

¹ Citation conventions vary according to discipline

- When a student does not comply with the instructions of an invigilator in the examination hall/room;
- When a student copies someone else's work during a level 3 or 4 examination unless there is evidence that this constitutes 49% or more of the totality of the work and/or it is a repeat offence;
- When a student talks to other students whilst under examination conditions;

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