

PLAGIARISM - What it is and how to avoid it

What is plagiarism? According to the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (6th edition) (2000), to plagiarize means **'To copy another person's words or works and pretend that they are your own.'** Lingnan University defines plagiarism simply as: **Using others' ideas and words without clearly acknowledging the source of that information.**

From: <https://www.ln.edu.hk/current-students/student-orientation/academic-pursuit/academic-integrity>

Plagiarism is considered morally wrong as it is a form of intellectual theft, even if it is committed unintentionally. Therefore it is a serious issue in both the academic world and the workplace.

- ✘ There are **penalties** for those who plagiarize, which range from failing an assignment to failing a course or even (in the most severe or repeated cases) being expelled from university.
- ✓ However, there are also **rewards** for those who learn the skills to avoid plagiarism and to become good writers, perhaps even authors!



How to use this guide

This guide is designed to help you understand what plagiarism is, how to avoid it and how to become a better writer. You can use this online or print it out. Here's how we suggest you use it.

- 1) Choose at least one of the [Online Tutorials](#) to check out.
- 2) Then jump to the [Online Quizzes](#) to test yourself. Take one from section a) and one from section b). If you don't do so well, do more until you can get at least **80%** right.
- 3) Read the [Strategies to Avoid Plagiarism](#) and select your weak points to work on.

ONLINE TUTORIALS

http://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/QPA_plagiarism.html - **How to avoid plagiarism**

<http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/pamphlets/plagiarism.shtml> - **Plagiarism: What It is and How to Recognize and Avoid It**

<https://www.indiana.edu/~plag/examples.html> - **How to recognize plagiarism**

<http://www2.umf.maine.edu/plagiarism/quick-tips-for-avoiding-plagiarism/> - **Tips for avoiding plagiarism** – Try the links on the right side of the page.

ONLINE QUIZZES

All these quizzes give you instant feedback on your answers.

a) What is plagiarism?

Choose from these online quizzes to help you know if you understand which practices are plagiarism and which practices are acceptable:

- <http://en.writecheck.com/plagiarism-quiz>
- http://turnitin.com/assets/en_us/media/plagiarism-quiz/
- http://tutorials.istudy.psu.edu/academicintegrity/academicintegrity4.html#userbookmark_Activity1
- <https://student.unsw.edu.au/plagiarism-quiz>
- <http://www.brighthubeducation.com/english-homework-help/126240-self-quiz-on-plagiarism-for-writing-essays-and-assignments/>
- <http://cw.routledge.com/textbooks/bailey/questions.asp?unit=1>
- <https://avoidingplagiarism.uts.edu.au/#quiz>

b) Can I recognize plagiarism?

Do you recognize plagiarism when you see it? Try one of these quizzes and find out! These quizzes show acceptable and unacceptable paraphrases, summaries or quotations and give feedback on why each one is or isn't plagiarism:

- <http://www.lib.usm.edu/legacy/plag/acceptuse1.php>
- <http://www.lib.usm.edu/legacy/plag/acceptuse2.php>
- <https://www.indiana.edu/~plag/practice.html>
- <https://plagiarism.arts.cornell.edu/tutorial/exercises/questions.cfm>
- <https://avoidingplagiarism.uts.edu.au/#grid3d>



STRATEGIES TO AVOID PLAGIARISM

Preparation Tips

- 1) Practice good time management. Start preparing early enough, especially when multiple assignments are due.
- 2) When you are given an assignment, make sure you understand the specific requirements as well as the purpose (and therefore your focus) of the assignment. Ask your teacher if you are unsure.
- 3) Whenever you copy or jot down notes while you are researching a topic, make sure you write down details of the source, so you don't forget later that it is not your own writing.
- 4) Learn to read more efficiently for the main points so that you can save more time for the writing process.
 - a. Try any exercises from these two sections on CEAL's English Language Support Service Reading Exercises webpage (<http://webapp.ln.edu.hk/ceal/elss/exercise/reading>) :

- i. Tips to Improve Reading Speed
- ii. Main Ideas in Text

b. Visit the *VETs (Visiting English Tutors)* at the **Drop-in Centre**

(<http://webapp.ln.edu.hk/ceal/elss/>) in LBY202 to ask for advice on reading skills, or register for their **RAP** (Reading Assistance Program).

5) Visit the *VETs (Visiting English Tutors)* at the **Drop-in Centre** (<http://webapp.ln.edu.hk/ceal/elss/>) in LBY202 to discuss any concerns you may have about plagiarism and your writing, or register for their **WAP** (Writing Assistance Program)



Writing Tips

1) Any time you use another author's work, remember that you must:

- a. never just copy – always either quote (using quotation marks) or paraphrase/summarize.
- b. always give credit to the original author through use of in-text citations and a reference list.



2) Check your department's guidelines for formatting of references and citations – academic disciplines vary in their requirements.

3) When you paraphrase or summarize, make sure you are writing the passage using your own words and sentence structures, not just rearranging or replacing a few words or phrases.

4) Improve your paraphrasing and summarizing skills:

a. Try these three exercises from CEAL's English Language Support Service webpage (Other similar exercises are found on this site: <http://webapp.ln.edu.hk/ceal/elss/online-exercises>)

i. **Paraphrasing Mini-Lesson**

(<http://webapp.ln.edu.hk/ceal/elss/sites/default/files/exercise/cate/writing/Paraphrasing/index.htm>) - has interactive exercises, with multiple sample answers, which progress through the stages of paraphrasing

ii. **Paraphrasing & Synthesizing**

(http://webapp.ln.edu.hk/ceal/elss/sites/default/files/exercise/cate/writing/paraphrasing_synthesizing/index.htm) - has exercises to help you better use synonyms, paraphrase and synthesize information

iii. **Example Academic Essay** (<http://webapp.ln.edu.hk/ceal>

[/elss/sites/default/files/exercise/cate/writing/Example%20Academic%20Essay/Example%20Academic%20Essay/index.htm](http://webapp.ln.edu.hk/ceal/elss/sites/default/files/exercise/cate/writing/Example%20Academic%20Essay/Example%20Academic%20Essay/index.htm)) - has an example essay with paraphrases, quotes and summaries highlighted to show you the variety of ways these can be worded and cited.

➔ For more writing exercises in general, try LU CEAL'S [Online Writing Exercises page](http://webapp.ln.edu.hk/ceal/elss/exercise/writing) (<http://webapp.ln.edu.hk/ceal/elss/exercise/writing>)

b. Take a sample of your own paraphrasing or summarizing to the *VETs (Visiting English Tutors)* at the **Drop-in Centre** (<http://webapp.ln.edu.hk/ceal/elss/>) in LBY202, or register for their **WAP** (Writing Assistance Program).