



# Plagiarism

## I) Definition

Plagiarism is the practice of taking credit (copying/ borrowing) for someone else's words or ideas. It is also representing someone else's work or ideas as your own, with or without their consent, by incorporating it into your work without full acknowledgement. It is an act of intellectual dishonesty.

According to the Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary, to "plagiarize" means:

- To steal and pass off (the ideas or words of another) as one's own
- To use (another's production) without crediting the source
- To commit literary theft
- To present as new and original an idea or product derived from an existing source.
- Plagiarism is an act of fraud. It involves both stealing someone else's work and lying about it afterward.

## II) Types of Plagiarism

With respect to the gravity and frequency of plagiarism, a survey of scientific researchers has produced a ranking of plagiarism types. While complete plagiarism represents the most serious offense, paraphrasing is the one that is the most common. It is, thus, very important to consider and understand all the various types of plagiarism and how they occur.

### 1. Complete Plagiarism

Complete plagiarism is the most severe form of plagiarism where a researcher takes a manuscript or study that someone else created, and submits it under his or her name. It is equivalent to intellectual theft and stealing.

### 2. Verbatim Plagiarism

Verbatim or direct plagiarism occurs when an author copies the text of another author, word for word, without the use of quotation marks or attribution, thus passing it as his or her own. In that way, it is like complete plagiarism, but it refers to sections (rather than all) of another paper.

### 3. Paraphrasing Plagiarism

This type is regarded as the most common type of plagiarism. It involves the use of someone else's writing with some minor changes in the sentences and using it as one's own. Even if the words differ, the original idea remains the same and plagiarism occurs.

### 4. Source-based Plagiarism

Plagiarism may occur because of the different types of sources. For example:

- ☞ When a researcher references a source that is incorrect or does not exist, it is a misleading citation.
- ☞ Plagiarism also occurs when a researcher uses a secondary source of data or information, but only cites the primary source of information. Both these types lead to an increase in the number of references sources. This, in turn, increases the citation number of the references.

☞ Finally, data fabrication and falsification are also forms of plagiarism. Data fabrication is the making up of data and research findings, while data falsification involves changing or omitting data to give a false impression. The consequences of this type of plagiarism can be grave, particularly when it comes to medical research, because it can adversely affect clinical decisions.

### **5. Self or Auto Plagiarism**

Also known also known as duplication, happens when an author reuses significant portions of his or her previously published work without attribution. Thus, this type of plagiarism is most likely to involve published researchers, rather than university students. The severity of this kind of infraction is under debate, depending on the copied content. Many academic journals, however, have strict criteria on the percentage of author's work that is reusable. Many journals run manuscripts through a plagiarism-detection software before considering them for review.

### **6. Inaccurate Authorship**

Inaccurate authorship or misleading attribution can happen in two ways:

- ☞ In one form, when an individual contributes to a manuscript but does not get credit for it.
- ☞ The second form is the opposite: when an individual gets credit without contributing to the work.

This type of plagiarism, whichever way it occurs, is a violation of the code of conduct in research. It is also possible to commit this form of plagiarism when someone else edits a manuscript, leading to substantive changes. In this case, the recommendation is to acknowledge the contributors at the time of publication, even if they are not listed as authors.

### **7. Mosaic Plagiarism**

Mosaic plagiarism may be more difficult to detect because it interlays someone else's phrases or text within its own research. It is also known as patchwork plagiarism and it is intentional and dishonest.

### **8. Accidental Plagiarism**

Whether intended or unintended, there is no excuse for plagiarism and the consequences are often the same. However, plagiarism may be accidental if it occurred because of neglect, mistake, or unintentional paraphrasing. Students are likely to commit accidental plagiarism, so universities should stress on the importance of education about this form of plagiarism.

These are some of the different types of plagiarism that are common in the research community.

## **III) Causes/ Reasons of Plagiarism**

**1. Lack of confidence:** one of the most common reasons that lead students commit plagiarism. Students may fear failure or fear taking risks in their own work.

**2. Lack of Time:** Students may have poor time-management skills or they may plan poorly for the time and effort required for research-based writing, and believe they have no choice but to plagiarize. This can be a singular problem with two causes:

- ☞ First, it might be the author's fault. Through poor time management or lack of focus, they might find themselves in a situation where they do not have enough time to finish a task.
- ☞ Second, it could be the fault of the person who assigned the writing. Overloading authors or students to the point that, even with perfect time management, there is little to no way they can complete the task ethically.

**3. Don't Care / Laziness :** this one is a difficult one for educators and editors alike but some writers simply do not care about the task at hand or are otherwise not motivated to complete it. Whether they think it's pointless or merely beneath them personally, when an authors doesn't take an assignment seriously, the odds that they will simply submit the works of another as their own increases. Simply put, when authors see the value in a work, their work ethic improves and they're much less likely to plagiarize.

**4. Lack of Adequate Knowledge:** students may make a mistake that would result in committing plagiarism unintentionally. Lack of awareness of the rules of conducting scientific research is, by far, the least common, but it does happen whether through poor paraphrasing, lost citations or some other means. To be clear, plagiarism that results from an error does not look like malicious plagiarism. It usually deals more with inadequate attribution than no attribution and is generally smaller in nature. Among these mistakes:

- ☞ Students may not know how to integrate the ideas of others and document the sources of those ideas appropriately in their texts.
- ☞ Students may make mistakes as they learn how to integrate others' words or ideas into their own work because error is a natural part of learning.
- ☞ Students may not know how to take careful and fully documented notes during their research.

#### IV) Consequences of Plagiarism

Plagiarism can have serious consequences. Depending on the nature of the plagiarism and the university or instructor's policy, here are some possible consequences:

- Academic probation
- Failure of the assignment
- Failure of the course
- Suspension
- Dismissal from the program or the institution

Additionally, you can seriously damage your academic and/or professional reputation.

Plagiarism is not limited to academic writing. It is also possible to plagiarize creative writing and online content.

#### V) How to Avoid Plagiarism

Not everyone who plagiarizes starts out with the goal of stealing someone else's work. Sometimes, plagiarism is simply the result of poor planning and a few bad, panicked decisions. In order not to fall victim to the plagiarism trap, you need to follow these tips to produce successful, original academic writing.

- 1 **Begin the research process as early as possible**, preferably as soon as you receive a new assignment. Read each source carefully. Take breaks between reading sessions to absorb the information. Explain each source's key ideas out loud, without referencing the original text. Then, write down each source's main arguments in your own words. This process will ensure you have plenty of time to both absorb your sources' ideas and formulate your own.
- 2 **Write a thorough outline.** After you've spent time researching and brainstorming, write a detailed outline of your paper. Focus on pinpointing your own original argument. As you outline, imagine yourself in conversation with your sources. Instead of restating your source's ideas, examine them and consider how they relate to your own.
- 3 **Paraphrase "blind."** If you plan to explain an author's ideas in your paper, write the explanation without looking at the original text. If you find this process tricky, try writing out the ideas in a conversational tone, as though you're explaining the idea to a friend. Then rewrite the information in a more appropriate tone for your paper.
- 4 **Keep track of your sources.** Make a list of every source you read, even the ones you don't expect to refer to in your paper. As you write, create a running bibliography using a free bibliography generator tool. Anytime you quote or paraphrase an author's ideas in your draft, include the source information right next to the relevant sentence.
- 5 **Use an online plagiarism checker.** Although online tools are not foolproof, it's a good idea to run your paper through a plagiarism checker before submitting it. You may discover that you've unintentionally composed a sentence that closely resembles something written by one of your sources or failed to include a citation for one of your direct quotes. Free resources such as Quetext compare your work to

millions of documents and search for close matches. Your professor probably uses these tools, and you should too.

## References

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