

PLAGIARISM

Many students fear the word “plagiarism”. **Plagiarism refers to using some other person's ideas and information without acknowledging that specific person as the source.** In other words, it is when you use information in your assignment but have not cited where you researched it. **This can also be applied to tables, figures, images, ideas and data.** It can be when you present someone else’s work as your own. **It is considered academic misconduct and cheating.**

TOP TIP

It is a common misconception that it will look good to pretend that you have come up with the idea or information but, in fact, it is good to show the level of research that you have completed by citing all the sources. It shows your credibility as a writer!

Turnitin

Turnitin is used in UCC and is integrated on Canvas, to allow you to **upload your assignments electronically.** This software allows UCC tutors and lecturers to **check for similarity with other sources of information.**

Many students often ask “**what percentage of plagiarism will be acceptable on Turnitin?**”. This is a difficult question to answer because **plagiarism is never acceptable!**

TOP TIP

Turnitin can highlight common phrases within a discipline or even the course code and that counts as part of the plagiarism percentage. Direct quotes should be clearly stated by using quotation marks and citing the source, then, it cannot be considered as plagiarism. It is a software to highlight similarities - not plagiarism. Tutors and lecturers will determine if it is plagiarism.

How to avoid plagiarism?

Quotes

In certain subjects you may all be using similar words. *For example, if you are learning about journalism, "newspapers" or even the name of a particular paper will be common among student assignments.* This is not plagiarism. **If you are using quotes (someone else's words), this must be clear to the reader by using quotation marks.**

TOP TIP

In your drafts you can highlight quotes to distinctly see how much of your assignment is reliant on quotes. You can paraphrase them later in your own words.

Write in your own voice

When taking notes from sources and lectures, you should avoid doing it verbatim.

Where possible, paraphrase your assignment in later drafts. **This will become easier with practice; the more you read about and understand the subject matter. Remember to look up appropriate academic sources, such as peer-reviewed literature.** To develop good habits, you should allow yourself time to do this.

Referencing

Each department in UCC has a particular method of referencing or citing material and you should learn this. When taking notes in lectures or from other material you should record where the original ideas came from. This is important to avoid plagiarism but also if you need to refer back to these ideas to develop your writing.

TOP TIP

You should maintain a record of your sources. You can use a citation software like Endnote or even an excel sheet.

Useful Sources

- UCC Library, 'Academic Integrity: Plagiarism', Available at: <https://lib-guides.ucc.ie/academicintegrity/plagiarism>
- UCC Plagiarism Policy, Available at: <https://www.ucc.ie/en/media/support/recordsandexaminations/documents/UCCPlagiarismPolicy-November2017.pdf>

Other Relevant Online PDFs

- Paraphrasing
- Notetaking for Academic Reading
- How to Write an Essay
- How to Build an Academic Argument
- Sourcing & Cite-Seeing: A Guide to Referencing