



WHAT IS PLAGIARISM?

Plagiarism is the act of copying text or ideas from others and presenting them as one's own. Authors have 'intellectual property right' to their ideas and texts. Copying text and pasting it into one's own work is, therefore, considered theft. And theft, of course, is unethical and unacceptable. Suspected plagiarism linked to course assignments, term papers or exam papers will be reported by the relevant departments to the University Board. The University Board will make a decision and determine appropriate reactions regarding the student.

Some students don't realize that they commit plagiarism. Hence, they plagiarise in good faith. The following examples will teach you how you should cite your references correctly and avoid the crime. If you still have questions after reading the text below, please contact your academic adviser or study coordinator immediately for clarification. At a university, lack of awareness is no excuse for plagiarism.

Text Based on Other Authors' Knowledge and Experience

Consider an original text by Werner (1993: 12)¹:

The results of many rural development projects aiming to improve the living standards of the rural population in developing countries have often been disappointingly poor.

1. You plagiarise Werner if you—based on this text—write:

The results of many rural development projects aiming to improve the living standards of the rural population in developing countries have often been disappointingly poor.

Why? Because (1) you copy the text without enclosing it in quotation marks, and (2) you give no credit to the creator of the sentence (no reference).

2. You plagiarise if you write:

According to Werner (1993: 12), the results of many rural development projects aiming to improve the living standards of the rural population in developing countries have often been disappointingly poor.

Why? Because you copy the text written by Warner without enclosing it in quotation marks. By not using quotation marks, you falsely indicate that you have formulated Werner's message using your own words.

3. You plagiarise if you write:

Many rural development projects aiming to improve the living standards of the rural population in developing countries have often *had* disappointingly poor *effects*.

Why? Because (1) you still copy the text even if you paraphrase Werner's text by taking out 'the results of,' replacing 'been' by 'had,' and adding 'effect' and (2) because no reference is given.

¹ Werner, J. 1993. Participatory development of agricultural innovations - Procedures and methods of on-farm research. Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (DTZ) GmbH and SDC, Swiss Development Cooperation. TZ-Verlagsgesellschaft mbH, Rossdorf, Germany.

4. You plagiarise if you write:

Many rural development projects *meant* to improve the living *conditions* of the rural population in developing countries have often *had very poor effects* (Werner, 1993: 12).

Why? Because you still copy the text even if you paraphrase some more by replacing the word '*aiming*' by '*meant*,' the word '*standard*' by '*condition*,' and the word '*disappointingly*' by '*very*.' Werner's sentence structure still remains. Providing reference does not eliminate the need to express the idea in your own words (unless you use quotation marks).

5. You plagiarise if you write:

"The results of many rural development projects aiming to improve the living standards of the rural population in developing countries have often been disappointingly poor."

Why? Because no reference is given. The quotation marks clearly show that you cite another author, but whom?

6. You do not plagiarise if you write:

"The results of many rural development projects aiming to improve the living standards of the rural population in developing countries have often been disappointingly poor" (Werner, 1993).

or

According to Werner (1993), "the results of many rural development projects aiming to improve the living standards of the rural population in developing countries have often been disappointingly poor."

Why? Because (1) you indicate that you present Werner's idea by providing reference, and (2) you show that you present Werner's idea in his own words by enclosing the text in quotation marks.

7. You do not plagiarise if you write:

The success rate of rural development projects in developing countries has generally been low. Attempts to raise the standard of living among rural poor have to a large extent not had the anticipated effects (Werner, 1993).

Why? Because (1) the statement is your own; you are the creator of sentence, and (2) you provide reference for the information on which you base your statement.

Text based on Your Own Knowledge and Experience

8. Assume that you have lots of experience in implementing or studying development projects. You may write that:

The success rate of rural development projects in developing countries has generally been low. Attempts to raise the standard of living among rural poor have to a large extent not had the anticipated effects.

You do not plagiarise anyone although you do not state your sources for this information. Why? Listing all your sources might be impossible, and you may not know from where you got the information. References are not needed when you express your accumulated, synthesized knowledge. Also, you do not plagiarise Werner even if he made a similar statement earlier. Reference is only needed if his statement had a *significant influence on your understanding* of the issue.

However, if your knowledge is based on one or a few sources, and you do not remember which ones, you should do a literature search to find them. Poor memory is not an excuse for omitting references where references are appropriate.

9. Again, let us assume that you have lots of experience in implementing or studying development projects (as item 8). You may write that:

The success rate of rural development projects in developing countries has generally been low. Attempts to raise the standard of living among rural poor have to a large extent not had the anticipated effects (e.g., Werner, 1993).

The abbreviation 'e.g.' means 'for example.' By writing 'e.g., Werner, 1993' you indicate that you have obtained your information from several sources too numerous to list and that Werner (1993) is an example of your sources.

10. Similarly to item 9, you may write:

The success rate of rural development projects in developing countries has generally been low. Attempts to raise the standard of living among rural poor have to a large extent not had the anticipated effects (cf. Werner, 1993).

The abbreviation 'cf.' means 'compare.' The reference 'cf. Werner, 1993' states that the reader should compare your statement to that of Werner because he has expressed the same or a similar opinion. A reference like this is optional.

Text based on Common Knowledge

11. You do not plagiarise if you write:

The Earth is round.

... without referring to Copernicus (1514)

or

Ethiopia is a country on the Horn of Africa.

... without referring to a world atlas.

or

Water scarcity poses a serious limitation to agricultural production in semi-arid areas.

... without referring to a publication documenting the fact.

Why? Common knowledge does not need a reference.

But what is 'common knowledge'? This is a difficult question. Even experts disagree on definitions. You will have to make your own judgment. If in doubt, play it safe and cite your source.

PLAGIARISM QUIZ

This quiz will test your understanding of plagiarism and correct citation of sources. Consider each case by comparing the student text to the original text. Assess the use of references. Check off whether you think the student text is plagiarism or not. If you find the student text to be plagiarised, check the reason(s). Note that each case may have more than one reason for being plagiarism.

Case 1

Original text	Student text
Ten percent of the world's population produces 70 percent of its goods and services and receives 70 percent of world income – an average of \$30,000 per person. At the other extreme, half of the world's population lives on less than \$2 per day. How do we understand this extreme global inequality? And, more importantly, what can we do about it?	Ten percent of the world's population produces 70 percent of its goods and services and receives 70 percent of world income – an average of \$30,000 per person. At the other extreme, half of the world's population lives on less than \$2 per day. How do we understand this extreme global inequality? And, more importantly, what can we do about it?
<p><i>Source:</i> Collier, P. and Dollar, D. (2001) <i>Can the world cut poverty in half? How policy reform and effective aid can meet the international development goals</i>. World Development 29(11):1787-1966</p>	<p><i>References:</i> none</p>

The student text is:

- a) Not plagiarism
- b) Plagiarism

If it is plagiarism, it is because:

- c) The original text is copied word by word and not enclosed in quotation marks
- d) The original text is paraphrased, but the sentence structure is copied
- e) The source of ideas, theories or opinions is not acknowledged
- f) The source of facts, numbers, statistics, photos or illustrations is not acknowledged

Case 2

Original text	Student text
Ten percent of the world's population produces 70 percent of its goods and services and receives 70 percent of world income – an average of \$30,000 per person. At the other extreme, half of the world's population lives on less than \$2 per day. How do we understand this extreme global inequality? And, more importantly, what can we do about it?	Ten percent of the global population produces 70 % of its products and receives 70 % of the total income – an average of \$30,000 per person. On the other hand, half of the world's population lives on less than \$2 per day. How can we understand this inequality? And, more importantly, how can we change it?
Source: Collier, P. and Dollar, D. (2001) <i>Can the world cut poverty in half? How policy reform and effective aid can meet the international development goals</i> . World Development 29(11):1787-1966	References: none

The student text is:

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Case 3

Original text	Student text
Ten percent of the world's population produces 70 percent of its goods and services and receives 70 percent of world income – an average of \$30,000 per person. At the other extreme, half of the world's population lives on less than \$2 per day. How do we understand this extreme global inequality? And, more importantly, what can we do about it?	One tenth of the world's people produces 70 % of the goods and services and receives 70 % of total income – an average of USD 30,000 per person. On the other hand, half of the world's people lives on less than USD 2 per day. How can we understand this inequality? And, more urgently, how can we change it? (Collier and Dollar, 2001).
Source: Collier, P. and Dollar, D. (2001) <i>Can the world cut poverty in half? How policy reform and effective aid can meet the international development goals</i> . World Development 29(11):1787-1966	References: Collier, P. and Dollar, D. (2001) <i>Can the world cut poverty in half? How policy reform and effective aid can meet the international development goals</i> . World Development 29(11):1787-1966

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Case 4

Original text	Student text
Ten percent of the world's population produces 70 percent of its goods and services and receives 70 percent of world income – an average of \$30,000 per person. At the other extreme, half of the world's population lives on less than \$2 per day.	Collier and Dollar (2001) states that “ten percent of the world's population produces 70 percent of its goods and services and receives 70 percent of world income – an average of \$30,000 per person. At the other extreme, half of the world's population lives on less than \$2 per day.”
<i>Source:</i> Collier, P. and Dollar, D. (2001) <i>Can the world cut poverty in half? How policy reform and effective aid can meet the international development goals.</i> World Development 29(11):1787-1966	<i>References:</i> Collier, P. and Dollar, D. (2001) <i>Can the world cut poverty in half? How policy reform and effective aid can meet the international development goals.</i> World Development 29(11):1787-1966

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Case 5

Original text	Student text
Ten percent of the world's population produces 70 percent of its goods and services and receives 70 percent of world income – an average of \$30,000 per person. At the other extreme, half of the world's population lives on less than \$2 per day.	Collier and Dollar (2001) states that one tenth of the world's people produces 70 % of its goods and services and receives 70 % of the total income – an average of USD 30,000 per person. On the other hand, half of the world's people lives on less than USD 2 daily.
<i>Source:</i> Collier, P. and Dollar, D. (2001) <i>Can the world cut poverty in half? How policy reform and effective aid can meet the international development goals.</i> World Development 29(11):1787-1966	<i>References:</i> Collier, P. and Dollar, D. (2001) <i>Can the world cut poverty in half? How policy reform and effective aid can meet the international development goals.</i> World Development 29(11):1787-1966

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Case 6

Original text	Student text
Ten percent of the world's population produces 70 percent of its goods and services and receives 70 percent of world income – an average of \$30,000 per person. At the other extreme, half of the world's population lives on less than \$2 per day. How do we understand this extreme global inequality? And, more importantly, what can we do about it?	Seventy percent of the total world income is earned by about 10 % of the richest people in the world. This is because they produce 70 % of the world goods. On the other hand, the poorest half of the world's people earn less than two dollar per day. What is the reason for this skewed distribution of wealth, and how can we change the situation?
Source: Collier, P. and Dollar, D. (2001) <i>Can the world cut poverty in half? How policy reform and effective aid can meet the international development goals</i> . World Development 29(11):1787-1966	References: none

The student text is:

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Case 7

Original text	Student text
Ten percent of the world's population produces 70 percent of its goods and services and receives 70 percent of world income – an average of \$30,000 per person. At the other extreme, half of the world's population lives on less than \$2 per day. How do we understand this extreme global inequality? And, more importantly, what can we do about it?	According to Collier and Dollar (2001), 70 % of the total world income is earned by about 10 % of the richest people in the world. This is because they produce 70 % of the world goods. On the other hand, the poorest half of the world's people earn less than two dollar per day. What is the reason for this skewed distribution of wealth, and how can we change the situation?
Source: Collier, P. and Dollar, D. (2001) <i>Can the world cut poverty in half? How policy reform and effective aid can meet the international development goals</i> . World Development 29(11):1787-1966	References: Collier, P. and Dollar, D. (2001) <i>Can the world cut poverty in half? How policy reform and effective aid can meet the international development goals</i> . World Development 29(11):1787-1966

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Case 8

Original text	Student text
The Republic of Uganda, or Uganda, is a country in East Africa, bordered in the east by Kenya, in the north by Sudan, by the Democratic Republic of Congo in the west, Rwanda in the southwest and Tanzania in the south. The southern part of the country includes a substantial portion of Lake Victoria, within which it shares borders with Kenya and Tanzania.	Uganda is located in East Africa. It borders Kenya in the east, Sudan in the North, Congo in the west, Rwanda in the southwest and Tanzania in the south. A large portion of Lake Victoria is part of Uganda.
Source: Wikipedia (2006) Uganda < http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Uganda > (accessed March 4, 2006)	References: none

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Case 9

Original text and photo	Student text and photo
<p>The Vedic literature written in India around 2000 BC lists hundreds of aromatic substances including cinnamon, ginger and sandalwood, and the Rig Veda describes their use for religious and medical purposes.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">*****</p> 	<p>The Vedic literature lists hundreds of aromatic substances including cinnamon, ginger and sandalwood. The Rig Veda describes their use for religious and medical purposes (Weiss, 1997). Cinnamon is the inner bark of the evergreen trees <i>Cinnamomum cassia</i> and <i>Cinnamomum zeylanicum</i> (Fig. 1).</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">Fig. 1. Leaves of cinnamon tree.</p>
<p><i>Text source:</i> Weiss, E.A. (1997) <i>Essential oil crops</i>. CAB International. CABI Publishing, Oxon, UK. 21 pp.</p> <p><i>Illustration source:</i> Katzer, G. 2006. <i>Ceylon cinnamon (Cinnamomum zeylanicum Blume)</i>. <http://www.uni-graz.at/~katzer/engl/Cinn_zey.html> (accessed March 4, 2006)</p>	<p><i>References:</i> Weiss, E.A. (1997) <i>Essential oil crops</i>. CAB International. CABI Publishing, Oxon, UK. 21 pp.</p>

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The student photo is:

- g) Not plagiarism
- h) Plagiarism

If it is plagiarism, it is because:

- i) The source of facts, numbers, statistics, *photos* or *illustrations* is not acknowledged

Case 10

Original text and photo	Student text and photo
<p>The Vedic literature written in India around 2000 BC lists hundreds of aromatic substances including cinnamon, ginger and sandalwood, and the Rig Veda describes their use for religious and medical purposes.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">*****</p> 	<p>The essential oil crops cinnamon, ginger and sandalwood have been used in India for at least 4000 years (Weiss, 1997). Cinnamon is the inner bark of the evergreen trees <i>Cinnamomum cassia</i> and <i>Cinnamomum zeylanicum</i> (Fig. 1).</p>  <p>Fig. 1. Leaves of cinnamon tree (Photo: Katzer, 2006).</p>
<p><i>Text source:</i> Weiss, E.A. (1997) <i>Essential oil crops</i>. CAB International. CABI Publishing, Oxon, UK. 21 pp.</p> <p><i>Illustration source:</i> Katzer, G. 2006. <i>Ceylon cinnamon (Cinnamomum zeylanicum Blume)</i>. <http://www.uni-graz.at/~katzer/engl/Cinn_zey.html> (accessed March 4, 2006)</p>	<p><i>References:</i> Katzer, G. 2006. <i>Ceylon cinnamon (Cinnamomum zeylanicum Blume)</i>. <http://www.uni-graz.at/~katzer/engl/Cinn_zey.html> (accessed March 4, 2006) Weiss, E.A. (1997) <i>Essential oil crops</i>. CAB International. CABI Publishing, Oxon, UK. 21 pp.</p>

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