

# Don't Get It Wrong

## Academic Misconduct

Different types of academic misconduct are listed and explained in more detail in the university guide found at <http://foi.st-andrews.ac.uk/PublicationScheme/servlet/core.generator.gblobserve?id=1030>. Misconduct includes:

- **Plagiarism** – Copying or paraphrasing another text (published, unpublished, another student's) or someone else's ideas and presenting them as your own.
- **Multiple submission** – Submitting an essay written for one module for another module.
- **Falsification** – Inventing or changing results, usually so that the data fits your hypothesis.
- **False citation** – Citing a source which doesn't actually include the information you say it does.
- **Misconduct in exams** – Everything from taking notes into the exam to impersonating another student.
- **Aiding and abetting** – Helping another student to do any of the above, supplying them with work to hand in, etc.

## Referencing

When it comes to **plagiarism**, not referencing correctly forms a large part of academic misconduct.

**Referencing** is the art of citing your sources when producing academic work. At your high school it may not have mattered all that much, but in the academic world correct referencing is taken very seriously. If you have used ideas, results or research from somewhere or someone else it's important to cite this clearly and correctly. You need to give credit to the academics who carried out the work originally, and also allow readers to evaluate your sources and follow them up themselves.

Deliberately trying to disguise passages taken from other works or making up citations is lying and punished severely by the university, whether your work is going to be marked for continuous assessment or not. You could lose permission to proceed, have your degree capped or be suspended or expelled from the university.

However, more and more students are getting caught for practices they didn't realise counted as misconduct. This is worrying as the university judges students on **action** rather than **intent**. This means not knowing about or understanding the academic misconduct policy, or not "meaning to" cheat, is not considered an excuse. Accidentally committing academic misconduct by referencing something wrongly can result in the same punishment as if you had set out to deliberately falsify something in your work. Now more than ever it's important that you **Don't Get It Wrong**.

## Common Pitfalls

### Copy & Paste

It is not acceptable to copy and paste a piece of text straight into an essay. It is also not acceptable to copy and paste a piece of text and go through changing every other word. Your tutor will most likely have read the text you are plagiarising, and some departments now use the Turnitin software to check for similarities between sources and essays and between the work of different students.

If you really feel you can't word something better than your source, you can quote the text directly. However, this text should be indented, in quote marks and referenced fully. Quoting is looked down upon by many members of staff because it's important that you show you can produce your own ideas in your own words. You should therefore limit quoting to cases where, for example, you are directly refuting a specific argument.

Some people type up a portion of text for reference purposes only, but over time that text is assimilated into their work and the original source forgotten. It is important if you are pasting portions of text into your own document that you keep it clear in your notes that this work is not your own. It's very easy to forget where a piece of text came from, so **reference as you go along**.

### Inappropriate Collaboration

At your high school it may have been acceptable to work in a group to produce a report or essay. Some students think that when they get to St Andrews it will still be OK to work on something with other people and produce a first draft of an essay together, then rework it slightly themselves. Whilst discussion with others on your course can give you a different perspective on a topic, it is very important that anything you hand in is an **individual** piece of work.

In some subjects you will be expected to gather data in a small group and discuss the results together, but the final work must still be yours. You should be given clear guidance on what is encouraged discussion and what is inappropriate collaboration – ask your tutor if you're unsure.

## School Requirements

There is no university-wide policy on referencing. Different schools and departments have different requirements, some change their requirements between Sub-honours and Honours, others don't mind how you reference as long as you're consistent. Have a look on your school's website to see if they have a guide or policy and if in doubt email your tutor for further information – it's better to ask for clarification than risk handing in something which could get you into trouble.

Below are some of the university documents which give guidance on referencing. It needn't be from your school for you to find it useful.

**Geography & Geosciences**, advice in the applicable Undergraduate Handbooks linked from this page: <http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/gg/prospective/ug/>

**Classics**, pp.3-4 of the guide to essay writing: <http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/classics/currentstudents/Guide%20to%20essay%20writing.pdf>

**Modern Languages**, pp.7-9 of the school handbook, under 'Essay writing': <http://foi.st-andrews.ac.uk/PublicationScheme/servlet/core.generator.gblobserve?id=609>

**Art History**, pp.14-17 demonstrate referencing an online article and give advice on evaluating internet sources: <http://www-ah.st-andrews.ac.uk/under/undergraduatehandbook.pdf>

**Film Studies**, pp.13-16 of the handbook provide detailed examples of how to reference different types of sources: [http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/filmstudies/docs/undergraduate\\_handbook\\_0708.pdf](http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/filmstudies/docs/undergraduate_handbook_0708.pdf)

## Different Systems of Referencing

There are several systems of referencing around, but the main ones you'll come across are the **Harvard** system and the **British Standard/Numeric** system.

### Harvard

In the **Harvard** reference system a citation would appear in the text as follows:

*Homer uses the absence of the Dioskouroi to underline Helen's human side (Suzuki, 1989, p.40).*

-or-

*Suzuki (1989, p.40) argued that the absence of the Dioskouroi underlined Helen's human side.*

The work would then appear in the end-of-text reference list or bibliography as:

Suzuki, M. (1989) *Metamorphoses of Helen: Authority, Difference and the Epic*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

This generator allows you to input all of your source information then shows how your book, chapter, journal article, website and e-mail reference should look:

<http://www.neilstoolbox.com/bibliography-creator/index.htm>.

A really useful guide to the Harvard system of referencing can be found at [http://libweb.anglia.ac.uk/referencing/files/Harvard\\_referencing.pdf](http://libweb.anglia.ac.uk/referencing/files/Harvard_referencing.pdf)

## British Standard/Numeric

This reference system is often used in arts subjects. Your citation is marked by a numeral which refers the reader either to the bottom of the page (for footnotes) or the end of the essay (endnotes) – do not use both! The first citation in your essay would be marked by a number in brackets or a superscript numeral:

*Homer uses the absence of the Dioskouroi to underline Helen's human side.*<sup>1</sup>

The foot- or endnote would list the source's details in full:

<sup>1</sup>Suzuki, M. *Metamorphoses of Helen: Authority, Difference and the Epic*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1989, p.40.

## Further Information

If you remain unsure about referencing try:

- Asking the person who will be marking your work.
- Reading the university's guide to avoiding academic misconduct, which can be found at <http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/media/Academic%20Misconduct%20-%20student%20version%20-2007%20final.pdf>.
- Exploring 'SALTIRE – SOAR', which can be found in your 'Course List' on WebCT. Follow the links to 'Academic Referencing' then 'Referencing Tools'.
- Contacting June Knowles (jk38) and arranging a time to meet at the SALTIRE building to discuss academic referencing.

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