Definitions

• Plagiarism is passing off someone else’s work as your own

• Collusion is working with someone else when you are meant to be working independently

Good practice

• Refer to other peoples’ work
• Quote other people
• Reuse other peoples’ code

BUT BE SURE
TO REFERENCE THIS PROPERLY

Bad Practice

• Failing to **fully** acknowledge others’ work
  – incorrect or incomplete attribution of work and ideas
  – incorrect use of quotation marks
  – incorrect use of in-text citations
  – incomplete or inaccurate bibliographic information about sources

• Claiming work or ideas as your own because you are ignorant of the work of others

• Getting advice and help with your project but not recording what it was or who gave it
Academic Offences

- Pretending that other people’s work or ideas are your own.
- Copying work without saying you have done so (including your own work that has already been submitted for assessment outside this module).
- Using code or other material written by someone else without saying this is what you have done.
- Working with someone else when you should be working on your own.

Consequences of Bad Practice

- IF
  - you are sloppy in your use of external sources
  - you show ignorance of other’s work or ideas
  - you are vague about where you got your ideas or help from
- Your mark will suffer, and there is a risk that you may be accused of cheating

Consequences of an Academic Offence

- IF you are accused of committing an offence
  - there will be an investigation
  - you will be given an opportunity to explain yourself ...
    but ignorance of the rules is no defence, and nor is “I didn’t mean to do it”
- IF you are found guilty (even on the IPR)
  - the normal minimum penalty for a Level 3 student committing a first offence is F1 in the module
  - you MAY find that you are denied the opportunity to get an Honours Degree
  - you MAY ALSO be subject to Disciplinary Action

Protect Yourself By Doing It RIGHT

- MAKE SURE YOU KNOW
  - when and how you should use work and ideas that you have not produced yourself
  - when and how to cite sources and write references
- MAKE SURE YOU CHECK
  - that everything in your project report (and your IPR) is as it should be
- IF IN DOUBT
  - check with your tutor
  - make sure that nobody reading the report could believe you are claiming credit where you should not be
Avoiding plagiarism

Always cite the source of
- direct quotations
- paraphrases
- borrowed ideas & opinions
- borrowed diagrams and figures
- reused code

Citing other peoples’ work is valuable (1)

- Show the context in which your project is being done
- Demonstrate that you have researched the background
- Use ideas from others to develop your project
- You get credit for a good bibliography

Citing other peoples’ work is valuable (2)

- Back up your ideas by citing reliable published work
  BUT ALWAYS GIVE REFERENCES

  Failure to cite references indicates:
  - Ignorance
  - Attempt to deceive

A common pitfall: errors in note taking

Distinguish between paraphrases and direct quotations.
- Paraphrasing is putting the authors’ ideas in your own words. You must still cite the reference.
- Direct quotations go within quotation marks.
- Copy quotations exactly.
Example 1a (no plagiarism)

Direct quotation (reference correctly cited)

“The great efficiency breakthroughs in software are to be found in the fundamental architecture of the system, not in the surface design of the interface”

(Tognazzini, 2003)

Example 1b (no plagiarism)

Paraphrased text, no direct quotation (reference correctly cited):

The fundamental architecture of a software system has a much greater influence on its efficiency than the surface design of the interface. (Tognazzini, 2003)

Example 1c

Bibliography entry for examples 1a and 1b


Example 2a (bad practice)

Direct quotation (no citation):

“The true measure of any compression scheme is the triple test of how well it compresses typical inputs, how quickly compression and decompression are achieved, and how much memory space is required for the method to operate.”

Some might say this is plagiarism, since the source is not identified
Example 2b (plagiarism)

Direct quotation (no quotation marks, no citation):
The true measure of any compression scheme is the triple test of how well it compresses typical inputs, how quickly compression and decompression are achieved, and how much memory space is required for the method to operate.

Example 2c (bad practice)

Mis-quoted text (reference correctly cited)
“...the triple test of how well it compresses input data, how quickly compression is achieved, and how much memory is needed for the operation.” (Witten, Moffat and Bell, 1999, page 406)
We have put the parts that are actually quoted in italics to show that only part of the quotation is accurate.

Example 2d (bad practice)

Attempt at a paraphrase that is actually mostly a quotation (reference correctly cited)
The real measure of any compression scheme is the triple test of how well it compresses input data, how quickly compression is achieved, and how much memory is needed for the operation. (Witten, Moffat and Bell, 1999, page 406)
(This is the same text as on the previous slide.)
Lesson: EITHER QUOTE ACCURATELY OR PARAPHRASE PROPERLY

Example 2e (plagiarism)

Same text as for 2c and 2d, but no citation
The real measure of any compression scheme is the triple test of how well it compresses input data, how quickly compression is achieved, and how much memory is needed for the operation.

Lesson: ALWAYS CITE YOUR SOURCES
**Example 2f (no plagiarism)**

Paraphrase (reference correctly cited):

To evaluate a compression scheme we need to know how well it compresses typical inputs, the speed at which it works, and the amount of memory space needed for the method to operate. (Witten, Moffat and Bell, 1999, page 406)

By re-writing the text in your own words (paraphrasing) you demonstrate that you understand what it means.

You get credit for this.

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**Reusing code (1)**

- Plagiarism of designs and program code is taken even more seriously, because this material is supposed to come from you.

But

- Code re-use is often a sensible approach. Remember: it is one of the reasons for using Object Oriented methods!
- Don’t re-invent the wheel: if a suitable program has been written, use it

**BUT ALWAYS CITE YOUR SOURCE**

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**Reusing code (2)**

- Some development environments (e.g. Delphi or Visual C++) produce a lot of automatically generated code.
- Whatever the origins of the code you use, make sure you adopt a system for distinguishing that which is copied or machine generated from that which you have written yourself.
- For example, you might put a comment at the start and end of each generated/copied passage.

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**Advice on using others’ work**

- Always cite correctly.
- Never pretend someone else’s work is your own.
- Do not assume it’s “obvious” which ideas and materials are yours and which are someone else’s.
- Record all citation information, and construct your bibliography, as you go along.

(This will save you a lot of time, too)
Useful WWW Resources Provided By UH

*Plagiarism and how to avoid it*
logos.herts.ac.uk/libqdp/plagiarism/start.html
(on-campus, UH web-proxy, or VPN access only)

*Harvard Referencing: a guide with examples*
www.studynet.herts.ac.uk/ptl/common/LIS.nsf/lis/busharvard