

STUDENTS' UNION ADVICE SERVICE

Your guide to suspected plagiarism

So what exactly is 'Plagiarism'?

In simple terms, plagiarism refers to using and presenting another person's ideas / words without properly referencing the source to indicate where the information is originally from. This applies to both quotations and paraphrasing (putting the ideas / information of others in your own words). Did you know that plagiarism also includes using work from an assignment submitted previously and working with another student when the work is meant to be individual?

I have been accused of suspected plagiarism, what will happen and how should I prepare?

- ✓ First things first, easier said than done, but don't panic. The Students' Union Advice Service is here to help you with any advice you may need relating to suspected plagiarism – our Academic and Welfare Advisers can help prepare you for your meeting. You can book an appointment / attend a drop-in session, email or call us.
- ✓ Make sure that you read through the University's Plagiarism and Examination Offences regulations carefully found at <http://www.gre.ac.uk/students/regs/plagiarism> to familiarise yourself with the procedure. Also have a read through the Little Book of Plagiarism (available at the Students' Union) to find out about the many different forms of plagiarism.
- ✓ The 'Investigative Interview' is an informal meeting with 2 members of staff to investigate the suspected plagiarism. Your tutors will have a copy of your assignment with the highlighted sections in question. This is your opportunity to put your side of the story forward and also ask any questions you may have.
- ✓ The Assessment Offences Panel is the more formal stage and usually has 5 members of staff, one of which should be a Students' Union Sabbatical Officer. Panel meetings often take place for moderate / major cases of plagiarism or if the matter cannot be resolved at the interview stage.
- ✓ Read through your assignment and have a think about whether you may have plagiarised (even if through mistake). If you have plagiarised, it is important to admit to this at your meeting. This may help to resolve matters more quickly and also show that you are taking responsibility.
- ✓ If you feel you have not plagiarised, you may wish to bring evidence to your meeting including books and journals used and any notes you made in preparation for the assignment.

What is 'Turnitin'?

Turnitin is a plagiarism detection software tool. Many Schools run electronic copies of assignments through Turnitin before marking which will highlight every reference that is made. Your plagiarism report (CP1) should reveal the percentage of exact matches to other references in your assignment.

Your School may ask you to submit your work via Turnitin so you can look at all of the references you have made to help ensure that you have referenced correctly.

Can I get representation for my meeting?

Representation is provided at the Assessment Offences Panel stage. The Students' Union has a team of elected Sabbatical Officers who can represent you. You may wish to bring a friend along to the Investigative Interview stage for moral support.

Will there be a penalty?

There will often be a penalty where a student is found to have plagiarised. Please refer to the penalties section in the plagiarism regulations for information and note that the severity of the penalty is dependent on several factors such as the degree of plagiarism, stage of study etc.

What if I am not happy with the decision of the Investigative Interview / Panel stage?

- ✓ Contact us for advice.
- ✓ There is an Academic Appeal procedure – the 2 grounds for appeal are that the procedure was not properly carried out or that substantial new evidence has come to light. Academic Appeal regulations are found at <http://www.gre.ac.uk/students/regs/appeals>.

How can I help to insure that this doesn't happen again?

- ✓ Use your School's referencing guide. Check your Programme handbook or ask your Personal Tutor which referencing guide to use and obtain a copy.
- ✓ Understand the different forms of plagiarism.
- ✓ Attend Study Skills referencing workshops. Visit <http://www.gre.ac.uk/studyskills/referencing> for information.
- ✓ Visit the PLATO (Plagiarism Teaching online page) at http://www.gre.ac.uk/offices/ils/ls/guides/information_skills/plato.
- ✓ Seek academic guidance from your Personal Tutor / Course Leader where necessary to check that you have referenced correctly.

Want to know more?

You are likely to have further questions about plagiarism / specific to your individual case and the Students' Union Advice Service is here to help!

You can book an appointment / attend a drop-in session / email suugadvice@gre.ac.uk / phone us on 020 8331 8057. Drop-in times are available from SU receptions and online at www.suug.co.uk/welfare. Medway students can either contact us (as above) or contact UMSA for advice – visit <http://www.umsa.org.uk/pages/advice>.

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