

**FACULTY OF SCIENCE**



**PLAGIARISM**

## PLAGIARISM AND PARAPHRASING

It is an academic offence to attempt to gain for oneself or another person an unpermitted advantage in an assessment.

### *Plagiarism*

The following definition of plagiarism appears in the University Calendar:

"It is an academic offence to present someone else's work as being one's own"

**Work in any year of study which is not undertaken in an Examination Room** under the supervision of an invigilator (such as dissertations, essays, project work, experiments, observations, specimen collecting and other similar work), but which is nevertheless required work forming part of the degree, diploma or certificate assessment, must be the student's own and must not contain plagiarised material.

Possible punishments for plagiarism are that the University may apply one of the following penalties:

- a) No marks to be awarded in relation to the specific material which is the subject of the academic offence (thus leading to a reduced overall mark for the piece of course work, dissertation, examination question or examination script in which the specific material appears).
- b) Award a mark of zero for the entire piece of course work, dissertation, examination question or examination script in which the academic offence has occurred.
- c) Award a mark of zero for the entire module in which the academic offence has occurred.
- d) Award a mark of zero for all the assessments in the semester (even where this will lead to a reduction in degree class). In the case of year-long modules, this penalty may affect both semesters.
- e) Award a mark of zero for the whole year (even where this will lead to a reduction in degree class).
- f) Require the student to take reassessments (as a result of being awarded zero marks) in the following session before being allowed to progress or complete their course.
- g) Require the student to register with the University and enrol on modules in which they need to take reassessments (as a result of being awarded zero marks) in the following session before being allowed to progress or complete their course.
- h) Require a research student to resubmit a thesis.
- i) Require a research student to register for a period of supervision before being allowed to resubmit a thesis.
- j) Terminate the student's course.
- k) Withdraw the award of a degree or other qualification from, and issue an amended transcript to, a former student of the University.

**Note:**

**Plagiarism is regarded as a serious academic offence by the University and will be punished accordingly. Plagiarism can be easily identified by entering suspect passages into search engines. Specialist search engines are available to check all submitted work against previously published sources, including coursework submitted by students in previous years. The Faculty of Science is participating in a University-wide scheme to detect plagiarism; students may be required to submit all coursework, including BSc projects, in electronic form to facilitate automatic on-line detection of plagiarism.**

**GUIDANCE TO HELP YOU AVOID COMMITTING PLAGIARISM**

1. You are allowed to use information from other people's work provided you acknowledge the source. This can apply to a statement, Table or Figure. The best way of doing this for Tables and Figures is to add: "After Smith (1988)" or "Modified from Smith (1988)", and include the reference in your reference list.

2. If you are discussing something somebody else has said, you can say, for example: Smith (1987) claimed that coral reefs in the Pacific were damaged by high temperatures in 1975. Or: It has been claimed that high temperatures in 1975 damaged coral reefs in the Pacific (Smith, 1975).

3. If you wish to quote from previous work you should put it in quotation marks, e.g. Smith (1980) described the outcome of unprecedented high temperatures on coral reefs as: "A disaster for the marine communities in the coastal regions of the Indo-Pacific", and then stated that: "The phenomenon appears to be due to unprecedented high temperatures"

**For information on paraphrasing see 8 and 9 below.**

4. Authors should be cited in text either as: Smith (1975), Smith and Allen (1978), Allen (1987, 1989), or as (Smith, 1975; Smith and Allen, 1978; Allen 1987, 1989). Note that these are in chronological, not alphabetic order. When more than two authors are quoted, this should be in the form Allen *et al.* (1993) in the text, but the full reference should be given in your reference list.

5. In your "References" or "Literature cited" section, the following style (authors, date, title, journal, volume number, page numbers) should be used and references should be listed alphabetically. Provided you are consistent, you may also use any other accepted style - see journals in the library.

Smith, A. J. and Allen, N. B. (1986). Temperatures and coral reefs. *Journal of the Marine Biological Association* **86**: 101-123.

Smith, A. J., Jones, K. L. and Allen, N. B. (1988). Death of corals due to high temperatures. *Thermal Biology* **27**: 19-34.

6. For books, the following style (author, title underlined or in italics, publisher, place of publication) applies:

Allen, N. B. (1992). *Coral Reef Biology*. Blackwells, London.

7. For chapters in edited volumes, the following style (author, date, title of chapter, title of book underlined or in italics, editors, page numbers, publisher, place of publication) applies:

Smith, A. J. (1987). Temperature and bleaching in corals. In: *Coral Reef Biology* (N. B. Allen and C. K. Hodges, eds.), pp. 65-90. Clumber Press, New York.

**8. Paraphrasing**, i.e. verbatim or almost verbatim restatement of a passage is a form of plagiarism frequently used in essays and dissertations. The following is paraphrased from C. H. Gordon, P. Simmons and G. Wynn (date unknown). *Plagiarism - What It Is And How To Avoid It*. University of British Columbia.

Students often ask "How much do I have to change a sentence to be sure I'm not plagiarising?" If you have to ask, you are probably about to commit plagiarism! There is no set number of words that you need to change or add to make a passage your own – the originality must come from the development and expression of your own ideas.

Original work demands original thought. You should try and separate your ideas from those of others. If you use another author's conclusions then acknowledge them. If you come to the same conclusions as another author you should still acknowledge them. Once a piece of work is complete, look at each part and ask yourself if the ideas expressed are entirely your own, and whether the general language or choice of words is your own. If the answer to either is "no" the work should be credited to the original author

9. Examples.

### **9.1 Original**

From Smith (1992):

The author has found that corals respond to high temperatures by expelling their zooxanthellae. This causes them to go white, a phenomenon known as "bleaching." Such corals soon become covered in algae, which makes it difficult for new coral planulae to settle and start a new colony (Davies, 1980). The phenomenon of bleaching is similar to the effect of a crown-of-thorns starfish (*Acanthaster planci*) attack where the polyps are digested by enzymes secreted onto the colony surface (Brown, 1990). As Jones (1972) found, *A. planci* poses a severe threat to corals in the Indo-Pacific. The recent occurrence of high numbers of these starfish on reefs has been correlated to run-off from land which contains high levels of plant nutrients (Jones, 1986). The subsequent increase in the number of algae apparently enhances the survival of the filter-feeding larvae of the starfish.

**To include this text verbatim in your own work, *without* placing the entire paragraph in quotation marks and acknowledging Smith (1992) (see 3 above) would constitute plagiarism.**

### **9.2 Paraphrased version**

Paraphrased from Smith (1992):

Smith (1992) has found that corals respond to high temperatures by expelling their zooxanthellae. This phenomenon, known as "bleaching", causes them to go white. Such corals quickly become covered in algae and this makes it difficult for new coral planulae to settle and begin developing a new colony (Davies, 1980). Bleaching is similar to the effect of a crown-of-thorns starfish (*Acanthaster planci*)

attack. Brown (1990) notes that this is where the polyps are digested by enzymes secreted onto the colony surface. Jones (1972) found that *A. planci* may be a severe threat to corals in the Indo-Pacific. Recently high numbers of these starfish on reefs has been correlated to run-off from land with high levels of plant nutrients (Jones, 1986). The increase in the number of algae apparently enhances the survival of the filter-feeding larvae of the starfish.

**To include this text in your own work, even *with* the initial acknowledgment Smith (1992) would constitute plagiarism since it reads as if only the first sentence is taken from Smith, and the rest of the references (Davies, Brown and Jones) have been sourced and read by you and that the development and expression of the text is your own original work.**

### **9.3 Unacknowledged version (i.e. submitting this as if it were your own thoughts or work)**

The presence of high numbers of crown-of-thorns starfish (*Acanthaster planci*) on reefs has been connected to run-off from land containing high levels of plant nutrients. This causes an increase in the number of algae which results in better survival of the filter-feeding larvae of the starfish. The starfish kills corals by secreting digestive enzymes onto their surfaces. *A. planci* poses a severe threat to corals in the Indo-Pacific and their effect is similar to that caused by "bleaching", a phenomenon caused by high temperatures which results in zooxanthellae being expelled. Subsequently the dead corals become covered in algae which makes it difficult for a new colony to start.

**To include this text verbatim in your own work, would constitute plagiarism since there is no acknowledgment of Smith (1992).**

### **9.4 Acceptable version (based on information from Smith, reading the cited references yourself and drawing upon other work)**

Smith (1992) quoted Jones (1972, 1986) in suggesting that the crown-of-thorns starfish poses a threat to corals in the Indo-Pacific, and that their recent upsurge may be due to an increase in plant food levels caused by an input of nutrients from land. Brown (1990) found that these multi-armed starfish killed corals by everting their stomachs onto the coral colony surface and secreting an enzyme to digest the tissues externally. The resulting "bleaching" effect is similar to that which occurs when corals are exposed to high temperatures and the zooxanthellae are expelled (Smith, 1992). Davies (1980) found that the settlement of algae on the colony surface made it difficult for new coral larvae to settle and, although fish often grazed the algae continually, he found they could not keep these under control. Recent studies have shown that plagues of crown-of-thorns starfish may be a natural phenomenon, as the fossilised remains of previous outbreaks have been found in rocks millions of years old (Cromer, 1994).

**To present your work like this would not constitute plagiarism.**

Note that all the references and authors used in this document with the exception of Gordon *et al.* are fictitious.

**PLEASE CONSULT YOUR TUTOR IF YOU ARE STILL IN DOUBT ABOUT PLAGIARISM**