Academic good practice – a practical guide

The principles of academic good practice go beyond understanding and avoiding plagiarism, although this is a key part of ensuring the academic integrity of your work. This section contains information and advice on attaining academic good practice, including managing your time efficiently, developing good reading and note taking skills and the importance of referencing correctly.

Whilst the guidance is primarily aimed at undergraduates, much of it is relevant to graduate students, particularly those with limited experience of academic writing. Graduate students should complete the online courses referenced as part of their graduate skills training portfolio. Some students from overseas may face particular difficulties when embarking on study at Oxford. Time constraints mean this can be a particular problem for students on one-year Master's courses. There are many resources available for students whose first language is not English, detailed in this section.

It is advisable that you also consult your subject handbook and course tutor for specific advice relevant to your discipline.

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Developing good practice

There are many elements to academic good practice, not just the ability to reference correctly. All students will benefit from taking the two 'Avoiding Plagiarism' courses available via the Skills Hub on WebLearn

which have been developed to provide a useful overview of the issues surrounding plagiarism and practical ways to avoid it. Graduate students should complete the online courses as part of their graduate skills training portfolio.

Any student seeking advice on academic writing and plagiarism should consult their tutor, who will be happy to help. Your subject handbook may contain useful advice in addition to that given below.

Time management

However obvious it may seem, time management is of the utmost importance. You should buy a diary and use it. Work out how much time you should allocate to each element of your course and try to stick to a timetable. You should aim to study in a regular pattern, perhaps by working a set number of hours a day. Make sure you allow sufficient time to plan and write your assignment so that you do not have to work into the small hours of the morning. The 'essay crisis' may be an Oxford tradition, but you are unlikely to produce your best work this way.

Reading skills

Rather than simply starting the book on page one and working through it in a linear fashion, look first for key terms relating to your topic, read the beginnings and endings of chapters, and find summaries of the main arguments. You will then be primed with a sense of the argument and structure of the book when you come to read it through properly. This should help you both to read more quickly and to engage more closely with the author's main ideas.

Note-taking

It is helpful to develop a more strategic approach to note-taking than simply writing down everything that looks important. Read the chapter or article once through quickly without taking any notes. Having obtained the gist of the argument you will be much more discriminating in the notes you make on a second, slower reading.

Remember to include full citation details for all your sources and ensure that you note down the page number of each argument or quote that you select. Try to confine yourself to the main points, making it clear when you are quoting verbatim by enclosing the material in quotation marks.

It is best to summarise the arguments in your own words as this helps you to understand them and avoids close paraphrasing, which can lead to inadvertent plagiarism.

When taking notes in a lecture, try to distinguish the speaker's main points and note them, together with any useful supporting evidence. Don't try to record him or her verbatim. Some people find drawing a 'mind map' beneficial – this is a symbolic representation of the lecturer's points, joined by lines indicating connections and their relative importance. These can also be very useful when noting from books or planning your essay.

Citation

Giving credit to the authors of the ideas and interpretations you cite not only accords recognition to their labours, but also provides a solid theoretical basis for your own argument. Your ideas will gain credence if they are supported by the work of respected writers. Transparent source use allows you to situate your work within the debates in your field, and to demonstrate the ways in which your work is original. It also gives your reader the opportunity to pursue a topic further, or to check the validity of your interpretations.

When writing you should consider the ways in which your work depends upon or develops from other research, then signal this with appropriate citation. Make clear your reasons for citing a source. When paraphrasing an idea or interpretation you must ensure that your writing is not too closely derived from the original, and you must also acknowledge the original author.

Referencing

There are numerous different referencing systems in use across the disciplines and the conventions may sometimes appear arcane. There should be information about referencing practice in your subject handbook, and your tutor can also direct you to an appropriate style guide. It is sensible to get into the habit of referencing all your work so that you learn the techniques from the start. Leaving all the footnotes until the week your dissertation is due is

a recipe for disaster. One of the best ways to learn referencing practice is to imitate examples in your subject, and to seek advice from your tutor in cases of difficulty.

There is a range of software which you can use to keep track of your sources and to automatically format your footnotes and bibliography (i.e. EndNote, Reference Manager, ProCite). Be meticulous when taking notes: include full citation details for all the sources you consult and remember to record relevant page numbers. Citation practice varies but, depending on the type of text cited (book, conference paper, chapter in an edited volume, journal article, e-print, etc.) the elements of a reference include: author; title of the book or article; title of the journal or other work; name of the conference; place of publication; date of publication; page numbers; URL; date accessed. The conventions for citing web resources vary between disciplines. You should note as many essential items of information as possible, such as author, title, publisher, dates of publication and last revision, URL, and date of last access. When using e-print archives you should bear in mind that many contain articles which have not yet been submitted for peer review. It is good practice to review the later, published versions for important changes before submitting your own extended essay or dissertation.

Research and library skills

All freshers attend an induction session at their subject library. Specialist librarians are able to offer advice on both print and electronic holdings and bibliographic search tools. In some subjects training sessions are provided for those embarking on independent research, and you should avail yourself of these. Your subject handbook may contain information on e-resources of particular relevance to you.

Information literacy

It is important to develop your IT skills while at university and there are many resources to help you to do so. In addition to software training provided by OUCS (Oxford University Computing Services), there is a wide range of information skills training available under the aegis of OULS (Oxford University Library Services), including practical Workshops in Information Skills and Electronic Resources (WISER). You may register for free taught courses at OUCS or pursue online self-directed courses at your own pace. Further information about IT training opportunities is available on the OUCS website.

The Bodleian has a wide range of scholarly electronic resources which you can access via their website. Subject libraries provide induction and training sessions in catalogue and specialist database searching, online bibliographic tools and other electronic resources. If your subject is not listed here you should ask your tutor or subject librarian for details. Small group and individual tuition can usually be arranged.

Graduate students

Graduate students' work is expected to meet high academic standards and will be scrutinised carefully. The University must ensure that these standards are upheld and that its research degrees provide proper training for an academic career. In addition, the academic community has to be satisfied that those who obtain the D.Phil. are appropriately qualified to undertake further, unsupervised, research. Plagiarism at this level is a serious breach of academic integrity and the consequences can be severe. In some cases a student may be expelled, or they may be stripped of their degree if their thesis is later discovered to contain plagiarised material. Some academics' careers have been ruined by the discovery of plagiarism in decades-old published work.

Far from being simply a disciplinary matter, plagiarism undermines the central tenets of scholarly discourse. Knowledge develops via a cumulative process as a result of years of research, innovation and debate. It is a principle of intellectual honesty that all members of the academic community should acknowledge their debt to the originators of the ideas, words, and data which form the basis for their own work. It is important to recognise that academic texts are multi-voiced, constructed from references to other texts; it is your responsibility as a writer to make it clear at all times whose 'voice' is speaking, whether your own or one of your sources'. This requirement for transparency of source use means that you must cite adequately, make it clear when you are quoting or paraphrasing, and establish the relationship between your source and your own text.

International students

Some students from overseas may face particular difficulties when embarking on study at Oxford, especially if they also have to overcome a language barrier. They may need help to improve their skills in academic English, or they may experience difficulties adapting to the requirements of Western academic culture. Time constraints mean this can be a particular problem for students on one-year Master's courses.

Students who experience difficulties should not delay in seeking out sources of support and guidance. You should approach your course director or supervisor to discuss your needs. Develop your academic writing skills through practice and ask for detailed feedback on your work. Ensure that you follow scrupulously the source use and referencing conventions of your discipline, even if they vary from those you have used before. If you have specific difficulties or questions, you should always ask for advice.

Inexperienced writers, particularly those who are not native speakers of English, often develop their writing technique via a process known as 'patchwriting'. If they lack the requisite skills of academic writing or self-expression, they may copy or heavily paraphrase their source material. Where the derivation is not made clear, this is plagiarism. However, it is recognised that many honest students employ mimicry and borrowed language as they learn to write in the academic style, and that patchwriting can be seen as a developmental stage. As students gain more experience at writing they must develop an independent voice and cease to rely on imitation. If work containing unattributed paraphrase is submitted for assessment, it will be treated as plagiarism regardless of the author's intentions.

There are many resources available at the Language Centre for students whose first language is not English. Graduate students who are non-native speakers of English are entitled to take two free courses in English for Academic Studies. Undergraduates may take one course or a specified number of modules. Individual writing tutorials and intensive one-week courses in Academic Writing are also available. There are also fee-paying courses available, including the intensive Pre-Sessional Course in English for Academic Purposes. This is either a four or eight week course open to students embarking on study at any English-speaking university. There are resources for independent study in the Language Centre library and online English teaching tools.

What is plagiarism?

Plagiarism is the copying or paraphrasing of other people's work or ideas into your own work without full acknowledgement. All published and unpublished material, whether in manuscript, printed or electronic form, is covered under this definition. Collusion is another

form of plagiarism involving the unauthorised collaboration of students (or others) in a piece of work.

Why does plagiarism matter?

Plagiarism is a breach of academic integrity. It is a principle of intellectual honesty that all members of the academic community should acknowledge their debt to the originators of the ideas, words, and data which form the basis for their own work. Passing off another's work as your own is not only poor scholarship, but also means that you have failed to complete the learning process. Deliberate plagiarism is unethical and can have serious consequences for your future career; it also undermines the standards of your institution and of the degrees it issues.

Why should you avoid plagiarism?

There are many reasons to avoid plagiarism. You have come to university to learn to know and speak your own mind, not merely to parrot the opinions of others - at least not without attribution. At first it may seem very difficult to develop your own views, and you will probably find yourself paraphrasing the writings of others as you attempt to understand and assimilate their arguments. However it is important that you learn to develop your own voice. You are not necessarily expected to become an original thinker, but you are expected to be an independent one - by learning to assess critically the work of others, weigh up differing arguments and draw your own conclusions. Students who plagiarise undermine the ethos of academic scholarship while avoiding an essential part of the learning process. The Proctors regard plagiarism in examinations as a serious form of cheating for which offenders can expect to receive severe penalties.

You should not avoid plagiarism for fear of disciplinary consequences, but because you aspire to produce work of the highest quality. Once you have grasped the principles of source use and citation, you should find it relatively straightforward to steer clear of plagiarism. Moreover, you will reap the additional benefits of improvements to both the lucidity and quality of your writing. It is important to appreciate that mastery of the techniques of academic writing is not merely a practical skill, but one that lends both credibility and authority to your work, and demonstrates your commitment to the principle of intellectual honesty in scholarship.

What to avoid

The necessity to reference applies not only to text, but also to other media, such as computer code, illustrations, graphs etc. It applies equally to published text drawn from books and journals, and to unpublished text, whether from lecture handouts, theses or other students' essays. You must also attribute text or other resources downloaded from web sites. An example of plagiarism has also been set out to illustrate how to avoid plagiarism.

There are various forms of plagiarism and it is worth clarifying the ways in which it is possible to plagiarise:

Verbatim quotation without clear acknowledgement

Quotations must always be identified as such by the use of either quotation marks or indentation, with adequate citation. It must always be apparent to the reader which parts are your own independent work and where you have drawn on someone else's ideas and

language.

Paraphrasing

Paraphrasing the work of others by altering a few words and changing their order or by closely following the structure of their argument, is plagiarism because you are deriving your words and ideas from their work without giving due acknowledgement. Even if you include a reference to the original author in your own text you are still creating a misleading impression that the paraphrased wording is entirely your own. It is better to write a brief summary of the author's overall argument in your own words than to paraphrase particular sections of his or her writing. This will ensure you have a genuine grasp of the argument and will avoid the difficulty of paraphrasing without plagiarising. You must also properly attribute all material you derive from lectures.

Cutting and pasting from the Internet

Information derived from the Internet must be adequately referenced and included in the bibliography. It is important to evaluate carefully all material found on the Internet, as it is less likely to have been through the same process of scholarly peer review as published sources.

Collusion

This can involve unauthorised collaboration between students, failure to attribute assistance received, or failure to follow precisely regulations on group work projects. It is your responsibility to ensure that you are entirely clear about the extent of collaboration permitted, and which parts of the work must be your own.

Inaccurate citation

It is important to cite correctly, according to the conventions of your discipline. Additionally, you should not include anything in a footnote or bibliography that you have not actually consulted. If you cannot gain access to a primary source you must make it clear in your citation that your knowledge of the work has been derived from a secondary text (e.g. Bradshaw, D. Title of Book, discussed in Wilson, E., Title of Book (London, 2004), p. 189).

Failure to acknowledge

You must clearly acknowledge all assistance which has contributed to the production of your work, such as advice from fellow students, laboratory technicians, and other external sources. This need not apply to the assistance provided by your tutor or supervisor, nor to ordinary proofreading, but it is necessary to acknowledge other guidance which leads to substantive changes of content or approach.

Professional agencies

You should neither make use of professional agencies in the production of your work nor submit material which has been written for you. It is vital to your intellectual training and development that you should undertake the research process unaided. Under Statute XI on

University Discipline, all members of the University are prohibited from providing material that could be submitted in an examination by students at this University or elsewhere.

Auto-plagiarism

You must not submit work for assessment which you have already submitted (partially or in full) to fulfil the requirements of another degree course or examination, unless this is specifically provided for in the special regulations for your course.

What happens if you are suspected of plagiarism?

The regulations regarding conduct in examinations apply equally to the 'submission and assessment of a thesis, dissertation, essay, or other coursework not undertaken in formal examination conditions but which counts towards or constitutes the work for a degree or other academic award'. Additionally, this includes the transfer and confirmation of status exercises undertaken by graduate students. Cases of suspected plagiarism in assessed work are investigated under the disciplinary regulations concerning conduct in examinations. Intentional or reckless plagiarism may incur severe penalties, including failure of your degree or expulsion from the university.

If plagiarism is suspected in a piece of work submitted for assessment in an examination, the matter will be referred to the Proctors. They will thoroughly investigate the claim and summon the student concerned for interview. If at this point there is no evidence of a breach of the regulations, no further action will be taken. However, if it is concluded that an intentional or reckless breach of the regulations has occurred, the Proctors will refer the case to one of two disciplinary panels. More information on disciplinary procedures and appeals is available on the Student Conduct section of the Student Gateway.

If you are suspected of plagiarism your College Secretary/Academic Administrator and subject tutor will support you through the process and arrange for a member of Congregation to accompany you to all hearings. They will be able to advise you what to expect during the investigation and how best to make your case. The OUSU Student Advice Service can also provide useful information and support.

Examples of plagiarism

The following examples demonstrate some of the common pitfalls to avoid; they should be of use even to non-historians. However, you should consult your subject handbook and course tutor for specific advice relevant to your discipline. The referencing system used here is that prescribed by the History Faculty for the use of writers of theses.

Source text

From a class perspective this put them [highwaymen] in an ambivalent position. In aspiring to that proud, if temporary, status of 'Gentleman of the Road', they did not question the inegalitarian hierarchy of their society. Yet their boldness of act and deed, in putting them outside the law as rebellious fugitives, revivified the 'animal spirits' of capitalism and became an essential part of the oppositional culture of working-class London, a serious obstacle to the formation of a tractable, obedient labour force. Therefore, it was not enough to hang them – the values they espoused or represented had to be challenged.

(Linebaugh, P., The London Hanged: Crime and Civil Society in the Eighteenth Century (London, 1991), p. 213. [You should give the reference in full the first time you use it in a footnote; thereafter it is acceptable to use an abbreviated version, e.g. Linebaugh, The London Hanged, p. 213.]

Plagiarised

1. Although they did not question the inegalitarian hierarchy of their society, highwaymen became an essential part of the oppositional culture of working-class London, posing a serious threat to the formation of a biddable labour force. (This is a patchwork of phrases copied verbatim from the source, with just a few words changed here and there. There is no reference to the original author and no indication that these words are not the writer's own.)

2. Although they did not question the inegalitarian hierarchy of their society, highwaymen exercised a powerful attraction for the working classes. Some historians believe that this hindered the development of a submissive workforce. (This is a mixture of verbatim copying and acceptable paraphrase. Although only one phrase has been copied from the source, this would still count as plagiarism. The idea expressed in the first sentence has not been attributed at all, and the reference to 'some historians' in the second is insufficient. The writer should use clear referencing to acknowledge all ideas taken from other people's work.)

3. Although they did not question the inegalitarian hierarchy of their society, highwaymen 'became an essential part of the oppositional culture of working-class London [and] a serious obstacle to the formation of a tractable, obedient labour force'.[1] (This contains a mixture of attributed and unattributed quotation, which suggests to the reader that the first line is original to this writer. All quoted material must be enclosed in quotation marks and adequately referenced.)

4. Highwaymen's bold deeds 'revivified the "animal spirits" of capitalism' and made them an essential part of the oppositional culture of working-class London.[1] Peter Linebaugh argues that they posed a major obstacle to the formation of an obedient labour force. (Although the most striking phrase has been placed within quotation marks and correctly referenced, and the original author is referred to in the text, there has been a great deal of unacknowledged borrowing. This should have been put into the writer's own words instead.)

5. By aspiring to the title of 'Gentleman of the Road', highwaymen did not challenge the unfair taxonomy of their society. Yet their daring exploits made them into outlaws and inspired the antagonistic culture of labouring London, forming a grave impediment to the development of a submissive workforce. Ultimately, hanging them was insufficient – the ideals they personified had to be discredited.[1] (This may seem acceptable on a superficial level, but by imitating exactly the structure of the original passage and using synonyms for almost every word, the writer has paraphrased too closely. The reference to the original author does not make it clear how extensive the borrowing has been. Instead, the writer should try to express the argument in his or her own words, rather than relying on a 'translation' of the original.)

Non-plagiarised

1. Peter Linebaugh argues that although highwaymen posed no overt challenge to social orthodoxy – they aspired to be known as 'Gentlemen of the Road' – they were often seen as anti-hero role models by the unruly working classes. He concludes that

they were executed not only for their criminal acts, but in order to stamp out the threat of insubordinacy.[1] (This paraphrase of the passage is acceptable as the wording and structure demonstrate the reader's interpretation of the passage and do not follow the original too closely. The source of the ideas under discussion has been properly attributed in both textual and footnote references.)

2. Peter Linebaugh argues that highwaymen represented a powerful challenge to the mores of capitalist society and inspired the rebelliousness of London's working class.[1] (This is a brief summary of the argument with appropriate attribution.)

You will find examples from other universities in the Resources section. You can gauge your understanding with a variety of online tests, or by undertaking the Oxford online courses.

[1] Linebaugh, P., The London Hanged: Crime and Civil Society in the Eighteenth Century (London, 1991), p. 213.

Frequently asked questions

Does this mean that I shouldn't use the work of other authors?

On the contrary, it is vital that you situate your writing within the intellectual debates of your discipline. Academic essays almost always involve the use and discussion of material written by others, and, with due acknowledgement and proper referencing, this is clearly distinguishable from plagiarism. The knowledge in your discipline has developed cumulatively as a result of years of research, innovation and debate. You need to give credit to the authors of the ideas and observations you cite. Not only does this accord recognition to their labours, it also helps you to strengthen your argument by making clear the basis on which you make it. Moreover, good citation practice gives your reader the opportunity to follow up your references, or check the validity of your interpretation.

Does every statement in my essay have to be backed up with references?

You may feel that including the citation for every point you make will interrupt the flow of your essay and make it look very unoriginal. At least initially, this may sometimes be inevitable. However, by employing good citation practice from the start, you will learn to avoid errors such as sloppy paraphrasing or unreferenced quotation.

It is important to understand the reasons behind the need for transparency of source use. All academic texts, even student essays, are multi-voiced, which means they are filled with references to other texts. Rather than attempting to synthesise these voices into one narrative account, you should make it clear whose interpretation or argument you are employing at any one time (whose 'voice' is speaking).

If you are substantially indebted to a particular argument in the formulation of your own, you should make this clear both in footnotes and in the body of your text, before going on to describe how your own views develop or diverge from this influence. On the other hand, it is not necessary to give references for facts that are common knowledge in your discipline. If you are unsure as to whether something is considered to be common knowledge or not, it is safer to cite it anyway and seek clarification. You do need to document facts that are not generally known and ideas that are interpretations of facts.

Does this only matter in exams?

Although plagiarism in weekly essays does not constitute a University disciplinary offence, it may well lead to College disciplinary measures. Persistent academic under-performance can even result in your being sent down from the University. Although tutorial essays traditionally do not require the full scholarly apparatus of footnotes and referencing, it is still necessary to acknowledge your sources and demonstrate the development of your argument, usually by an in-text reference. Many tutors will ask that you do employ a formal citation style early on, and you will find that this is good preparation for later project and dissertation work. In any case, your work will benefit considerably if you adopt good scholarly habits from the start, together with the techniques of critical thinking and writing described above. As junior members of the academic community, students need to learn how to read academic literature and how to write in a style appropriate to their discipline. This does not mean that you must become masters of jargon and obfuscation; however the process is akin to learning a new language. It is necessary not only to learn new terminology, but the practical study skills and other techniques which will help you to learn effectively. Developing these skills throughout your time at university will not only help you to produce better coursework, dissertations, projects and exam papers, but will lay the intellectual foundations for your future career. Even if you have no intention of becoming an academic, being able to analyse evidence, exercise critical judgement, and write clearly and persuasively are skills that will serve you for life, and which any employer will value.

Unintentional plagiarism

Not all cases of plagiarism arise from a deliberate intention to cheat. Sometimes students may omit to take down citation details when copying and pasting, or they may be genuinely ignorant of referencing conventions. However, these excuses offer no protection against a charge of plagiarism. Even in cases where the plagiarism is found to have been unintentional, there may still be a penalty. It is your responsibility to find out the prevailing referencing conventions in your discipline, to take adequate notes, and to avoid close paraphrasing. If you are offered induction sessions on plagiarism and study skills, you should attend. Together with the advice contained in your subject handbook, these will help you learn how to avoid common errors. If you are undertaking a project or dissertation you should ensure that you have information on plagiarism and collusion. If ever in doubt about referencing, paraphrasing or plagiarism, you have only to ask your tutor. There are some helpful examples of plagiarism-by-paraphrase and you will also find extensive advice and useful links in the Resources section.

All students will benefit from taking the online courses which have been developed to provide a useful overview of the issues surrounding plagiarism and practical ways to avoid it.

The best way of avoiding inadvertent plagiarism, however, is to learn and employ the principles of good academic practice from the beginning of your university career. Avoiding plagiarism is not simply a matter of making sure your references are all correct, or changing enough words so the examiner will not notice your paraphrase; it is about deploying your academic skills to make your work as good as it can be.

Resources

Academic Integrity in Research

- Describes the code of practice for all those undertaking research at the University.

English language resources

- Students from overseas will find a great deal of helpful information on the web site of the UK Council for International Student Affairs, particularly the Advice for Students and Information Sheets.

- English for Academic Studies at the University Language Centre.

- Pre-Sessional Course in English for Academic Purposes.

- Online English teaching tools.

Evaluating web resources

- The Virtual Training Suite provides over 60 free tutorials on Internet research skills for university students written by a team of UK university lecturers and subject librarians.

- Although the Intute website is no longer maintained, it continues to provide comprehensive lists of web resources in a wide range of disciplines. The website archive will remain available until 2014, although it will not be updated.

- Georgetown University Library provides a valuable introduction to searching the World Wide Web and essential guidance on how to assess the usefulness and legitimacy of web resources.

- Staff at the UCLA College Library have devised a practical (and fun!) exercise to help students learn how to evaluate web resources.

- Acadia University has an interactive tutorial for evaluating web resources.

Information literacy

- Oxford University Computing Services: The IT Learning Programme (information about IT training opportunities).

- Oxford University Library Services: Information literacy and library induction.

- WISER: Workshops in Information Skills and Electronic Resources. Free practical workshops open to all members of the University.

- Oxford University Library Services: Scholarly e-resources.

- Oxford University Library Services: Subject Specific Training Sessions (e-resource skills training).

Online tests

- Online tests are a practical way of gauging your understanding of plagiarism and citation practice. You should try to work through as many of them as possible, then try out the two plagiarism courses available from the Skills Hub on WebLearn: Avoiding Plagiarism 1 and Avoiding Plagiarism 2 (you will need to log in to WebLearn first). If you have any queries about the tests, please ask your tutor/supervisor for

advice.

- First test your baseline understanding with the brief [Plagiarism Quiz](#) which is based on an exercise devised for graduate students at the University of Michigan.

- [Indiana University School of Education](#). You should work through the tutorial and practice questions first.

- [Bradford School of Management](#).

- The Goucher College '[Plagiarism-by-Paraphrase Risk Quiz](#)' usefully covers academic practice in five different disciplines. The referencing conventions of your subject may vary from the examples in use in this and other web sites; however, the principle of transparency of source use remains the same.

- [University of Essex](#).

Plagiarism advice

- [Princeton University](#) offers comprehensive advice on the avoidance of plagiarism, with some useful examples and guidance on source use and referencing.

- [Indiana University School of Education](#) has developed a practical tutorial with extensive examples. There is also a formal test by which you can gauge your understanding.

- [Georgetown University](#) provides accessible, often amusing, advice about plagiarism with some excellent examples. It is particularly good on the pitfalls of paraphrasing.

- You will also find many examples of good citation practice and source use in the [Leeds University online tutorial](#), especially the section headed 'How do I not do it?'

Study skills

- The [Oxford University Careers Service](#) has produced comprehensive guidance to help students assess, reflect on and develop academic, personal and professional skills whilst at University.

- The [Skills Hub](#) on WebLearn provides access to a variety of online skills training and professional development courses, including two '[Avoiding Plagiarism](#)' courses.

- There is extensive information about academic writing, note-taking, citation practice, and plagiarism on the [Central European University](#) website.

- Edinburgh University's Institute for Academic Development has produced a useful [study skills website](#) which covers the topics of time management, reading and note-taking, source use, and essay-writing.

- Although aimed at American college students, [Hamilton College's Writing Center](#) website contains a wealth of resources designed to promote effective writing, including topics such as grammar and punctuation, source use and referencing. It is well worth a look. You may find the concise guide to [source use](#) particularly useful.

- The British-based PlagiarismAdvice.org provides extensive advice on referencing terminology and practice.

- You will find a comprehensive guide to the technicalities of source use, quotation and citation on the web site of the University of Victoria (Canada) Department of English.

- Peter Levin is an academic and student mentor who offers both practical advice to conscientious students and a different perspective on what he sees as the 'moral panic' surrounding plagiarism.

Style guides

- The Modern Humanities Research Association style guide is available to download from their web site.

- Wiley-Blackwell's Publishing provides a useful guide to the Harvard and Vancouver reference systems on its 'Author Services' web site.