

GSICS Guidelines for Avoiding Plagiarism*

Academic Affairs Committee
Graduate School of International Cooperation Studies (GSICS)
Kobe University

“**Plagiarism**” is a form of academic fraud. If a GSICS student is caught plagiarizing, the following rules apply.

Memorandum of Understanding Regarding Cheating on Examinations, Reports, Theses, Dissertations, and/or other Assignments**

1. If a student is caught cheating on an examination, report and/or other assignment in the Kobe University Graduate School of International Cooperation Studies (GSICS), the following actions will be taken:
 - (1) At the request of the course instructor, the chair of the GSICS Academic Affairs Committee will appoint a hearing panel to investigate the alleged case, after which, the Faculty Meeting, when necessary, will impose the following actions:
 - a) The submission by the student of a self-evaluation report regarding his/her act of cheating
 - b) Failing grades in all or some of the student’s courses, with the exception of seminars, for the semester in which s/he was caught cheating.
 - (2) In serious cases, Kobe University student disciplinary policies and procedures will be applied. These include the following: issuing of an admonitory warning, suspension or being expelled from Kobe University.

***Source: GSICS Guide Book, p.5*

If you submit a plagiarized work of any kind, you must bear the consequences, as indicated above. This guide explains what plagiarism is and how to avoid it. If in any doubt, ask your supervisor for guidance.

* These guidelines are an excerpt from the website of [plagiarism.org](http://www.plagiarism.org), with some revisions and additions by GSICS. Each article on the website is provided by [Turnitin.com](http://www.turnitin.com) and Research Resources and can be downloaded from: http://www.plagiarism.org/plag_article_printable_handouts.html. GSICS has obtained permission from Plagiarism.org to reprint and disseminate the articles on its website.

How to Avoid Plagiarism

1. What is Plagiarism?

Many people think of plagiarism as copying another's work, or borrowing someone else's original ideas. But terms like "copying" and "borrowing" can disguise the seriousness of the offense:

According to the *Merriam-Webster OnLine Dictionary*, to "plagiarize" means

- 1) to steal and pass off (the ideas or words of another) as one's own
- 2) to use (another's production) without crediting the source
- 3) to commit literary theft
- 4) to present as new and original an idea or product derived from an existing source.

In other words, **plagiarism is an act of fraud**. It involves both **stealing** someone else's work and **lying** about it afterward.

All of the following are considered plagiarism:

- turning in someone else's work as your own
- copying words or ideas from someone else without giving credit
- failing to put a quotation in quotation marks
- giving incorrect information about the source of a quotation
- changing words but copying the sentence structure of a source without giving credit
- copying so many words or ideas from a source that it makes up the majority of your work, whether you give credit or not

Attention!

Changing the words of an original source is *not* sufficient to prevent plagiarism. If you have retained the essential idea of an original source, and have not cited it, then no matter how drastically you may have altered its context or presentation, **you have still plagiarized.**

Most cases of plagiarism can be avoided, however, by **citing sources**. Simply acknowledging that certain material has been borrowed, and providing your audience with the information necessary to find that source, is usually enough to prevent plagiarism.

2. Types of Plagiarism

Anyone who has written or graded a paper knows that plagiarism is not always a black-and-white issue. The boundary between plagiarism and research is often unclear. Learning to recognize the various forms of plagiarism, especially the more ambiguous ones, is an important step in the fight to prevent it.

Sources Not Cited

1) *“The Ghost Writer”*

The writer turns in another’s work, word-for-word, as his or her own.

2) *“The Photocopy”*

The writer copies significant portions of text straight from a single source, without alteration.

3) *“The Potluck Paper”*

The writer tries to disguise plagiarism by copying from several different sources, tweaking the sentences to make them fit together while retaining most of the original phrasing.

4) *“The Poor Disguise”*

Although the writer has retained the essential content of the source, he or she has altered the paper’s appearance slightly by changing key words and phrases.

5) *“The Labor of Laziness”*

The writer takes the time to paraphrase most of the paper from other sources and make it all fit together, instead of spending the same effort on original work.

6) *“The Self-Stealer”*

The writer “borrows” generously from his or her previous work, violating policies concerning the expectation of originality adopted by most academic institutions.

Sources Cited (but still plagiarized!)

1) “*The Forgotten Footnote*”

The writer mentions an author’s name for a source, but neglects to include specific information on the location of the material referenced. This often masks other forms of plagiarism by obscuring source locations.

2) “*The Misinformer*”

The writer provides inaccurate information regarding the sources, making it impossible to find them.

3) “*The Too-Perfect Paraphrase*”

The writer properly cites a source, but neglects to put in quotation marks text that has been copied word-for-word, or close to it. Although attributing the basic ideas to the source, the writer is falsely claiming original presentation and interpretation of the information.

4) “*The Resourceful Citer*”

The writer properly cites all sources, paraphrasing and using quotations appropriately. The catch? The paper contains almost no original work! It is sometimes difficult to spot this form of plagiarism because it looks like any other well-researched document.

5) “*The Perfect Crime*”

Well, we all know it doesn’t exist. In this case, the writer properly quotes and cites sources in some places, but goes on to paraphrase other arguments from those sources without citation. This way, the writer tries to pass off the paraphrased material as his or her own analysis of the cited material.

3. What is Citation?

A “citation” is the way you tell your readers that certain material in your work came from another source. It also gives your readers the information necessary to find that source again, including:

- information about the author
- the title of the work
- the name and location of the company that published your copy of the source
- the date your copy was published
- the page numbers of the material you are borrowing

Why should I cite sources?

Giving credit to the original author by citing sources is the only way to use other people’s work without plagiarizing. But there are a number of other reasons to cite sources:

- Citations are extremely helpful to anyone who wants to find out more about your ideas and where they came from.
- Not all sources are good or right – your own ideas may often be more accurate or interesting than those of your sources. Proper citation will keep you from being held responsible for someone else’s bad ideas.
- Citing sources shows the amount of research you’ve done.
- Citing sources strengthens your work by lending outside support to your ideas.

Doesn’t citing sources make my work seem less original?

Not at all. On the contrary, citing sources actually helps your reader distinguish your ideas from those of your sources. This will actually emphasize the originality of your own work.

When do I need to cite?

Whenever you borrow words or ideas, you need to acknowledge their source. The following situations almost always require citation:

- Whenever you use quotes
- Whenever you paraphrase
- Whenever you use an idea that someone else has already expressed
- Whenever you make specific reference to the work of another
- Whenever someone else’s work has been critical in developing your own ideas.

4. How do I cite sources?

This depends on what type of work you are writing, how you are using the borrowed material, and the expectations of your instructor.

First, you have to think about how you want to identify your sources. If your sources are very important to your ideas, you should mention the author and work in a sentence that introduces your citation. If, however, you are only citing the source to make a minor point, you may consider using parenthetical references, footnotes, or endnotes.

There are also different forms of citation for different disciplines. For example, when you cite sources in a psychology paper you would probably use a different form of citation than you might in a paper for an English class.

Finally, you should always consult your instructor to determine the form of citation appropriate for your paper. You can save a lot of time and energy simply by asking “How should I cite my sources,” or “What style of citation should I use?” before you begin writing.

In the following sections, we will take you step-by-step through some general guidelines for citing sources.

(1) Quoting Material

What is quoting?

Taking the exact words from an original source is called **quoting**. You should quote material when you believe the way the original author expresses an idea is the most effective means of communicating the point you want to make. If you want to borrow an idea from an author, but do not need his or her exact words, you should try paraphrasing instead of quoting.

How often should I quote?

Quote as infrequently as possible. You never want your essay to become a series of connected quotations, because that leaves little room for your own ideas. Most of the time, paraphrasing and summarizing your sources is sufficient (but remember that you still have to cite them!). If you think it’s important to quote something, an excellent rule of thumb is that for every line you quote, you should have at least two lines analyzing it.

How do I incorporate quotations in my paper?

Most of the time, you can just identify a source and quote from it. Sometimes, however, you will need to modify the words or format of the quotation in order to fit in your paper. Whenever you change the original words of your source, you must indicate that you have done so. Otherwise, you would be claiming the original author used words that he or she did not use. But be careful not to change too many words! You could accidentally change the meaning of the quotation, and falsely claim the author said something they did not.

For example, let's say you want to quote from the following passage in an essay called "United Shareholders of America," by Jacob Weisberg:

"The citizen-investor serves his fellow citizens badly by his inclination to withdraw from the community. He tends to serve himself badly as well. He does so by focusing his pursuit of happiness on something that very seldom makes people happy in the way they expect it to."

When you quote, you generally want to be as concise as possible. Keep only the material that is strictly relevant to your own ideas. So here you would not want to quote the middle sentence, since it is repeated again in the more informative last sentence. However, just skipping it would not work – the final sentence would not make sense without it. So, you have to change the wording a little bit. In order to do so, you will need to use some **editing symbols**. Your quotation might end up looking like this:

In his essay, "United Shareholders of America," Jacob Weisberg insists that "The citizen-investor serves his fellow citizens badly by his inclination to withdraw from the community. He tends to serve himself badly... by focusing his pursuit of happiness on something that very seldom makes people happy in the way they expect it to."

The ellipses (...) indicate that you have skipped over some words in order to condense the passage. But even this version is still a bit lengthy – there is something else you can do to make it even more concise. Try changing the last sentence from

"He tends to serve himself badly... by focusing his pursuit of happiness on something that very seldom makes people happy in the way they expect it to."

to

"He tends to serve himself badly... by focusing his pursuit of happiness on [money]."

The brackets around the word [money] indicate that you have substituted that word for other words the author used. To make a substitution this important, however, you had

better be sure that “money” is what the final phrase meant – if the author intentionally left it ambiguous, you would be significantly altering his meaning. That would make you guilty of fraudulent attribution. In this case, however, the paragraph following the one quoted explains that the author is referring to money, so it is okay.

As a general rule, it is okay to make minor grammatical and stylistic changes to make the quoted material fit in your paper, but it is not okay to significantly alter the structure of the material or its content.

(2) Quoting within Quotes

When you have “embedded quotes,” or quotations within quotations, you should switch from the normal quotation marks (“ ”) to *single* quotation marks (‘ ’) to show the difference. For example, if an original passage by John Archer reads:

The Mountain Coyote has been described as a “wily” and “single-minded” predator by zoologist Ima Warner.

Your quotation might look like this:

As John Archer explains, “The Mountain Coyote has been described as a ‘wily’ and ‘single-minded’ predator by zoologist Ima Warner.”

Note the double quotes surrounding the entire quotation, and the single quotes around the words quoted in the original.

(3) How do I include long quotes in my paper?

The exact formatting requirements for long quotations differ depending on the citation style. In general, however, if you are quoting more than 3 lines of material, you should do the following:

- Change the font to one noticeably smaller (in a document that is mostly 12 point font, you should use a 10 point font, for example)
- Double indent the quotation – that means adjusting the left and right margins so that they are about one inch smaller than the main body of your paper.
- Do not use quotation marks for the entire quotation – the graphic changes you have made already (changing the font, double indenting, etc.) are enough to indicate that the material is quoted. For quotations within that quotation, use normal quotation marks, not single ones.

- You might want to skip the line-spacing you are using in the document before you begin the quotation and after it. This is optional and depends on the style preferred by your instructor.

(4) Citing Sources

Citation styles differ mostly in the location, order, and syntax of information about references. The number and diversity of citation styles reflect different priorities with respect to concision, readability, dates, authors, publications, and, of course, style.

There are also two major divisions *within* most citation styles: **documentary-note citation** and **in-text citation**. The documentary-note citation uses either footnotes or endnotes to document sources so that information about your sources is readily available to your readers but does not interfere with their reading of your work.

There are two major styles for the in-text citation. The first is the so-called **parenthetical style**, in which the author, publication date, and page number(s) appear in parentheses. The second is the so-called **running text style**, which places the author outside the parentheses as part of the text. An example of the parenthetical style would be the following sentence, taken from page 23 of a book written by Professor Scott in 1999:

One of the assertions is that “environmental reform in Alaska in the 1970s accelerated rapidly as the result of pipeline expansion.” (Scott, 1999, p.23)

In the running text style, the sentence above becomes:

Scott (1999) asserts that “environmental reform in Alaska in the 1970s accelerated rapidly as the result of pipeline expansion.” (p.23)

The in-text citation is generally considered an abbreviated form of citation, and it does not require footnotes or endnotes, although it does require the equivalent of a “Works Cited” page (i.e. Reference or Bibliography) at the end of the paper. It is easier to write, but might interfere with how smoothly your work reads. See your instructor for information on which form, documentary-note citation or in-text citation, is appropriate for your paper.

Attention!

With so many different citation styles, how do you know which one is right for your paper? First, we strongly recommend asking your instructor. There are several factors which go into determining the appropriate citation style, including discipline (priorities in

an English class might differ from those of a Psychology class, for example), academic expectations (papers intended for publication might be subject to different standards than mid-term papers), the research aims of an assignment, and the individual preference of your instructor.

If you want to learn more about using a particular citation style, we have provided links to more specific resources below.

APA Style (American Psychological Association)

- APA Style.org
<http://www.apastyle.org/index.aspx>
- Writer's Handbook: APA Style Documentation
<http://www.wisc.edu/writing/Handbook/DocAPA.html>

Chicago Manual of Style

- The Chicago Manual of Style.com
<http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/home.html>
- Writer's Handbook: Chicago Style Documentation
<http://www.wisc.edu/writing/Handbook/DocChicago.html>

MLA Style (Modern Language Association)

- MLA Citation Style
<http://www.mla.org/style>
http://campusgw.library.cornell.edu/newhelp/res_strategy/citing/mla.html
- Writer's Handbook: MLA Style Documentation
<http://www.wisc.edu/writing/Handbook/DocMLA.html>

Turabian Style (an academic style that works in other disciplines as well)

- Turabian Style Guide (University of Chicago)
http://www.press.uchicago.edu/books/turabian/turabian_citationguide.html
- Turabian Citation Style Examples (Northwest Missouri State University)
<http://www.nwmissouri.edu/library/citing/turabian.htm>

Legal Style

- Introduction to Basic Legal Citation (Cornell University)
<http://www.law.cornell.edu/citation/>
- Legal Research and Citation Style in the USA
<http://www.rbs0.com/lawcite.htm>

5. Avoiding Plagiarism

In a research paper, you have to come up with your own original ideas while at the same time making reference to work that's already been done by others. But how can you tell where their ideas end and your own begin? What's the proper way to integrate sources in your paper? If you change some of what an author said, do you still have to cite that person?

Confusion about the answers to these questions often leads to **plagiarism**. If you have similar questions, or are concerned about preventing plagiarism, we recommend using the checklist below.

A. Consult with your instructor

Have questions about plagiarism? If you can't find the answers, or are unsure about something, you should ask your instructor. He or she will most likely be very happy to answer your questions.

B. Plan your paper

Planning your paper well is the first and most important step you can take toward preventing plagiarism. If you know you are going to use other sources of information, you need to plan how you are going to include them in your paper. This means working out a balance between the ideas you have taken from other sources and your own, original ideas. Writing an outline, or coming up with a thesis statement in which you clearly formulate an argument about the information you find, will help establish the boundaries between your ideas and those of your sources.

C. Take Effective Notes

One of the best ways to prepare for a research paper is by taking thorough notes from all of your sources, so that you have much of the information organized before you begin writing. On the other hand, poor note-taking can lead to many problems – including improper citations and misquotations, both of which are forms of plagiarism! To avoid confusion about your sources, try using different colored fonts, pens, or pencils for each one, and make sure you clearly distinguish your own ideas from those you found elsewhere. Also, get in the habit of marking page numbers, and make sure that you record bibliographic information or web addresses for every source right away – finding them again later when you are trying to finish your paper can be a nightmare!

D. When in doubt, cite sources

Of course you want to get credit for your own ideas. And you don't want your instructor to think that you got all of your information from somewhere else. But if it is unclear whether an idea in your paper really came from you, or whether you got it from somewhere else and just changed it a little, **you should always cite your source**. Instead of weakening your paper and making it seem like you have fewer original ideas, this will actually strengthen your paper by: 1) showing that you are not just copying other ideas but are processing and adding to them, 2) lending outside support to the ideas that are

completely yours, and 3) highlighting the originality of your ideas by making clear distinctions between them and ideas you have gotten elsewhere.

E. Make it clear who said what

Even if you cite sources, ambiguity in your phrasing can often disguise the real source of any given idea, causing inadvertent plagiarism. Make sure when you mix your own ideas with those of your sources that you always clearly distinguish them. If you are discussing the ideas of more than one person, watch out for confusing pronouns. For example, imagine you are talking about Harold Bloom's discussion of James Joyce's opinion of Shakespeare, and you write: "He brilliantly portrayed the situation of a writer in society at that time." Who is the "He" in this sentence? Bloom, Joyce, or Shakespeare? Who is the "writer": Joyce, Shakespeare, or one of their characters? Always make sure to distinguish **who** said **what**, and give credit to the right person.

F. Know how to Paraphrase

A paraphrase is a restatement **in your own words** of someone else's ideas. Changing a few words of the original sentences does NOT make your writing a legitimate paraphrase. You must change **both** the **words** and the **sentence structure** of the original, **without** changing the content. Also, you should keep in mind that paraphrased passages **still require citation** because the ideas came from another source, even though you are putting them in your own words.

The purpose of paraphrasing is not to make it seem like you are drawing less directly from other sources or to reduce the number of quotations in your paper. It is a common misconception among students that you need to hide the fact that you rely on other sources. Actually it is advantageous to highlight the fact that other sources support your own ideas. Using quality sources to support your ideas makes them seem stronger and more valid. Good paraphrasing makes the ideas of the original source fit smoothly into your paper, emphasizing the most relevant points and leaving out unrelated information.

G. Evaluate Your Sources

Not all sources on the web are worth citing – in fact, many of them are just plain wrong. So how do you tell the good ones apart? For starters, make sure you know the author(s) of the page, where they got their information, and when they wrote it (getting this information is also an important step in avoiding plagiarism!). Then you should determine how credible you feel the source is: how well they support their ideas, the quality of the writing, the accuracy of the information provided, etc.

* These guidelines are an excerpt from the website of [plagiarism.org](http://www.plagiarism.org), with some revisions and additions by GSICS. Each article on the website is provided by Turnitin.com and Research Resources and can be downloaded from:

http://www.plagiarism.org/plag_article_printable_handouts.html.

GSICS has obtained permission from Plagiarism.org to reprint and disseminate the articles on its website.