

# Avoiding Plagiarism FAQ for Students

At the College of New Caledonia, "academic integrity and honesty, as well as personal accountability and responsibility, are expected and valued." (CNC Standards of Conduct Policy). Your success as a student is based on this. Instructors expect you to do your own work, acknowledge sources and avoid plagiarism. This information sheet explains what plagiarism is and what you can do to prevent it. The goal is for you to be successful in your studies. Good luck!

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## What is plagiarism?

The College Standards of Conduct policy defines it as follows:

*"Plagiarism is the presentation of someone else's **work, words** or **ideas** as if they were one's own.*

*Plagiarism can take the following forms:*

- **Deliberate** plagiarism is where an idea, phrase, sentence or longer passage is submitted as one's own work; where one hands in someone else's partial or entire paper, whether bought, stolen or acquired on the Internet, as one's own; or where ideas are summarized or paraphrased without acknowledgment in text citations, footnotes/endnotes or by other accepted academic practices. This includes all sources of thought and writing obtained from all sources including the electronic.
  - **Accidental** plagiarism is where, through carelessness, quotation marks are not placed around another writer's words or where a source reference has been omitted when summarizing another's idea."
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## What's the penalty for plagiarism?

According to the policy:

- **Level 1** - For most first offences, the instructor will assign a grade of zero for the affected assignment, test, paper, project, lab etc.;
- **Level 2** - For most second offences, the instructor will assign a failing grade in the affected course;
- **Level 3** - Depending on the circumstances surrounding the first or second offence, a more severe level of discipline may be imposed by the College, including denial of admission or re-admission to a course and/or a program;

- **Level 4** - For any third offence, the matter must be referred to the Executive Vice President Academic for assignment of a sanction, which may include suspension or expulsion from the College.

## What kinds of things can get me in big trouble?

### Using someone else's entire work

It seems like an obvious point! Don't try to pass off someone else's work as your own, or have someone write something for you. If you do not present your own work to your instructor, your instructor will know. Instructors have many ways of checking sources. Students have failed before. Please don't add yourself to the list!

Added warning about "dovetailing": It is not okay to re-use your own work, for example, by submitting a paper done in one course for an assignment in another course. If your topic is similar ask your instructor for advice.

### Quotations

If you use someone else's exact words, put them in quotation marks with a proper citation. Otherwise, it's plagiarism.

ORIGINAL TEXT	PLAGIARISM	CORRECT – QUOTE+CITE
<p>Millions of people are taken in each year by medical fraud and worthless health products.</p> <p><i>(a statement from a book by Kemper page 334).</i></p>	<p>Millions of people are taken in each year by medical fraud and worthless health products.</p> <p><i>(you have taken the statement directly from the book without quoting or citing it; instructors can usually tell right away when this happens!)</i></p>	<p>“Millions of people are taken in each year by medical fraud and worthless health products.” (Kemper 334).</p> <p>- or - According to Donald Kemper, “Millions of people are taken in each year by medical fraud and worthless health products” (334).</p> <p>- or - Kemper outlines concerns about “worthless health products” (334).</p>

### Paraphrasing

Paraphrasing is re-stating someone else's ideas in your own words. You still need to cite the source. If you don't cite the source, or if you try to get around the whole thing by just rearranging a few words or phrases, you are plagiarizing.

ORIGINAL TEXT	PLAGIARISM	CORRECT
<p>Millions of people are taken in each year by medical fraud and worthless health products.</p>	<p>Each year, many people are taken in by medical fraud and worthless health products.</p> <p><i>(Changing a few words or the sentence structure is not acceptable. It is a form of “obvious” cheating)</i></p>	<p>There are a lot of health products on the market today and many don't work as advertised (Kemper 334, Jones 26).</p> <p><i>(You are using your own words to build your argument, with solid backing from reputable sources)</i></p>

## Charts, Diagrams, Photos etc.

If you are “copying” someone else’s chart, diagram, photo or graphic (from any print or online source) into your own paper, be sure to cite the source.



### Pua Shell Egg from New Zealand

Source: CNC Library Photo Page

<http://www.cnc.bc.ca/library/photo04apr-easter.html>

## Common Knowledge

By now, you may be thinking you have to “cite everything”! That’s not quite true. You don’t have to provide a citation for things that are common knowledge. These are facts that are likely to be known by a lot of people, and/or written about in a lot of different sources, or controversial. Here are some examples.

<b>COMMON KNOWLEDGE NO CITATION REQUIRED</b>	<b>NOT COMMON KNOWLEDGE CITATION REQUIRED</b>
Canada has ten provinces and three territories.	The newest Canadian territory, Nunavut, operates a “consensus government” (Craufurd-Lewis par. 3) <i>(You go on to explain what this means)</i>
Justin Trudeau is Canada’s 23rd Prime Minister.	Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has called for decisive action on climate change (Toronto Star A1).
Richard Matvichuk is the coach of the Prince George Cougars. <i>(this can be considered common ‘local’ knowledge) - sports scores are also common knowledge</i>	Based on a survey of fans and volunteers, the Prince George Cougars decided to stay with 7:30 pm game starts (Prince George Citizen 8)

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## Five useful tips to avoid plagiarism

### 1. Start early

Start your research early because it will take time. If you leave things to the last minute, there is more chance you will rush things; you’ll be more likely to look for short-cuts, cut-and-paste solutions, quick-and-dirty sources - as opposed to reputable, in-depth, scholarly sources.

### 2. Find out what citation style your instructor wants you to use

This will help you collect the right information for your citations. Ask if it’s APA, MLA, Chicago, Uniform Requirements, or another style, and then get a copy of the relevant handout (or manual). The Library has handouts on most citation styles, available in print and online at <http://www.cnc.bc.ca/library/> - click on citations link.

### 3. Take careful notes

As you’ve seen from the above examples, the real trick to doing research is to document things as you go. Take careful notes! When you come across a useful quote, write down the quote exactly, and what source you found it in, including the page number. When you copy a photo or

quote from the Internet, immediately copy the <http://address> of the page you found it on, along with all of the other information about the page that you will need for your in-text reference and your Bibliography or Works Cited list.

Remember, in the text of your paper, you need to:

- cite direct quotes
- cite ideas which you will paraphrase (put into your own words)
- cite facts that are not well known (i.e. not “common knowledge”)
- cite all types of sources: print, electronic, images, recorded or spoken material including interviews, broadcasts, etc.

#### 4. Be Selective

Evaluate your sources. Are they reputable? Are they on topic? Not everything is worth quoting, and not every quote needs to be a long one. Select appropriate quotes and paraphrases to show your instructor that you have done some reading and research. Balance this with your own ideas and write it in your own style.

#### 5. Ask for Help

Please don't hesitate to ask for help, from your instructor or from a librarian. We are here to help you. We want you to be a success!

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## Plagiarism Links...

**CNC Policies Page - Student Affairs and Services – “Standards of Conduct” Policy**

[http://www.cnc.bc.ca/Visiting/CNC\\_Policies.htm](http://www.cnc.bc.ca/Visiting/CNC_Policies.htm)

**Citations and Plagiarism Tutorial: interactive, enter as a “guest” (Kwantlen Polytechnic U)**

<http://www.kpu.ca/library/citationsplagiarism>

**Citing: When and Why? youtube video (2.4 min., University of B.C.)**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B9tmVfRTSw8#action=share>

**What is Plagiarism? video (5 min., BC Institute of Technology)**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QEydhrYX8ag&feature=youtu.be>

**How to Recognize Plagiarism and Avoid It (Indiana University)**

<https://www.indiana.edu/~istd/>

**Avoiding Plagiarism (Purdue University Online Writing Lab)**

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/589/01/>

**Bedford/St. Martin’s Workshop on Plagiarism: Plagiarism Handouts for Students...**

<http://www.macmillanhighered.com/Catalog/other/Plagiarism>

**Now Showing: Plagiarism media show (Rutgers University) -**

<http://library.camden.rutgers.edu/EducationalModule/Plagiarism/>

**Plagiarism Tutorial (Acadia Univeristy)**

<http://library.acadiau.ca/sites/default/files/library/tutorials/plagiarism/>

#### More Term Paper Tips...

**The 10 Steps of Preparing a Research Paper (CNC Library) + Citations (CNC Library)**

<http://www.cnc.bc.ca/library/> - click on Information Sheets

Updated Oct. 2016 – Also available online at <http://www.cnc.bc.ca/library> - Information Sheets