Guidance on Plagiarism

What follows is important guidance on plagiarism for all students in the Faculty of Human, Social, and Political Science.

Plagiarism is presenting as your own work words and thoughts that are not your own. It is a form of cheating and treated as such by the University's ordinances. At the beginning of each academic year you are asked to sign a form saying that you have read this guidance document and understand what plagiarism is. If you are in any doubt about what constitutes plagiarism, ask your graduate supervisor or Director of Studies to talk you through the issue. You should also ensure that you are familiar with the University's formal Statement on Plagiarism, www.admin.cam.ac.uk/univ/plagiarism.

What Constitutes Plagiarism?

Plagiarism from published literature

Plagiarism is copying out, or paraphrasing someone else's work (whether published or not), without acknowledgement in quotation marks (where directly copied) or a reference or citation. Avoiding plagiarism means getting into the habit of careful referencing. Citation styles and preferences can vary by subject within the Faculty; make sure you check with your supervisor or course organiser about what style best suits the type of work you are producing. Whatever the style, though, appropriate referencing is essential.

Take the following passage, from Fritz Stern's book, *The failure of illiberalism* (1974):
> "Some of them, unwittingly, hastened the coming of the disaster, for they became exuberant imperialists, justifying Germany's headlong rush into world politics by a kind of cultural Darwinism. Once more, brute force was gilded by idealistic invocations, by reference to Hegel and Fichte and the German Idealist tradition. Similar rationalizations had been propagated in Western countries; the difference, as Ludwig Dehio points out, was that the ideals of the Western powers, of Spain during the Counter-Reformation, of revolutionary France or liberal England, possessed a universal appeal, whereas the "German mission" was parochial and unpersuasive. The Germans were searching for the identity of their mission, in a sense for their own identity; the Kaiser's theatrics were a pathetic insistence of this search." (Fritz Stern, The failure of illiberalism: essays on the political culture of modern Germany, pp. 16-17.)

Any part you directly quote should be attributed to Stern in the main body of your text, identified by quotation marks.

It is plagiarism to write without a reference to Stern:

> A few Germans inadvertently speeded up the impending disaster, for they became enthusiastic imperialists, justifying Germany's dizzy charge into world power politics by a form of cultural Darwinism.

> Again, violence was covered by idealistic rhetoric, through the words
> of Hegel and Fichte, and the German Idealist tradition.

This is because the source of the information is not made clear.

To write what follows is also plagiarism:

> Some Germans unwittingly hastened the coming of the disaster, for
> they became exuberant imperialists, justifying Germany's headlong
> rush into world politics by a kind of cultural Darwinism. Once more,
> brute force was gilded by idealistic invocations (Stern, 1974: 16-17).

Even though there is a reference to Stern here, this is plagiarism because substantially the same sequences of words are used as in Stern's text: those words should be in quotation marks.

In both of the passages above, it is not possible to distinguish between your words or thoughts and those of Stern, and therefore this counts as plagiarism.

Your objective should be to show your reader where and how you have supported or defended your work with that of others, or where you have carried someone else's work to a new level. This is done by including references and quotation marks as appropriate:

> Stern (1974) felt that some Germans "… unwittingly hastened the
> coming of the disaster, for they became exuberant imperialists,
> justifying Germany's headlong rush into world politics by a kind of
> cultural Darwinism". This legitimisation can be clearly seen in
> speeches given by German orators throughout 1930-39.

It is also plagiarism to pass off an author's discussion of another author as your own. For example, you must acknowledge Stern in taking his comment on Ludwig Dehio. Here, if you want to use Stern's words you should write something like:

> Stern (1974: 16-17) emphasises Ludwig Dehio's argument that "the
> ideals of the Western powers, of Spain during the Counter-
> Reformation, of revolutionary France or liberal England, possessed a
> universal appeal, whereas the 'German mission' was parochial and
> unpersuasive".

It is plagiarism to write the following without acknowledging Stern:

> Ludwig Dehio argued that the difference Germany and Western
> countries was that the ideals of the Western powers, of Spain during
> the Counter-Reformation, of revolutionary France or liberal England,
> possessed a universal appeal, whereas the "German mission" was
> parochial and unpersuasive.

Plagiarism from the Internet

Buying essays from Internet sites and passing them off as your own is plagiarism. There are no grey lines with this kind of plagiarism. It always constitutes a deliberate attempt to deceive and shows a wilful disregard for the point of a university education.

Downloading material from the Internet and incorporating it into essays without acknowledgement also constitutes plagiarism. Internet material should be treated like published sources and referenced accordingly.

Plagiarism from other students' essays

Submitting an essay written by another student is plagiarism and will always be treated as a deliberate attempt to deceive. This is the case whether the other student is at this University or another, whether the student is still studying or not, and whether he or she has given consent to you doing so or not. Taking passages from another student's essay is also plagiarism.

In most courses, it is also plagiarism to submit for examination any work or part of any work which you have already had examined elsewhere, even if this was in another University or for another degree.

Collusion

Submitting parts of an essay, dissertation, or project work completed jointly with another student, without acknowledgement or if joint work has not been permitted, is collusion and is considered a form of plagiarism. When submitting assessed work, each student will be asked to declare whether or not s/he has received substantial help from another student or supervisor. This will include, but is not limited to, rewriting or rephrasing large sections of the work. Each piece of work is expected to be the original, independent work of the student, and so if this is not the case it must be declared at the beginning of the assessment process.

Proofreading, reading drafts, and suggesting general improvements are not collusion and students are encouraged to obtain a third party's view on their essay(s). However, as an example, if a supervisor or another student carried out detailed redrafting of the entire conclusion section of an essay, this would be considered collusion.

Some projects may benefit from joint working. In this case, however, the final project carried out by each student should be original and should not overlap significantly with one another. Students considering working together should always discuss the matter with their Supervisors and/or Directors of Studies *before* beginning the project. This type of joint work must always be declared by both students when the work is submitted.

Authenticity of data

Some dissertations or project work may focus on analysing and drawing conclusions from a set of data. The integrity of data collection is paramount and students of any level are expected to uphold good research practice. Falsifying, or attempting to falsify,

data will be treated as fraud (a form of plagiarism) and will be investigated (see *The consequences of plagiarism* below).

Supervisors of dissertations or projects are encouraged to carry out spot-checks on data gathered online and via traditional methods, and to seek assistance from computing staff in interpreting the results of these spot checks. Supervisors who have concerns regarding anomalous results should in the first instance discuss these with the student. If they are unsatisfied, they should contact the Chair or Senior Examiner to discuss. In this instance, supervisors have the right to stop the collection of data or to suspend the student's access to a shared dataset, until the concerns can be reviewed more fully with both student and supervisor. This will be done in as timely a manner as possible so as not to impede the progress of the project or dissertation.

The Consequences of Plagiarism

All students are asked to sign a form at the start of the year stating that they have read this guidance and the University's statement, that they understand what plagiarism is, and that they consent for any work they submit throughout the year to be submitted to software that checks for originality (see *Use of originality checking software* below).

Assessed work
A supervisor or examiner with concerns about potential plagiarism in work for formal assessment, whether or not the work has yet been submitted, will contact the Chair or Senior Examiner, who will liaise with the University Proctors. This will lead to an investigative meeting with the student. If the Proctor believes that there is a case to answer, s/he will then inform the University Advocate who can take the student before the University's Court of Discipline. The Court of Discipline has the power to deprive any student found guilty of plagiarism of membership of the University, and to strip them of any degrees awarded by it. A case may be made irrespective of the student's intent to deceive.

Supervision essays
Any supervisor who finds evidence of plagiarism in a supervision essay will contact the student's Director of Studies. The College then has the discretion to take disciplinary action. Supervisors can refuse to supervise any student whom they have found plagiarising in an essay.

Use of originality checking software

The University subscribes to a service named 'Turnitin' that provides an electronic means of checking student work against a very large database of material from the internet, published sources and other student essays. This service also helps to protect the work submitted by students from future plagiarism and thereby maintain the integrity of any qualifications you are awarded by the University.

This software will only be used when there are unresolved queries about the originality of student work; such queries may be raised by supervisors, by examiners, or by other students. In such circumstances, the work will be submitted to Turnitin, where it will be stored electronically in a database. Turnitin will produce an originality report showing whether any strings of words not in quotation marks are contained in other items in its database. The originality report will then be used to inform judgements about whether or not plagiarism has occurred. The copyright of the material remains entirely with the author, and no personal data will be uploaded with the work.

In order to use the originality checking software, students must grant their authority for their work to be submitted in electronic form to Turnitin. Students are asked to sign a declaration at the start of the academic year granting this authority, and any assessed work must be submitted electronically as well as in hard copy form. Students have the right to refuse this permission; however, where permission has been withheld the Faculty reserves the right to use alternative means to investigate the concerns.

Guidance on Assyriology Code of Practice

Where in assessed coursework and examinations candidates are asked to give English translations of Akkadian or Sumerian texts this should be **in their own words**. The reproduction, from memory or otherwise, of translations by other parties, published or unpublished, attributed or unattributed, is unacceptable.