

Ensuring good academic conduct

School of History, Classics and Archaeology



Which of these can be regarded as plagiarism?

- Drawing on someone else's ideas without referencing where you got these from
- Inserting other people's words of into your work without using quotation marks and/or without proper referencing
- Inserting the words of others into your work, and then changing a few words and/or amending the word-order, with proper referencing
- Re-using your **own work** from one assignment in another

These are ALL examples of plagiarism (the last one is self-plagiarism). Plagiarism can be considered a form of academic misconduct and may lead to mark penalties.

Plagiarism is problematic regardless of intention.

How to avoid plagiarism:

- **Always** acknowledge the ideas of others by referencing fully.
- **Avoid** copying-and-pasting from texts/websites into your written work.
- **Always** use quotation marks for direct quotes, and provide specific page numbers in your references.
- **Understand** what proper paraphrasing entails: write in your own words and sentences from scratch.
- **Never** re-use work from previous assignments (unless expressly allowed).

Other forms of academic misconduct include:

Collusion Unauthorised and unattributed collaboration in assessed work.

Falsification Presentation of fictitious or distorted data, evidence, references, citations, or experimental results.

Cheating Attempts to obtain, or give, assistance in an exam or assessment without acknowledgement. Includes submitting work which is not one's own, e.g. from online essay mills/essay purchasing sites.

If you ever receive 'adverts' for anything that looks like an essay purchasing service, then please notify the School Academic Conduct team (hca-conduct@ed.ac.uk).

Consequences

Where markers have concerns (big or small), they refer pieces of work to the School Academic Conduct Officer.

Over 160 pieces of work (UG and PG) were referred by markers in 2021/22.

Consequences

If 'first offence' **and** deemed to be 'poor scholarship':

- typically, contacted by School Academic Conduct Officer to discuss issues and how to avoid them in future
- mark will reflect the university marking scheme and HCA grade descriptors, which stipulate good referencing, transparency of sources, etc.

Over 120 pieces of work (UG and PG) were handled this way in 2021/22.

Consequences

If repeat offence **and/or** deemed to be potential academic misconduct:

- referred to College Academic Misconduct Officer for investigation
- in many cases, formal mark penalties (e.g. 10, 20, 30 marks; reduced to 0).

Over 30 pieces of work (UG and PG) received mark penalties in 2021/22.

Top tips: basics of referencing

Whenever you quote from, paraphrase or otherwise allude to ideas from what you have read, you must also provide references.

Indicate the relevant page or pages where needed.

According to Ian Wood, the kings of Francia may have enjoyed brief periods of overlordship in southern Britain.¹ If so, then this would show that medieval rulers had aspirations beyond their own borders. Some recent historians have, however, remained unconvinced by Wood's argument.²

¹ Ian N. Wood, *The Merovingian North Sea* (Alingsås: Viktoria, 1983), 12–18.

² Daniel G. Russo, *Town Origins and Development in Early England, c.400–950 AD* (London: Greenwood Press, 1998), 170; Roger Collins and Judith McClure, 'Rome, Canterbury and Wearmouth-Jarrow: three viewpoints on Augustine's mission,' in *Cross, Crescent and Conversion*, ed. Simon Barton and Peter Linehan (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 33–6.

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Top tips: basics of referencing

Principles are the same across disciplines, even if conventions about *formatting* references differ.

Include details of all sources you have used in the bibliography.

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Top tips: always be citing!

Myth: online resources (e.g. newspaper articles, electronic theses, encyclopedia entries, blogposts) do not need references.

Although it originated in an attempt to explain the enduring devaluing of medieval women's work, Judith Bennett's concept of 'patriarchal equilibrium' can help to explain why computer programming went from being a lower-status female occupation to a higher-status male occupation between 1940 and 1990.

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Anything informing your written work, including online resources, electronic theses etc., requires references just as books and journal articles do.

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¹ David M. Perry, 'What Google bros have in common with medieval beer bros' (2017) <<https://psmag.com/social-justice/alewives-and-google-bros>> [accessed 8 October 2019].

Top tips: citing at second hand

Sometimes you may wish to cite at second hand. No problem but...your references should make clear where *you* have obtained your information from.

The works *you* have consulted are the ones that should appear in the bibliography.

¹ Judith Stacey, *Patriarchy and Socialist Revolution in China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), 56; quoted in Susan L. Mann, *Gender and Sexuality in Modern Chinese History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 60.

¹ Syme (1939); summarized in Galinsky (2005), 16.

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Top tips: citing at second hand

Failing to indicate that you have obtained information at second hand has the *effect* of deceiving your reader about the real sources on which you're drawing (whether or not that's your intention).

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Top tips: citing at second hand

If you find yourself copying someone else's references: stop!

You are copying someone else's 'paper trail' and passing it off as your own.

Personal relationships affected the politics of the anti-apartheid movement in the 1970s and 1980s. In one letter, for example, Mandela referred to Camagwini Matanzima as “my darling Mzakulu”.³

³ NMPF A54, 107.



This gives your reader the impression that you are claiming to have consulted the Nelson Mandela Prison Files (NMPF) held in the National Archives, Pretoria, South Africa.

Top tips: citing at second hand

Your references should leave a ‘paper trail’ of what *you* have read yourself.

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³ Nelson Mandela, letter to Camagwini Matanzima (November 1981); quoted in Timothy Gibbs, *Mandela’s Kinsmen: Nationalist Elites and Apartheid’s First Bantustan* (Woodbridge: James Currey, 2014), 125.

Top tips: paraphrasing is *not* changing words

‘Wealth accumulation through employment in the Company’s Indian empire was a collaborative enterprise, a family business that required labor from both men and women. Reproductive labor – both the labor of biological birth and the hard graft of raising children to adolescence and socialising them to Company culture – was performed by an array of natural and adoptive mothers and fathers, actual and fictive parents drawn variously from the nuclear family, blood kin, in-laws and influential friends.’

↑
Journal article

Accumulating wealth through employment in the Company’s Indian empire was a collaborative undertaking, a family business requiring labour from both women and men. Procreative work – both the work of biological birth and the difficult slog of raising children – was performed by a range of actual and fictive parents, natural and adoptive mothers and fathers drawn differently from influential friends, in-laws, blood kin and the nuclear family.¹

¹ Margot Finn, ‘The female world of love and empire: Women, family and East India Company politics at the end of the eighteenth century’, *Gender & History* 31 (2019), 20.

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Essay

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Substituting words or changing word order is **not** proper paraphrasing.

Top tips: paraphrasing is *not* changing words

‘Wealth accumulation through employment in the Company’s Indian empire was a collaborative enterprise, a family business that required labor from both **men and women**. Reproductive labor – both the labour of biological birth and the hard graft of raising children to adolescence and socialising them to Company culture – was performed by an array **of natural and adoptive mothers and fathers, actual and fictive parents** drawn variously from **the nuclear family, blood kin, in-laws and influential friends**.’

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The **effect** is deceptive. The reader is invited to read the articulation of ideas and/or exposition of details as if they’re your own. In reality, the phrasing and sentence structure very closely replicates the original. This is a form of **plagiarism**.

Top tips: paraphrasing is writing in your own words

‘Wealth accumulation through employment in the Company’s Indian empire was a collaborative enterprise, a family business that required labor from both men and women. Reproductive labor – both the labor of biological birth and the hard graft of raising children to adolescence and socialising them to Company culture – was performed by an array of natural and adoptive mothers and fathers, actual and fictive parents drawn variously from the nuclear family, blood kin, in-laws and influential friends.’

Writing in your own words means writing in your own sentences from scratch.

Avoid copying-and-pasting text into your written work.

Don’t think: how do I reword this sentence?

Do think: what is the key idea/point/detail?

Stop staring at the original text!

Top tips: review your note-taking practices...

Notes from Finn, 'Female world'.

p.20 Finn sees East India Company (EIC) as 'family business'. Women/men contributing to different kinds of labour.

'Reproductive labor' vital. Term doesn't just mean biological reproduction. Also about bringing up children, 'socialising them to Company culture'. Not only parents: relatives, friends, men as well as women too.

[Illustrates important broader point: what women/families are doing crucial to EIC and colonialism].

Avoid just copying out what you're reading or strings of quotations.

As in this example, write primarily summarized and/or abbreviated notes in your own words.

Quote sparingly and make sure the details are clear (e.g. use quotation marks *and* underline).

Your notes are for the benefit of your future self who is writing the essay.

...and get writing!

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Finn argues that the 'reproductive labor' of parents, relatives and friends was crucial to the East India Company's success. This was not just about biological reproduction, but also about bringing children up and 'socialising them to Company culture'.¹ In other words, what women got up to within family and friendship circles was, in fact, crucial to the colonial project.

¹ Margot Finn, 'The female world of love and empire: Women, family and East India Company politics at the end of the eighteenth century', *Gender & History* 31 (2019), 20.

Top tips: intellectual benefits

Rigorous, summarized notes and proper paraphrasing help you:

- Avoid plagiarism
- Engage much more thoroughly with what you're reading
- Lessen the pressure to articulate things in your own words at the point of writing
- Develop your ability to communicate ideas and details in writing

For more information:

If still unsure, please seek advice. **We are all here to help you.**

Consult your course organiser, course tutor(s) or the School Academic Conduct team (hca-conduct@ed.ac.uk).