

## **Assessment Task 4:**

### **Research Essay Draft**

**Topic:**  
Intellectual Property – Plagiarism

**Question:**  
Plagiarism is currently a major issue for all universities. What is the problem, and how can it be dealt with?

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## Introduction

According to *Dictionary.com* (2018), plagiarism is defined as “an act or instance of using or closely imitating the language and thoughts of another author without authorization and the representation of that author’s work as one’s own, as by not crediting the original author” (para. 1). It is a serious offence that can occur in two different situations. The first being when an individual’s work is passed off as someone else’s without reference and the other is when someone’s work mirrors another piece (Oshima & Hogue, 1999).

**Commented [CY1]:** For quotations, remember to give to the page or paragraph number – whichever applies.

Plagiarism is increasing in all higher education institutions throughout the country. It is such a big problem that universities have bought plagiarism-checking technology to examine assignments submitted and plagiarism councils are frequently meeting during term time. Without question, it is something that students must be constantly aware and alert of the risk of plagiarising. Accusations of plagiarism can lead to serious penalties for academic misconduct.

This essay investigates the growing problem of plagiarism in universities and suggests reasonable solutions to it and evaluates the effectiveness of these solutions.

## Situation

The escalation of plagiarism seems to be almost directly connected to the wider availability of technology like having the internet at home, on mobile phones, and on games consoles. It is becoming easier for lazy or ignorant students and academicians, to lift another author's words into their own, because of the cut and paste technology. Moreover, in 2008, Malvern highlighted that the drastic increase in 'essays for sale' online is evident in a 4,840,000 'buying essays' Google search results. This means that students can go to an online essay writing business to purchase an essay for as little as £4. Hence, the "'significant' rise in pupils caught copying work from the web", according to the Welsh Joint Education Committee (WJEC) (as cited in BBC News, 2006, para. 2). This situation will not cease if there continues to be a demand for such services. Apart from that, despite it being costly to invest into a plagiarism-checking software like 'Turnitin', yet over 80% of the tertiary institutions in Britain consider it a worthwhile investment (Kellerman, 2006). This is one of the measures taken to deter plagiarism in their institutions. Therefore, the advancement of technology is one of the causes plagiarism has become popular and easier to commit.

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If your primary source does not have a publication year, there is no need to provide n.d. unless it is stated.

## Problem

Firstly, a university's image will be tarnished if plagiarism is rampant among its staff and students. Universities with a track record of high plagiarism cases are frowned upon and looked upon as unable to teach students how to write academically. Consequently, the intake of students may decrease due to a bad reputation and therefore their ability to earn will decrease (Banwell, 2003). To fix their image, the universities could expel the students but with one strong argument against it as university league tables will show institutions with a large drop-out rate. If students are retained, their grades might be cut, and the league tables will show poor results for the university. Hence, disciplining students who plagiarise becomes a big problem. Furthermore, another major difficulty in policing is when students unintentionally plagiarise. Reducing their marks would adversely affect their performance and the rest of their university career, and it would seem unfair (Armitstead, 2008). By disciplining students who commit plagiarism, universities could also be hurting their image. Hence, these institutions will lose both their reputation and income if this problem is not addressed.

## **Solution**

Firstly, providing a workshop or course on how to avoid plagiarism can be included as part of a student's induction experience. It should be introduced to the curriculum to create an awareness that plagiarism is a crime. This information should be made available on the university's online learning platform (University of Bristol, 2008). These points show that some additional education included into each degree curriculum could help solve the big issue of plagiarism. Many universities alert their students about plagiarism without actually showing them how to identify and avoid it, whereas a simple instruction lesson could reduce the occurrence of plagiarism within higher education institutions as claimed by Carroll (2008). The instructor plays a significant role and the activities designed should allow students to apply academic skills to avoid plagiarism. Thus, informing students of how dangerous plagiarism is can help them in being more careful when writing their essay.

*(710 words – inclusive of in-text citations, excluding headings, cover page and references)*

## References

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