Plagiarism Policy

Plagiarism is using, without acknowledgement, someone else's words, ideas or work.

Introduction

Academic assessments exist to help you learn and to demonstrate your knowledge and understanding. Passing assignments shows how fully you have demonstrated this and give you credit for your learning.

Good academic practice is the process of completing your academic work independently and honestly; using the appropriate academic style and with all sources fully attributed according to academic requirements (Please see info sheet 0019).

When you submit an assignment at Matrix you will do so via Moodle, you are asked to confirm that the work you are submitting is your own and has not been written by anyone else. Whilst you may collaborate with others in studying, **submitted work copied from or written jointly with others is not acceptable, unless collaboration is required in the particular assignment**.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is using, without acknowledgement, someone else's ideas or work. It is an example of Academic misconduct

If you submit an assignment that contains work that is not your own, **without clearly indicating this to the marker** (fully acknowledging your sources using the rules of the specified academic referencing style (outlined in student info sheet 0019)), you are committing 'plagiarism' and this is academic misconduct. This might occur in an assignment when:

- using a choice phrase or sentence that you have come across or translated from another source
- copying word-for-word directly from a text or other source
- paraphrasing or translating the words from a text or other source very closely
- using text downloaded from the internet, including that exchanged on social networks
- borrowing statistics or assembled facts from another person or source
- copying or downloading figures, photographs, pictures or diagrams without acknowledging your sources
- copying comments or notes verbatim from a tutor
- copying from the notes or essays of a fellow student
- using text obtained from assignment writing sites, organisations or private individuals.
- paying for work from other sources and submitting it as your own

It is important to understand that if you do not acknowledge fully the sources that have contributed to and informed your work you are misrepresenting your knowledge and abilities. Since this may give you an unfair academic advantage in assessment it is considered to be academic misconduct.

NB: Passing on your assignments to others is also an academic misconduct offence.

Detailed guidance on how to properly acknowledge sources used in writing can be found on Student info sheet 019. The **Guidance Section** below provides some initial help on avoiding plagiarism.

Please note that Matrix College uses **Turnitin** a text comparison software which it applies to assignments, an explanation of this software and how it is used is provided below in the Guidance section.

Consequence of academic misconduct

If you are suspected of academic misconduct you will receive a letter from the Head of Training, which will detail both the allegation and any evidence. You should respond to the letter as soon as possible, but it must be within 14 calendar days of the date on the letter. In the letter you should address the allegation and whether you deny or accept the allegation. You should provide an explanation and state any reasons. You should also submit relevant evidence, where necessary.

The Head of Training will arrange a meeting with you and your Programme Lead to discuss the alleged misconduct.

If you are found to have plagiarised the consequence is that the essay (or piece of work) will be given a fail grade and you will not be able to resubmit until the following academic year.

As you will have then failed the module you will be required to take a consolidation year (at your own expense) to complete the missing work.

Guidance Section

You are expected to show the results of your reading by referring to and quoting from works on your subject, however, **copying** from such sources **without acknowledgement** is considered to be plagiarism and will not be accepted by Matrix.

You must make it clear which words and ideas are yours and which have come from elsewhere.

- If you are using the words that appear in the source i.e. quoting, you must show these words in **quotation marks** accompanied by an **in-text citation/in-text reference**.

- If you are summarising (sometimes called paraphrasing) ideas in a source you must acknowledge these by including an appropriate **in-text citation/in-text reference**.

If you are new to academic study you may find it difficult to understand these academic conventions and this can lead to poor academic practice. In the same way as you want to learn about counselling, it is equally important that you learn how to write and present your work so that it meets the requirements of good academic practice.

You should:
- carefully **read all the specific assignment / essay guidance** advice
- revisit statements concerning plagiarism in the Handbook and info sheets
- learn how to reference your sources accurately

- make sure you use your marker's feedback on your assignments which may include how you are using and referencing sources
- ask your PL to support you if you are unsure if text you wish to use in an essay will be identified as plagiarism

Remember:

- Assignments provide a vehicle for assessing your performance during your module and contribute to your pass or failure of the modules.
- Assignments assist you in understanding your subject and aid your learning on the module.
- When you attempt to use the ideas and terms of the module independently you learn more thoroughly and develop your own writing style.
- You are likely to perform better and become a more accomplished practitioner if you have learned how to write your own answers to questions in assignments.

Ethical implications:

The counselling profession requires you to work in ethical ways with honesty, fairness and integrity being important counsellor qualities.

Matrix may be required to make an honest assessment of your suitability for professional registration at the end of your studies if you apply for UKCP registration or if you require a professional reference.

Turnitin software

Plagiarism primarily takes one of two forms:

i) students misuse of information from the web or other sources, where they 'cut and paste' sections of text from these resources directly into their assignments without acknowledging the original source;

and

ii) students working too closely with one or more individuals to help solve and/or answer an assessed task or question, resulting in the production of a joint answer or solution (whether intentionally or not) to gain an unfair advantage over others in their assignments. This form of plagiarism is called collusion and is academic misconduct.

To check students are working in a fair and academically appropriate manner, Matrix uses Turnitin a text comparison software to detect potential cases of plagiarism in work that is submitted for assessment:

Turnitin carries out the equivalent of an internet search, looks for matches between the text included in a piece of work submitted by a student with all forms of information and resources publicly available on the internet. Turnitin is used to check for cases of direct copying, and/or not properly referencing various types of source materials. It can also be used to compare each student's assignments with the module materials and other commonly used or provided references. For each assignment submitted to Turnitin, an 'originality' report is produced showing the percentage of text that matches specific websites

What happens:

Depending on the questions being asked and the format of the submitted answer, some level of matching between scripts and with other sources is expected.

For example, you may have used information obtained from other sites and/or scientific papers as a direct quote to support your answer or illustrate a particular point (making sure that you have referenced this in the appropriate and expected manner).

Likewise, you will probably use terms and phrases, which can be described as 'common knowledge' within your particular subject area and level of study, which do not need to be referenced, but are likely to arise in a similar format on a number of sites and other students' answers.

The staff team (including your Programme Lead, the marker and possibly the reader of the assignment) will take all such matters into account when reviewing the report from Turnitin and deciding whether a student has plagiarised. If there are concerns:

- the staff team may decide that some students need further guidance or support to develop their academic writing skills
- the staff team may decide that what the reports are showing is more serious, in which case they will refer the matter to Management team for consideration

Data Protection:

When using Turnitin, you need to understand that it is likely your work will have your name on it, from your Moodle profile

Your work will not be stored on any external system and so will not be accessible to anyone outside of Matrix