**Plagiarism and Plagiarism Detection Tools**

**Introduction**

The word ‘plagiarism’ is derived from the latin words meaning ‘kidnapper’. In its simplest sense, plagiarism can be seen as stealing someone else’s works and passing them off as your own. The "Work" includes text, ideas, images, videos, and audio.  Plagiarism is a form of fraud and a serious academic offense. Penalties can range from failing the examinations to being expelled from the institution.

**Definitions**

The Cambridge dictionary defined plagiarism as “to use another person's [ideas](http://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/idea) or [work](http://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/work) and [pretend](http://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/pretend) that it is [your](http://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/your) own”. The oxford dictionary defiened it as the “practice of taking someone else's work or ideas and passing them off as one's own”. According to the merriam-webster online dictionary, to "plagiarize" means:

* + to steal and pass off (the ideas or words of another) as one's own
  + to use (another's production) without crediting the source
  + to commit literary theft
  + to present as new and original an idea or product derived from an existing source

In other words, plagiarism is an act of fraud. It involves both stealing someone else's work and lying about it afterward.

**Scope**

All of the following are considered plagiarism:

* turning in someone else's work as your own
* copying words or ideas from someone else without giving credit
* failing to put a quotation in quotation marks
* giving incorrect information about the source of a quotation
* changing words but copying the sentence structure of a source without giving credit
* copying so many words or ideas from a source that it makes up the majority of your work, whether you give credit or not
* Using an image, video or piece of music in a work you have produced without receiving proper permission or providing appropriate citation is plagiarism. The following activities are counted as plagiarism.

1. Copying media (especially images) from other websites to paste them into your own papers or websites.
2. Making a video using footage from others’ videos or using copyrighted music as part of the soundtrack.
3. Performing another person’s copyrighted music (i.e., playing a cover).
4. Composing a piece of music that borrows heavily from another composition.

**How to Avoid Plagiarism**

To avoid plagiarism, you must give credit whenever you:

1. paraphrase or directly quote from someone's actual spoken or written words.
2. use another person's ideas, opinions, or theories in an assignment or essay.
3. make use of pieces of information, such as statistics, graphs, drawings, that are not common knowledge.

You can avoid unintentional plagiarism by:

1. using quotation marks around everything that comes directly from a text or article.
2. summarising ideas and arguments in your own words - don't just change or rearrange a few random words.
3. correct paraphrasing and acknowledging of original ideas.
4. checking your summary against the original text.
5. correctly referencing all sources used.

**Turnitin: A Plagiarism Detection Tool**

The Turnitin is plagiarism detection software tool developed by i-Paradigm LCC, USA. The major features of the Turnitin are the following:

1. It is a web-based software tool which does not require local installation.
2. It is basically an instructional supporting system incorporating a number of tools/functionalities like discussion boards, peer marking, grammar checking, rubrics as well as plagiarism check.
3. Turnitin is the most heavily used plagiarism detection tool in the world.
4. Turnitin is a fee-based software which requires yearly subscription
5. It operates on User-name and password based. The Username will be the user’s e-mail id.
6. There are three types of Users/ accounts in Turnitin:
7. Administrator, the person who is managing the Turnitin service in an organization
8. Instructor, the teacher who creates assignments for the students
9. Students, who submits the papers based on the assignments created by the Instructor/teacher
10. The Turnitin maintains 4 databases with the following contents:
11. Free website contents.
12. Copyrighted materials such as commercial e-journals and e-books.
13. Student papers submitted by the organizations who subscribe Turnitin.
14. Student papers in own organization which subscribes Turnitin.
15. The software does the plagiarism checking by comparing the paper submitted by a student with the existing documents in all the four databases.
16. The software produces a document called Originality Report containing the source document (submitted paper) and the matching documents (documents already existing in the databases) with a numerical value for amount of matching called Similarity Index.
17. The permitted file size for one Turnitin submission is 40 MB
18. The Turnitin accepts the following file types for checking plagiarism: MS Word, WordPerfect, html, Adobe PostScript, Plain text, Rich Text Format, Portable Document Format, OpenOffice