

*Exceed Your
Expectations*



Corinda State High School

Plagiarism Policy

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Rationale

Corinda SHS is committed to the achievement of academic excellence and the fostering of civil and social responsibility in our students. Part of this process is recognising the intellectual property rights of others, and accepting that the act of plagiarism is academic dishonesty as well as an ethical offence which undermines a trusting educational environment and impedes students' personal growth and development. A student who plagiarises is dishonest with their teacher, their peers and themselves. Corinda SHS wishes all students and parents to know that plagiarism is NOT acceptable behaviour at this school.

Policy

All students are expected to adhere to the highest standards of personal honesty and integrity in their work. Submissions to teachers must be original, or respect the intellectual contributions of others through correct referencing. Any violations of this policy will have serious consequences.

Definition of Plagiarism

Plagiarism is defined as stealing and passing off the ideas and words of another as one's own, when it actually comes from another source. This source may be written, oral or electronic, and includes copying/pasting from the Internet and the retrieval of research papers from the Internet.

Examples of Plagiarism

You are plagiarising when you do any of the following, even if unintentionally:

- You hand in someone else's work (parent, friend, tutor) as your own.
- You copy another student's work (with or without their knowledge) and hand it in as your own.
- You produce assignments in conjunction with other people (e.g. another student, tutor) which is supposed to be your own independent work.
- You allow someone else to copy your work and hand it in.
- You paraphrase material from another source without proper acknowledgement or citation. This includes commentary in study aids like *Brodie's Notes*.
- You use plots, characters, theories, opinions, concepts, designs from other sources like short stories, novels, TV shows, films etc and present them as original work without properly attributing them.
- You piece together different sections of the work of others into a new whole ie 'cutting and pasting', especially off the internet or CD-ROM encyclopedias etc.
- You fail to indicate with quotation marks that you copied another person's exact written words or symbols, regardless of how few were used.

- You fail to name a person whose exact words you use in an oral report, or to indicate by verbal inflexion that you are quoting.
- You fail to provide a Bibliography for a project that requires research.
- You buy or obtain a paper from an internet research service or 'paper mill' and hand it in as your original work.

How to Avoid Plagiarism

Sometimes students don't realise they are plagiarising, or they don't know how to avoid it. Here are some techniques to help:

- Learn how to manage your time so you don't panic at the end and feel plagiarism is the only alternative.
- Learn the 6 steps of the Information Process (Defining, Locating, Selecting, Organising, Presenting and Evaluating) to break down your assignment into manageable segments. Refer to the *Corinda SHS Research Guide*.
- Don't allow others to copy your work, as you will be an 'accessory to the crime' and penalised as well.
- Don't hand in someone else's work as your own – ever.
- Learn Corinda SHS's accepted method of referencing and constructing bibliographies. The accepted method at Corinda SHS is the Harvard method. "*The Corinda SHS Research Guide*" is available on the school web site. It shows you how to legitimately use the work of others to enhance your work by teaching you to:
 - Properly construct a Bibliography of all the sources you used for your assignment (called 'end-text referencing').
 - Properly use direct and indirect quotations in your assignment (called 'in-text referencing').
- Be aware of Australian copyright guidelines. Look at the Information Sheets at <http://www.copyright.org.au/page3.htm>
- *Citation* is available on the network for students to access and use.
- When taking notes from any source, always copy the bibliographic information immediately so you can easily acknowledge this when writing the assignment later.
- When you write a quotation in your notes, make sure it has quotation marks around it, so you later realise it's a quote and not your own words.
- Separate your ideas from others' as you are taking notes. Some use brackets or different coloured pens to separate their comments from the author's words.
- Learn how to legally paraphrase. Look up notetaking methods. Use a thesaurus.
- Learn how to effectively synthesize information into something that is your own work. There are many excellent writing sites on the web. Try these:

- Guide to Writing a Basic Essay
<http://members.tripod.com/~lklivingston/essay/>
- Mt Edgcumbe High School Writing Manual
http://www.mehs.educ.state.ak.us/braves_writing/manual.html
- OWL Handouts: Thesis Statements
<http://www.ipl.org/teen/aplus/linksthesis.htm>
- OWL Online Writing Lab - General Writing Concerns
<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/general/index.html>

Consequences of Plagiarism

If a teacher reasonably believes, based upon significant evidence, that a student has been guilty of plagiarism or assisted another student to do so, then that student may be subject to any of the following penalties, depending on the nature and extent of the plagiarism:

Verbal warning.

- Reduction of marks for the assignment.
- No marks at all given for the assignment.
- Insistence on student re-writing the assignment (or a similar one), using original ideas or style.
- Written notification to parents/guardians, possibly with interview.
- Referral to Head of Department, Administration team or Guidance Officer for additional discipline/counselling. Incident recorded.
- Suspension of participation in designated school activities.

Please note that the penalties for tertiary plagiarism are even more severe, and may include exclusion from a subject or course, even if fees have been paid.

Conclusion

This policy has been developed for the protection of the vast majority of Corinda SHS students who observe the guidelines for honest authorship, and for the protection of our academic community's integrity.

(This policy has been based on the Brigidine College draft policy written by Jennie King, Teacher Librarian, May 2004.)

Further reading

The following sites give a well-rounded introduction to the policy issue. Balsano, C. 2001, 'Plagiarism' (online). *North High School Library*, Community High School District 99, Downer's Grove ILL.

<http://www.csd99.k12.il.us/north/library/plagiarism.htm>

Adaptation by a high school librarian of the information on a well-respected site by Robert Harris (see later) which reads easily with its dot-point summaries. Also includes a collection of useful online, full-text magazine articles about plagiarism teachers can access.

Bruce, L. & Hilvert, J. 2001, 'Select, copy, cheat', *PC User*, August, pp102-106.

An Australian periodical article from the wider non-educational community. Authors give a general outline of the contemporary situation which would be helpful in giving staff the big picture of plagiarism today. Reinforces the idea that others, apart from teachers, are concerned about plagiarism as a broader social problem.

Department of Education, Government of Western Australia. 2002, *Using the net: Intellectual property in online resources*.

<http://www.eddept.wa.edu.au/cmis/eval/curriculum/copyright/copy5.htm>

Fain, M. 2002, 'Internet paper mills' (online). *Kimbel Library*, Coastal Carolina University, Conway SC. <http://www.coastal.edu/library/mills2.htm>

Comprehensive collection of cheat sites compiled by a university librarian to help make her staff aware of what was available. Useful for teachers to work through so that they can show awareness of sites to students as a preventative measure. Also includes subject specific sites and warns students against using them.

Harris, R. 2001, *Anti-plagiarism strategies for research papers* (online), Virtual Salt. <http://www.virtualsalt.com/antiplag.htm>

A very useful and highly-respected site to start with from an experienced writer and university educator. Contains balanced, consistent, practical and specific strategies of awareness, prevention and detection of plagiarism. Reminds teachers to look at the student point of view and educational advantages of being proactive rather than reactive. All staff should be made aware of his views. See earlier reference to an adaptation and well-presented dot point summary by Chris Balsano.

Horton, R. 2002, 'Plagiarism' (online). *P.L. Duffy Resource Centre*, Trinity College, Perth. <http://library.trinity.wa.edu.au/library/study/plag.htm>

Comprehensive listing of appropriate web sites Rosemary Horton has collected on the topic - a useful resource for staff research. 3 allied sections lead off this page which teachers could explore, and which reinforce to students the positives rather than the negatives: Study Skills and Research, Copyright and Intellectual Property, and Social, Ethical, Moral and Legal Impacts of Information Technology.

Lathrop, A., & Foss, K., 2000. *Student cheating and plagiarism in the internet era: A wake-up call*. Libraries Unlimited, Englewood, CO.

An excellent, comprehensive book. Teacher authors have organised it as a practical guide for educators and parents who want to reduce cheating and plagiarising. Provides helpful ideas and strategies to counter both hi-tech/low-tech cheating and plagiarism in K-12 schools, as well as references to online and print resources. Each chapter followed by article intended as discussion starters with students, staff or parents. Despite American bias, a valuable book for raising awareness of a difficult problem. Will provide plenty of food for thought/topics for discussion.

McKenzie, J. 1998, 'The new plagiarism: Seven antidotes to prevent highway robbery in an electronic age' (online). In *FNO: From Now On- The Educational Technology Journal*, 7(8) May. <http://www.fno.org/may98/cov98may.html>

Provides hints for teachers and students which will help avoid the necessity for or capability of students to plagiarise. Emphasises that often the 'question is the answer'; discourages 'trivial pursuits', and offers other sensible advice, including citation ethics and progress monitoring. Overall, gives seven strategies for teachers planning research assignments, linked to examples of typical assignments divided into three levels of research. All teachers should be encouraged to read McKenzie's common-sense articles, perhaps starting with this one.

'On plagiarism' (online) 2001. *SafetyNet@2Learn.ca*, Because We Care Society of Alberta, Alberta. <http://www.2learn.ca/mapset/SafetyNet/plagiarism/Plagiarism0.html>

Public education service from Canada which provides comprehensive information for teachers about plagiarism, its significance in the classroom, checking methods (including a useful 'Plagiarism Sleuth' which tells teachers how to check suspect work online), an excellent set of supportive research resources for students, and some sample school policies which can be used by teachers.

Plagiarism.org (online) 2001, <http://www.plagiarism.org/>

Designed to provide latest information on online plagiarism and promote their subscription-based software, *Turnitin.com*, which detects suspected plagiarism. Schools register with the site, which has compiled a huge database of plagiarised papers from the internet. Students upload work for scanning, essays are cross-referenced with the database, and teachers notified of detected cases of plagiarism. Negative issues of copyright, civil liberties and heavy-handed surveillance as opposed to emphasis on educating about research skills and academic honesty are debatable aspects though.

Senechal, G. 2001, *Plagiarizeddotcom: The instructors guide to internet plagiarism* (online). Ottawa, <http://www.plagiarized.com/index.shtml>

A committed campaigner helping teachers/parents determine internet plagiarism. Contains useful information including 'Dead Giveaways'; Online training (sample essays provide an exercise designed to give teachers means of practicing their own detection skills and constructing a list of key plagiarism indications); titles of some essays currently available for download; how students can legally obtain research information, and 5 rules to follow once some is caught plagiarising.

Sharka, J. 'Plagiarism stoppers: A teacher's guide' (online). *Naperville Central High School Web Site*, Naperville Central High School, IL.
http://www.ncusd203.org/central/html/where/plagiarism_stoppers.html

From a practising school librarian and colleagues. Useful for showing staff what other schools are actually doing. Sections which provide collections of useful links include Detection Tips; Prevention and Training; Free Detection Sites; Fee-Based Services; and Potential Paper Mills. Because it's on a school's library pages, the site would be a powerful deterrent. As with Horton's site, there are direct links from this page to help with copyright and research, a clever approach to be used in constructing a school's policy.

This list for further reading was compiled by Jennie King, Teacher Librarian, Brigidine College, May 2004.