Plagiarism & Student Responsibility

This document explains Wintec’s position on plagiarism. It is your responsibility to become familiar with what constitutes plagiarism and what the consequences of plagiarism are.

What is plagiarism
Plagiarism is using someone else’s words, ideas, tables, diagrams, images, or artworks without acknowledgement. It happens when you present these, intentionally or unintentionally, as your own work.

Examples of plagiarism
Plagiarism comes in many forms including, but not limited to:

- Exact copying of paragraphs, one or more sentences, or significant parts of a sentence without appropriate acknowledgement;
- Exact copying of paragraphs, sentences, a single sentence or significant parts of a sentence with an end reference but without quotation marks around the copied text;
- Copying ideas, concepts, research results, computer codes, statistical tables, designs, images, sounds or text or any combination of these without appropriate referencing;
- Paraphrasing, summarising or simply rearranging another person’s words, ideas, etc., without changing the basic structure and/or meaning of the text, without appropriate referencing;
- Offering an idea or interpretation that is not original without identifying whose idea or interpretation it is;
- Mixing a variety of statements from multiple sources into one statement without acknowledging their sources;
- Copying work from another language and translating it into English without acknowledging its source;
- Taking individual ownership for work done in collaboration with others;
- Copying or adapting another student’s original work into a submitted assessment item;
- Using someone else’s original work that has been purchased from another person, company or website and claiming it as your own.

Writing your work in another language and getting it translated into English by an independent source or another person is also an academic offence as you are making false claims about your role in writing the assignment in the required language of learning.

Stating common knowledge is NOT plagiarism and does not require referencing; for example, New Zealand has two main islands, the North Island and the South Island or The Treaty of Waitangi, New Zealand’s founding document, was signed in 1840.
Detection
Turnitin.com is a programme that has been adopted by Wintec to monitor student writing and to detect whether you are in danger of plagiarising.

Other signs of possible plagiarism include:

- the presentation of work that does not reflect the level that a student has previously exhibited
- the use of words that are different from those used in class or textbooks
- an excess of technical terminology
- the construction of an assignment that is not consistent to the level of understanding

Variables
The severity of plagiarism will be considered under the following variables:

- Was the plagiarism intentional or accidental?
- Is this a first or a repeated breach?
- Is this the student’s first year of study?
- To what extent would the grade/result change if the plagiarised sections were removed? In other words, what difference will the plagiarism make to the outcome?

Intentional and accidental plagiarism.
Intentional plagiarism occurs when you know you are passing off someone else’s words or ideas as your own. This includes purchasing assignments or getting a friend to write your assignment. It also includes paraphrasing someone else’s idea without referencing or acknowledging the original source, and presenting almost exact copies of another persons’ artwork.

Accidental or unintentional plagiarism happens when you do not realise that you have plagiarised. This can occur through such things as minor referencing errors, including acknowledging the source but failing to put quotation marks around the actual quote; or getting assistance from another person to write your assignment where the person goes beyond proof reading and adds to the ideas and sense. It cannot be claimed to be unintentional if the error has been repeated in another assessment.

Consequences of Plagiarism.
If you are seen to be plagiarising another person’s ideas or work, the consequences are categorised as: Minor, Moderate, or Serious – dependent of the severity of the breach. Identified breaches are discussed immediately with you by academic staff, with actions to follow as suits the situation. If you have any concerns about plagiarism, speak with your tutor, an academic learning advisor or a librarian.