Avoiding Plagiarism in the IRR and IPP

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Good Scholarly Practice

• As scientists we are always building on the work of others.

• This is a good thing!

• Good Scholarly Practice requires us to explicitly acknowledge this when reporting on our own work.
Plagiarism

• Weak definition: “Copying other people’s work”

• Better definition: “Re-using other people’s work without giving due credit to the original author (whether deliberately, or lazily)”

• This is not good scholarly practice.

• The University disapproves and penalises it!
Avoiding Plagiarism in the IRR and IPP

• IRR is your summary and analysis of existing work in some research area, so by definition it is building on the work of others!

• You should

  • Write in your own words (this shows that the material has passed through your brain 😊), don’t just make a shallow cut-and-paste rephrasing of existing text (any more than you would copy code and change the variable names 😞)

  • If you do need to directly quote something, such as a definition, an image or an opinion, put it in “quotation marks” and cite the source, or make it explicit in some other clear way that you have done so. For example “This figure is borrowed from Smith [27].”
Avoiding Plagiarism in the IRR and IPP

• IPP is your plan for your project. Exactly the same approach applies

• If you want to quote from your own IRR, do the same thing (your IRR is previous work too!). If you are closely reworking from your IRR in the new context of your IPP make it clear that you are doing so and cite it e.g. “This section is based on my IRR [12]”, but it is much better to write it again, with a new IPP-relevant focus.

• The same applies to borrowing material from your IRR/IPP in your MSc dissertation. You should also acknowledge borrowed algorithms, code, ideas etc, with proper citations.
Summary

• This is not complicated!

• If you act in the right spirit, you won’t have any problems.

• Good luck with your IRR and IPP!

(more advice https://web.inf.ed.ac.uk/infweb/admin/policies/academic-misconduct)