

# Academic Dishonesty in Courses

## Homework / Project-report / Submissions

IIIT-Delhi wishes to maintain global academic standards in its own education system. Therefore it does not tolerate any form of academic dishonesty. Almost all violations of academic honesty in course submissions (homework assignments, project reports) are instances of plagiarism, which is what this document is about. The guidelines for research papers (as term paper or for publication) are far more stringent and the authors have to be far more careful.

**Plagiarism is the offence of taking undue credit for someone else's work.**

When you submit an assignment, the instructor basically wants to evaluate/grade you on what **you did**. And unless you explicitly indicate that some part is not done by you, it is implicitly assumed that the entire assignment was done by you. Academic dishonesty is displayed when some part(s) of your assignment are **someone else's writing/idea/art** (for example, obtained from a friend, a solution manual, a website), but you claim it as your own by not explicitly making it clear that these parts are someone else's.

### What leads to plagiarism?

**Copying (verbatim or with modification)** in any form - from phrases to paragraphs, from code fragments to entire programs, from the idea behind a proof to an actual written form - may lead to plagiarism. It is also plagiarism if you submit **any modification of an existing solution** - you are basically copying the solution idea/solution structure and claiming credit for the solution. Here "modification" **does not** refer to only textual modification; the originality of the submission should be substantially different. A non-exhaustive list of specific instances is given below.

- If a question requires descriptive answers to some existing idea covered in instructional material (lecture, textbook), then it is plagiarism to use someone else's words.
- For mathematical/analytical questions, it is plagiarism to write someone else's steps/calculation.
- If a question requires you to come up with a new idea (e.g., prove something, or write something not already present in lecture notes or book), then it is plagiarism to even use someone else's idea.
- For programs, it is plagiarism to use (even a small portion of) someone else's code.

Example 1: Copying solution to a homework problem from the internet. You are claiming that solution to be your own, which is plagiarism.

Example 2: Copying an answer from a friend. You are claiming your friend's answer to be yours, which is plagiarism.

Example 3: Using the solution idea of a friend. You are claiming your friend's idea as your own, which is plagiarism.

Example 4: Copying only one paragraph from someone's solution but the rest is original. You are claiming the "entire solution" to be your own, which is plagiarism. It is actually quite dumb to write five pages yourself and then copy a paragraph, thereby reducing the value of your work, and risking punishment.

## How to avoid plagiarism

You may borrow, not copy.

If, for whatever reason, you have to use some existing work, you cannot copy - you can only borrow (when you borrow, you do not claim ownership of the borrowed item). Therefore, it is your responsibility to explicitly indicate which parts are borrowed.

You are allowed to borrow definitions, formulae, figures, one sentence, small parts of code etc. by (1) clearly specifying what is borrowed AND (2) from where it is borrowed (you need to do both).

(1) For borrowed text, you can either put it inside quotation mark or paraphrase/summarise it by writing in your own words with occasional quoted text. For code, figures, mathematical steps, and other content, document in the appropriate manner which part is borrowed.

(2) To attribute the borrowed part to its source, you need to cite it by using references or footnotes or other appropriate means.

Example: *"Atomic actions are defined as ....."* [name of book/paper/website]

Example: *"Atomic actions are defined as ...."* <sup>1</sup> and a footnote <sup>1</sup> name of website

Example: *// code taken from http://<website> def function(...) { ... }*

Example: *We would like to have atomic actions because it provides "top-level independent actions" [source]...*

Example: *\* This figure is taken from <book>.*

Example of a proper answer:

In functional programming languages, functions are first-class members, which means, functions are treated equally as any other value (aka. first-class objects). Functions are part of most programming languages, but they may be used merely as a second-class language construct, and may not be assigned to variables, passed as parameters or even changed on the fly. Functional programming is part of the genre declarative programming which “expresses what the program should accomplish” in contrast to imperative programming which prescribes “how to do it in terms of sequences of actions to be taken” [Wikipedia: Imperative Programming].

## Policy for Plagiarism in Assignments / Projects / Quiz / Mid-Sem / End-Sem

	<b>Misconduct/use of unfair means in assignments/projects</b>	<b>Penalty</b>
1.	First misconduct/use of unfair means during the entire stay in IIIT-Delhi	Zero in the assignment (awarded by faculty) + one letter grade less in the course.
2.	Second misconduct/use of unfair means during entire stay in IIIT-Delhi	Student is assigned an F grade in the course.
3.	Third or further misconduct/use of unfair means during the entire stay in IIIT-Delhi	Student is assigned an F grade in the course and the case is reported to DAC, who may suspend the student for 1 semester to a year.

	<b>Misconduct/use of unfair means in quiz/midsem/endsem</b>	<b>Penalty</b>
1.	First misconduct/use of unfair means during the entire stay in IIIT-Delhi	Student is assigned an F grade in the course.
2.	Second misconduct/use of unfair means during the entire stay in IIIT-Delhi	Student is assigned an F grade in the course and student may be suspended from the program for 1-2 semesters by DAC.
3.	Third misconduct/use of unfair means during the entire stay in IIIT-Delhi	Student is assigned an F grade in the course and student's program may be terminated by DAC.

Notes:

- More serious offenses like tampering with the answerbook after the exam (e.g. modifying an answer, changing marks, changing the total, etc), impersonating someone else, etc. will be reported to DAC and may result in stricter punishment by DAC, say, expulsion for a semester, year, or more.
- Some types of misconduct/use of unfair means commonly observed are specified below. This list on types of misconduct or on use of unfair means is not exhaustive.
  - a. Using material which has not been allowed by the instructor like books, notes, cheat sheets, etc. or writing on body, for the syllabus of the exam, irrespective of whether the student was caught before actually using the material or later, and whether the question in the exam was related to the material.
  - b. Exchanging information with other students in the exam hall (or outside, in toilets, for example), whether verbally or by showing the paper, or any other way. (Except in case of exams where groups are to jointly solve the problem.
  - c. Using communication device during the exam duration inside or outside the examination hall for exchanging/getting information with other persons.
- Communication devices like mobile phone are not allowed in any exam. Being in possession of a communication device in an exam, even in off mode, will be treated as an instance of cheating in an assignment, and rules mentioned above will apply.
- All other forms of cheating (e.g. a senior facilitating a junior or a TA helping a student) will be reported to DAC for action and disciplinary action would be taken on facilitator of cheating as well.
- An instructor will report the instances of cheating in an assignment/project/quiz/midsem/endsem or in any other course assessment component to the academic section. The above policies of grade reduction, awarding an F, reporting to DAC will be applied by the academic section.
- A student can appeal a decision to DAC. If a student appeals the decision of an instructor to the DAC or appeals the decision of DAC to Director, he/she must do so in writing. If any false claims are made in the written complaint, it may be treated as the next instance of cheating.
- The student involved in the cheating case is not allowed to fill the course feedback of that particular course.
- In case, at the time when cheating is detected, it comes to the notice that the student did cheating earlier too (but was not caught), the current case will be considered as the second or the third case depending on the number of cheatings detected for other courses too (including those of previous semesters but detected now) and action will be taken accordingly.

## Summary

- Using ideas/facts/knowledge/terms which is common knowledge, taught in the course, or given in the textbook is allowed without any restriction.
- Anything from instructional material like lecture notes, course text-books and reference books (those explicitly mentioned by the instructor) can be written in your own words without citation.
- You can discuss with your instructor and course TA without attribution. Usually, most instructors allow discussion with classmates (along with attribution of collaborators) - but it may change from course to course. You may not discuss with anyone else.
- Small amount of material may be verbatim copied (only one or two sentences, definitely not a paragraph) when done with proper style (quotation/paraphrasing) and attribution.
- An idea taken from other sources may be used if it is written in your own words and is accompanied with attribution.
- No other existing material is allowed for assignments and projects.
- Any violation may lead to strict punishment as decided by the course instructor or DAC.

Individual instructors may have a different set of restrictions. Please review the course policy carefully.

### Easy Rule of Thumb:

Most of the times, students are led to academic dishonesty simply because their solution ended up unnecessarily containing a significant amount of non-original work. An easy way to avoid this is to ensure that the sources are not in front of you - if it was a book, do not have it open in front of you, if it was a website, then do not have it on screen. Do not memorise what you have read - unlike practices in school, we do not encourage memorisation by heart. And this is what is needed from you in all your homework - explain whatever you want in your own words based on your own understanding.

If you are discussing a homework assignment with others (make sure the instructor has allowed it in that particular course), you can avoid dishonesty by (1) if you have seen your friend's homework, ensure that it is not open in front of you when you do your own (2) mentioning your collaborators in your submission.