Promoting Good Scholarly Practice

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Good Scholarly Practice in Research

Suppose I submit a paper then I must:

▸ Be clear about use of other work (including my own).
  ◁ Citation of relevant work (publication details, url etc.)
  ◁ including diagrams (even if modified).
  ◁ If using a quote then give it clearly as such, e.g., As stated by KK (2014) “It is wise to follow good academic practice…”

▸ Acknowledge help received.
  ◁ Conversations/discussions that led to significant progress.
  ◁ Comments from an anonymous referee that led to improvements.
  ◁ etc.

▸ Work claimed as one’s one really is one’s own.

Exception. No need to credit standard general knowledge, e.g., the solutions to $ax^2 + bx + c = 0$ are given by . . . !
Purpose of this Presentation

- Give some (quick) guidance on good practice for students.
- Give examples of bad practice.
- Give links to guidance.
- Explain briefly the consequences of bad practice.
Individual Assessment

All assessed work must be (unless explicitly specified otherwise) your own individual work.

This applies to, e.g.:

- Coursework.
- Programming assignments.
- Essay submissions.
- Research proposals.
- Dissertation, etc.

Breaches of this rule are regarded as academic misconduct and are taken very seriously by the University.
Two Examples of Academic Misconduct

1. Copying a portion of a research paper from the internet and then editing the words.
   - This is plagiarism.
   - Copied text must always be included verbatim in quotation marks with the original source explicitly attributed.

   All other text should be written in your own words from the start. Not an edited version of someone else’s text.

   **Myth:** It is OK to have 20% copied. **FALSE!**

2. Working together with another student to produce a joint program and then each customizing the code to make the solutions appear distinct.
   - This is collusion.

By all means discuss general ideas and difficulties with fellow students, but keep this at a general level well away from the solution and write the code by yourself.
Information About Academic Misconduct

Academic misconduct includes:

- plagiarism,
- collusion,
- falsification,
- impersonation, ... 

University information page on academic misconduct:
http://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/staff/discipline/academic-misconduct

School of Informatics guidelines on plagiarism:
http://web.inf.ed.ac.uk/infweb/admin/policies/academic-misconduct

http://web.inf.ed.ac.uk/infweb/admin/policies/guidelines-plagiarism
Consequences of Misconduct

Three levels depending on case:

▶ Warning from School Academic Misconduct Officer.
▶ Interview and escalation to College of Science and Engineering, resulting in a possible reduction of mark(s), potentially to 0.
▶ Report to University Student Discipline Committee.

Note: Any accusation is a very serious charge, hence treated with great care and rights of all respected.
Keeping to Good Scholarly Practice

If in doubt:
- Consult online guidance.
  - If necessary ask person who set assignment for help on specific points relating to it.
  - For a general point ask me (kk@inf.ed.ac.uk).

Publishing your solutions to coursework:
- By default you are not allowed to do this but a lecturer can give permission (on the handout).
- For the projects (UG4, MInf, MSc) the default is that you can publish unless the proposer stated otherwise.
Danger to be avoided by all: a ‘siege’ mentality. This is not a police state!

- The vast majority of people have no intention of committing any crimes.
- The vast majority of students wish to follow good scholarly practice.

Any Questions?