# Seminar focus activity on discipline-specific academic integrity (located or cloud)

# Introduction by lecturer to seminar

## What do we mean by ‘your own understanding’ and why is it important to academic integrity?

Most plagiarism is unintentional. The majority of students want to complete assignments honestly but sometimes there are obstacles in your way. It takes time and guidance to transition successfully to university study and it is important to know where you will find most obstacles.

The obstacles could be:

* Previous education experiences did not *emphasise* original work supported by in-text citation and full referencing protocols (E.g., in Australian schools, there is difference in approaches, and internationally, there is diversity in how original work is defined and taught)
* English as a second, third or fourth language makes learning in a new environment challenging (stress, time, access to complex ideas)
* There are university cultural protocols that take time to learn.

In Australian universities there is an assumption that all students **must construct their own understanding** rather than remember and reproduce that of others (Carroll: 2007:6) Universities based on Western models (predominately USA, UK, Australia and New Zealand) interpret **understanding** to mean:

* A student can use a fact in a new setting
* A Student can analyse a theory by taking it to bits
* A student can explain something ‘in their own words’ (Carroll: 2007:7)

Therefore, learning academic protocols are essential in order for you to demonstrate **your own understanding.**

# Student Activity

Demonstrating your understanding is at the heart of all assessment at Deakin. Look at the following learning activities your lecturer might do in class.

1. **Evaluate each activity’s usefulness**, allocating a score of between 1 and 5 (1 = lowest, 5 = highest)

**2. Which three** of these learning activities would be most useful to you? Why?

3. **In a group** discuss together your top three learning activities. What are the **group’s top three activities**?

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| **Classroom Topic Activity** | Your personal score of usefulness 1- 5 | Explain your top 3 choices | What are the group’s top three activities? |
| Talk about the **meaning of plagiarism** |  |  |  |
| See **the ‘rules’** for avoiding plagiarism **in practice** |  |  |  |
| Talk about your **previous education experiences and the rules of plagiarism**(did you have to follow the rules?) |  |  |  |
| Talk about your personal **study challenges** |  |  |  |
| Talk about the discipline’s idea of **reliable sources** of information |  |  |  |
| Talk about **typical** discipline format for **assessment** |  |  |  |
| Talk about the **structure/tone** of written work in the discipline (Can I use first person? What’s passive voice? What does ‘discuss’ mean in this unit?) |  |  |  |
| Is there a **preferred** way of citing in this discipline? Why? |  |  |  |
| How does the lecturer give **feedback** about unintentional plagiarism in this unit? |  |  |  |
| Talk about **working in groups** and the rules for avoiding plagiarism |  |  |  |
| Talk about how lecturers **‘catch out’** plagiarism |  |  |  |
| Talk about plagiarism **penalties** |  |  |  |

Note: This activity is **exploratory** for students and a safe way to discuss matters of originality. It also provides a way of identifying specific skills to be taught.

**A follow up learning idea** is assigning one topic from each group’s priority list for the group to become ‘expert’ in and explain ‘in their own words’ for posting on a class wiki or discussion post. More detailed work could involve ‘re-teach’, where students are responsible for teaching the topic to others.

Reference

Carroll. J., (2008). Assessment Issues for International Students and Teachers of International Students. The Enhanced Series Case Studies: International Learning Experience 2008. Higher Eduction Academy: UK