



## GUIDANCE ON RECOGNISING AND AVOIDING PLAGIARISM

This guidance has been produced to assist candidates who are compiling portfolios as part of the assessment process for Institute-awarded qualifications, and as a source of general information on plagiarism.

### Definition of plagiarism

Plagiarism is copying or reproducing someone's work and presenting it as one's own; professionally and academically it is a form of stealing or cheating. According to Institute policy, plagiarism is unacceptable and, if proved, may result in the withdrawal of an award.

The most common form of plagiarism is the copying or downloading of text from an article, website or textbook. Simply substituting different words or slightly rearranging the sentences without acknowledging the source still constitutes plagiarism.

### Action taken by the Institute on discovering or suspecting plagiarism

Where an assessor suspects a candidate of plagiarism during a portfolio assessment, it is the assessor's responsibility to:

- a. notify the Institute's Examinations Department immediately, provide details of the extent and nature of the suspected plagiarism, and suspend the assessment. **This will result in automatic referral of the portfolio. The candidate will be refused admission to the endpoint assessment and will be required to submit a new or revised portfolio the following year.**
- b. submit a report accompanied by the candidate's portfolio to the Institute's Examinations Department within five working days of the initial notification for consideration by the Professional Examinations and Awards Committee.

If plagiarism is proved after the award of a particular qualification, the Institute reserves the right to withdraw that award. Further action may also be taken regarding an individual's membership status.

### How to avoid plagiarism and instructions for references

References should appear in Vancouver format, examples of which are shown below:

The Vancouver style uses a number series to cite references in the text. These are listed in the Reference section in the numerical order in which they appear in the text. The

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advantage of the Vancouver style is that the main text reads more easily, and it is considered to be less obtrusive.

Example:

"The author has discussed the implications of these proposals on the National Health Service in another paper.<sup>1</sup> Other writers have commented on related issues, notably Lane<sup>2,3</sup> and Lewis.<sup>4</sup>"

References are then listed in the References section in numerical order, as below. Please make note of the limited punctuation and the fact that the journal names are abbreviated (the exception to this being when a journal name is a single word). Where more than six authors are named, the first three should be included, followed by *et al.*

- 1 Annas GJ. New drugs for acute respiratory distress syndrome. *N Engl J Med* 1997; **337**: 435–9.
- 2 Lane K, Grinspoon L, Bakalar JB. *Marijuana: the forbidden medicine*. London: Yale University Press, 1993.
- 3 Lane K, Feinberg TE, Farah MJ eds. *Behavioural neurology and neuropsychology*. 2nd edn. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1997.

References cited only, or at their first mention, in tables, or in legends to figures should be numbered in sequence according to the first mention of that table or figure in the text.

Where you may have referred to a specific chapter in an edited book (one where different authors have written each of the chapters) the author(s) of the relevant chapter needs to be specified, as well as the editor(s) and title of the book; for example:

- 1 Allen A. Susceptibility testing. In: Brown, CD, Collins F eds. *Microbiology methods* 3rd edn. Oxford: University Press, 2008.

If quoting a piece of text verbatim from a book chapter or journal, this should be cited in quotation marks, followed by a superscript number, as shown in the example above.

Further information can be found on the following websites:

[www.nlm.nih.gov/bsd/uniform\\_requirements.html](http://www.nlm.nih.gov/bsd/uniform_requirements.html)

[www.icmje.org/](http://www.icmje.org/)