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## ACADEMIC WORK AND SCIENTIFIC INTEGRITY: A GUIDE FOR STUDENTS AND TEACHERS AT UNINE

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*DeepL.com was partially used for translating this document from French to English<sup>1</sup>*

Learning and critical thinking are central at the university. Critical thinking is the ability to analyze information effectively and form a judgment, particularly by developing original work that expresses one's own creativity.

Original academic work refers to the creation and presentation of content produced entirely by oneself, without direct or uncredited dependence on the work or ideas of anyone else. It involves making new and unique contributions while acknowledging and respecting the contributions of others through appropriate citation and reference.

This guide is developed to help clarify the rules relating to original academic work. It begins by defining the concept of plagiarism, provides examples and outlines the expectations for your personal work. It also provides a framework for the use of generative artificial intelligence in academic work.

### What is plagiarism?

Plagiarism can be defined as taking all or part of the work, or an idea of someone, and passing it off as one's own without mentioning (or not correctly mentioning) the sources.

The question of original academic work arises throughout one's academic career. For students, academic work can be in the form of a paper, a dissertation, a thesis, an article, a report for a project, etc.

### Examples of plagiarism<sup>2</sup>

- Passing off someone else's work as your own;
- Paraphrasing an author's text without mentioning the exact source where the text was copied;
- Copying someone's text without reformulating it in your own words and without mentioning the source;
- Copying a text (or part of a text) without quotation marks (or using the citation rules of your field of study) ;

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<sup>1</sup> DeepL was used to help translate this guide from French to English: <https://www.deepl.com/fr/translator?il=fr> .

<sup>2</sup> Examples from the guidelines on plagiarism issued by the Faculty of Law of the University of Geneva on 10 October 2007, the report of the 'Master's thesis and plagiarism' committee to the Faculty Council on student plagiarism, Faculty of Law of the University of Neuchâtel, 9 December 2010 and the website <https://uclouvain.be/fr/etudier/uss/lut-ter-contre-le-plagiat.html> , accessed on September 6, 2024.

- Only making a general note at the end of a paragraph or page, without quotation marks (a text that has been copied should always be marked as such) ;
- Copy and paste from the Internet, without quotation marks and without citing the reference (URL and date of access);
- Not appropriately indicating a reference (for example, in parenthesis, footnote, at the end of the paragraph, or according to the rules of the field of study).
- Translating a text without mentioning the source (translating a text does not make the translator the author of the original work) ;
- Copying an image, graph, table or any other original representation without mentioning the source.
- Using a text generated by a generative artificial intelligence tool without mentioning its origin (see *below*).

### **By recognizing the merit of other authors, you increase your own merit**

The recipe for avoiding plagiarism is quite simple: all you have to do is recognize the contribution of third-party sources to your work. Citing your sources correctly shows exactly what your original contribution is. In other words, by acknowledging the merit of others, you are also highlighting your own contribution, your ideas and what you bring to the table scientifically. The ideas, comments, works consulted, etc., must therefore be cited in your work, using the criteria specific to your field of study.

### **How to properly cite sources ?**

To help you correctly cite your sources, below are a few guidelines. These guidelines might vary based on the scientific field of your work and your teacher's specific instructions.

- *Copying another author's text word-for-word* must be indicated by quotation marks and must be accompanied by a precise and complete reference to the source at the end of the citation and in the bibliography. Please note: in this case, the citation must be copied exactly as written, including the original punctuation marks. Copying and pasting from the internet constitutes a direct reproduction and must be cited accordingly.
- *Any modifications to a citation within quotation marks* should be indicated, such as by using square brackets to enclose comments or changes.
- *Quotation marks are not needed when incorporating an idea, image, graph, table, or any other visual element, or when paraphrasing text.* However, the source must be properly cited at the point of use.
- *When compiling the bibliography*, it is important to cite all the references used. The same applies if websites have been consulted, citing the URL address and the date of access.

## Considerations related to Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI)

It is important to cite the use of generative artificial intelligence in your academic work to preserve the integrity and transparency of the work. The logic is the same: as a general rule, you should cite anything you have not written yourself and reference it correctly. The results obtained using a generative AI tool are based on a corpus that is, at least in part, scientific, and its use will not necessarily respect the rules of scientific integrity.<sup>3</sup>

The following recommendations are useful. “You should :

- **Cite** a generative AI tool whenever you paraphrase, quote, or incorporate into your own work any content (whether text, image, data, or other) that was created by it;
- **Acknowledge** all functional uses of the AI tool (like editing your prose or translating words) in a note, your text, or another suitable location;
- take care to **vet** [verify] **the secondary sources** it cites.”<sup>4</sup> [emphasis added]

### Can I use Generative AI tools for my academic work?

Before using a generative AI tool, you need to:

- Check if the use of generative AI is authorized by the teacher;
- Understand the benefits, limitations and data protection issues of generative AI and remain critical of it;
- Bear in mind that the work must remain personal and that a generative AI tool must not carry out this work for us.

### What are the contributions of Generative AI that should be mentioned?

It is possible to distinguish between the direct and indirect contributions of generative AI. The **contribution is indirect** when an AI tool is used to provide you with inspiration or initial ideas that significantly shape the direction of your work or your arguments.

The same applies when AI tools help to gather or organize research materials (e.g. managing citations, organizing literature reviews). The same goes for checking spelling and grammar at the end, before turning in the work. In the case of an indirect AI contribution, its use must be mentioned (see below).

A **direct contribution** may be the generation of text or ideas directly included in the work. Analysis of data and interpretation of results are also considered direct contributions. If AI is used for a direct contribution,

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<sup>3</sup> Burri, M., D. Kaufmann, et N. Ostovan, 2024. “AI in economic research – A guide for students and instructors,” IRENE Policy Reports 24-03, IRENE Institut de recherches économiques, Université de Neuchâtel. Accessed on 12 September 2024 at: <https://ideas.repec.org/p/irn/polrep/24-03.html>

<sup>4</sup> “How do I cite generative AI in MLA style?”, Modern Language Association of America, <https://style.mla.org/citing-generative-ai/>, accessed on 19 June 2024.

it must be cited as a source in your work.

### How can I cite the use of generative AI?

For **indirect contributions** of AI tools, it is necessary to mention their use. There is no universal method for identifying the use of generative AI; however, as long as you indicate when and how it was used, several ways of acknowledging its use are possible: in the introduction, a footnote, the methodology section, at the top of the reference list or through an *honor pledge* (in French: déclaration sur l'honneur). If you are not sure, do not hesitate to contact your teacher to find out their preference.

Here is an example of a text to acknowledge the use of generative AI :

*"In this paper I used ChatGPT 4o (Open AI, <https://chat.openai.com/chat>) to make a summary of my notes and to correct the English of the final version."*

When it comes to **direct contributions**, you should first refer to your teacher's instructions. If no specific guidelines are provided on how to cite the use of generative AI in your work, consider following these basic rules:

- If you use text generated by an AI tool, whether word for word or in paraphrased form, you should quote it directly in the body of the text and then include a full reference in the list of references or as a footnote, depending on the citation style you choose.
- Depending on the different citation styles (e.g. APA, MLA, etc.), the form of the citation in the text may vary. For example, it may include the author's name, date and year. In the list of references, the name of the developing company is used instead of the author, the name of the tool instead of the title of the work, the year mentioned corresponds to the current year. It is also necessary to add the URL pointing to the tool.

Example of how to cite the use of generative AI directly in the text: "I asked AI the following question: Do I cheat when I use ChatGPT in my academic work?" *The text generated by ChatGPT 4o told me that this depends on several factors and that "the ethical use of ChatGPT in the university setting requires transparency, compliance with institutional guidelines, and judicious use that complements your own intellectual work rather than replacing it. It is always best to consult your professor if you have any doubts about the appropriate use of these tools in your academic work."* (OpenAI, 1 March 2024).

In your reference list, you will cite the entire source. For example : OpenAI. (2024). ChatGPT (1 March 2024). <https://chat.openai.com/chat>

In some cases, you may be asked to attach the conversations (prompts and responses) you have had with the generative AI to the submitted work. It is recommended to keep a record of these conversations so that you can pass them on to your teacher if she or he requests them.

It is essential to take a critical and thoughtful approach to the ideas and content generated by AI,

ensuring that you personalize your work inspired by these tools and strictly adhere to academic integrity policies. This ensures the transparent, responsible, and ethical use of generative AI in your academic work.

### **Committing to scientific integrity**

The University of Neuchâtel has regulations regarding the respect of scientific integrity, which include sanctions if these regulations are not applied and respected. Sanctions can range from failing a course to expulsion in serious cases. If you follow the advice in this guide, you should be able to meet the criteria for producing original academic work that complies with the rules of scientific integrity. For certain assignments, you may also be asked to sign an [honor pledge](#) (*déclaration sur l'honneur*). Signing this pledge implies that you have read the documents issued by UniNE on scientific integrity (including this guide) and that you commit to complying with them to produce original academic work.

The Rectorate