Plagiarism

To plagiarize is to copy writing or ideas from someone else without acknowledging that person as your source. The University’s Regulations state:

Plagiarism is defined as the unacknowledged use, as one's own, of work of another person, whether or not such work has been published.¹

Plagiarism is a serious offense, equivalent to cheating or stealing. Students caught plagiarizing usually fail the plagiarized assignment and may fail the course. They can also be referred to the faculty or university for disciplinary action.

Students often commit plagiarism unintentionally due to their failure to correctly use footnotes or endnotes in their written work. Learn to keep track of your sources, use quotation marks to indicate any phrase, sentence, or special term taken from other writers, and include footnotes or endnotes, as well as a bibliography, to give credit for all your sources. If you are unsure, it is better to over-footnote than to under-footnote.

Plagiarism guidelines and advice from HKU are available at:
- http://www.hku.hk/plagiarism
- http://www4.caes.hku.hk/plagiarism [tips and advice from the HKU English Centre]

Plagiarism pledge

The department requires every student essay to include this signed statement:

“I certify that I am the author of this essay and I have not copied any writing or ideas from any other source, whether published or unpublished, except those that are cited in the footnotes.”

When should I make a footnote or endnote?

1. Anytime you directly quote someone else’s words, whether from a book, an article, the internet, a videotape, a personal interview, or any other medium.
2. Anytime you paraphrase someone else’s words. This means anytime you summarize someone else’s ideas in your own words.
3. Anytime you refer to someone else’s opinion. This means anytime you are stating an opinion that is not your own original idea and not already widely known.
4. Anytime you cite specific facts that are not widely known. For example, you don’t need a footnote to say the Impressionists held their first group exhibition in 1874, because that fact is widely reproduced in many texts; but you do need to cite a source to say Zacharie Astruc showed a painting of a woman in Chinese clothes at this show.²
5. Anytime you want to give further information that is not essential to your argument but might be of interest to some readers.³

¹ What is Plagiarism? (Hong Kong: The University of Hong Kong, 2002): available at www.hku.hk/plagiarism.
² For information on this painting, see Charles Moffett et al., The New Painting: Impressionism 1874-1886, exh. cat. (San Francisco: The Fine Arts Museum of San Francisco, 1986), 124.
³ For example, this footnote has no reference to a source, but I can use it to point out that some footnotes can go on for several sentences, or even paragraphs. For student essays, such comments should be brief.
What form should I use for footnotes or endnotes?

Citation forms vary by academic discipline (e.g. anthropology vs. art history) and medium of publication (e.g. scholarly journal vs. newspaper). The key is to provide enough information for a reader to find and check your source. Important general points:

1. In art history, you should use footnotes (at the bottom of each page) or endnotes (at the end of the essay); do not use brief references in parentheses.

2. A full footnote includes the author(s), title of work, publisher, place and date of publication, and page number(s). (In the bibliography, drop the page numbers for books.)

3. Number your footnotes and place each footnote reference number at the end of the relevant sentence, following the full stop and “quotation marks.”

4. If you have more than one footnote from the same source, give the full citation for the first reference only. Use a shortened citation for repeat references to the same source.

5. Use the same footnote form throughout your essay. Do not mix different styles.

Examples of footnote forms

The following examples are based on The Chicago Manual of Style, the department’s preferred citation system. Every comma and colon is part of the correct citation form.


for an exhibition catalogue: Charles Moffett et al., The New Painting: Impressionism 1874-1886, exh. cat. (San Francisco: The Fine Arts Museum of San Francisco, 1986), 124. [“et al.” is used when there are more than three authors]

for a journal article: Deborah Cherry, “Art History Visual Culture,” Art History 27, no. 4 (September 2004): 485. [note colon before page numbers instead of a comma]


for an interview: Personal interview with Claude Monet, Giverny, France, July 14, 1890.

for repeated references: Moffett, New Painting, 200-1; Cherry, “Art History,” 481.

Examples of footnote formats for Chinese sources


4 In this example, note how the reference number 4 appears after the full stop and quotation mark.
Bibliography

At the end of a research paper, attach a bibliography listing the sources that you cited. Sources are listed in alphabetical order, the first author’s name is listed by surname first, and punctuation is different from the footnote. Examples:


for a journal article: Cherry, Deborah. “Art History Visual Culture,” *Art History* 27, no. 4 (September 2004): 478-93. [page numbers for the entire article]


Further sources on footnotes and other aspects of writing (*note bibliography style*)


Inclusive writing

All students are expected to be familiar with the School of Humanities’ *Guidelines on the Use of Inclusive Language in Student Work*, available from the SoH website: [http://www.soh.hku.hk/docs/SoH_Inclusive_Language.pdf](http://www.soh.hku.hk/docs/SoH_Inclusive_Language.pdf). Please follow the spirit of these guidelines to maintain gender neutrality in writing and ensure that your choice of words, phrases, and examples does not inadvertently demean or offend particular groups or cultures.