

IDTA

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International Dance Teachers' Association
Level 4 Diploma in Dance Teaching
Plagiarism

Plagiarism

IDTA takes reports of plagiarism seriously and will investigate any reports received from candidates, trainers or examiners of suspected plagiarism.

What is plagiarism?

Plagiarism can be defined as:

- stealing and passing off (the ideas or words of another) as one's own
- using (another's production) without crediting the source
- committing literary theft
- presenting as new and original an idea or product derived from an existing source

Plagiarism in short is an act of fraud. It is stealing someone else's ideas and not admitting that they aren't yours.

The expression of original ideas is considered intellectual property and is protected by copyright laws, just like original inventions. Almost all forms of expression fall under copyright protection as long as they are recorded in some way (such as a book or a computer file).

Examples of plagiarism can be:

- turning in someone else's work as your own
- copying words or ideas from someone else without giving credit
- failing to put a quotation in quotation marks
- giving incorrect information about the source of a quotation
- changing words but copying the sentence structure of a source without giving credit
- copying so many words or ideas from a source that it makes up the majority of your work, whether you give credit or not

Plagiarism isn't just limited to written documents it also applies to photographs, music and videos.

How can I avoid plagiarism?

A very simple way of avoiding plagiarism is to quote the sources you use so that you give credit to the person who wrote the original text.

Some examples of plagiarism and how it can be avoided

1. Quoting a source in a document

If you want to use a piece of source material directly in your own work, you can do this by making it clear that you are quoting them rather than passing this off as your own text. For example, quoting text from a factsheet produced by Ausdance (an Australian dance advocacy body):

Wrong – this doesn't clearly show that this is a quote from another source:

A thorough warm-up includes general preliminary mobility exercises and stretches followed by more specific steps, movements and combinations, initiated gradually and vigorous enough to cause perspiration without becoming out of breath.

Right - the source is clearly referenced and the text is in quotes:

As stated in the Ausdance factsheet on warm up and cool down *“A thorough warm-up includes general preliminary mobility exercises and stretches followed by more specific steps, movements and combinations, initiated gradually and vigorous enough to cause perspiration without becoming out of breath”.*

2. Referencing a source

If you want to use the source in example one but don't necessarily want to quote them directly in the text, you can use a footnote to reference the source. You do need to be clear about which bit of the text comes from that source. You can use a footnote as well as quoting the source in example 1.

A thorough warm-up includes general preliminary mobility exercises and stretches followed by more specific steps, movements and combinations, initiated gradually and vigorous enough to cause perspiration without becoming out of breath.¹

¹Text taken from the Ausdance factsheet on safe warm up and cool down

<http://ausdance.org.au/articles/details/warm-up-and-cool-down-rules-for-safe-dance>

3. Using a bibliography

You can also use a bibliography to reference the sources you use in your work. You will also need to make sure you reference the sources appropriately in the body of work. An example entry for a bibliography would look like this:

Ausdance factsheet on safe dance warm up and cool down (website accessed on 9th February 2016) <http://ausdance.org.au/articles/details/warm-up-and-cool-down-rules-for-safe-dance>

If you are using a website as a source make sure you reference as accurately as possible the page the text was taken from and the date you used the website. This is important as website information changes quickly and the text you used may be updated.

You can also reference books and publications in the same way. For example:

Advanced Freestyle by Anna Jones (published by IDTA 2016)

Remember to reference the book title, the author and the publisher and date. As with websites there may be updated versions of some publications so it's important to be clear about which version the text comes from.

More information about plagiarism

There are a number of publications and websites giving information about plagiarism and advice on quoting sources and constructing a bibliography. A good website is www.plagiarism.org which gives clear advice and guidance.