

# Proposing a Model to Address Issues of Plagiarism in Australian Tertiary Education

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## Abstract

For the classroom teacher, student plagiarism has become a major issue, especially with the availability of much material on the Internet. Plagiarism is also associated with the public and marketing image of educational institutions, many of which fiercely protect these reputations with policies and posturing that claim the problem is under control. This paper explores some of the challenges facing tertiary education in Australia due to plagiarism. First, the notion of plagiarism is discussed and this is placed in the context of recent debates about it in Australian universities. Second, some of the implications of how Australian universities are approaching the problem, using Murdoch University as an example, are discussed. Third, three different conceptual standpoints on plagiarism are compared. The results of this comparison lead to the proposal of a model framed around the elements of risk, reward, morality and management. These elements are described briefly and some issues arising from them are identified. This paper makes the observation that plagiarism is not a simple matter of rule-bound definition: culture, circumstance and changing attitudes to the management of education interact to exacerbate the scope of the issue. Present policy responses favour short-term solutions, to what is, potentially, a problem deserving a considered, long-term response.