

# Sample Letter to Students from Head of an Academic Department

[insert date]

Dear Students,

As students at the PolyU, you are entering into a community that aims to maintain high academic standards. If these standards are to be kept then we must all act and work in an honest way. It is important that you should uphold your high standard of behaviour.

One aspect of honesty concerns plagiarism. Although it takes different forms, plagiarism occurs when someone tries to pass off another person's work or ideas without acknowledgement.

As university students, you are here to learn and gain a qualification that will determine the course of your career. If you just copy someone else's work, it means others have done the thinking for you, you will gain far less knowledge, and the quality of your award will be reduced. No one will be a winner!

Plagiarism is a very serious offence: it is the same as stealing and fraud. To show that the University regards plagiarism very seriously, there are punishments for students who plagiarise. In some cases it may be a reduced grade. In other cases, it means that you may fail your subject/programme, or you may be suspended or expelled from the University.

If you are unclear on what plagiarism is, or want to find information on how to avoid plagiarism, please refer to the following sources or ask your Subject Teacher/Programme Leader for advice.

- The Hong Kong Polytechnic University Student Handbook on *Academic Studies and Penalties Applied to Offences* under the Chapter "Conduct and Discipline"
- [http://www.acad.polyu.edu.hk/~lblcau/literacy/module2\\_4/manage0.htm](http://www.acad.polyu.edu.hk/~lblcau/literacy/module2_4/manage0.htm)
- <http://elc.polyu.edu.hk/elsc/material/Writing/using.htm>
- <http://www.csubak.edu/ssric/Modules/Other/plagiarism.htm>

Wishing you a very successful study in the University.

Yours sincerely,

Professor [ ]  
Head of Department [ ]