



# Deterring students from plagiarism by teaching writing from sources

Jude Carroll,  
8 October 2010,  
Solstrand Writing Conference



## A story.....

Sunday, 3 October 2010 : .... To check  
the exact title of this talk, I Google  
*[writing norway plagiarism PhD]*

First hit: I get this conference

Second hit: I get Custom Writings.com  
[Site motto: *The art of Relieving student's (sic) pain*]

“Doctoral dissertation writing is an exercise that is not a common exercise to do. For writing a doctoral dissertation, a student has to do enough hard work. Teachers who are in charge of checking doctoral dissertations or doctoral thesis are well read and knowledgeable due to which, they analyze a doctoral dissertation writing with scrutinizing excellence and complete doctoral dissertation or doctoral thesis with its writing quality and subject matter. Students feel problematic while writing doctoral dissertations because it is a full-fledged demanding activity that should be done with full expertise and skill at writing.”

*<http://www.customwritings.com/doctoral-dissertation.html>*

**Cost: \$27.00 USD / page (\$48.00 USD for 24 hours)**

**Another story . . . .** Bergen has made a film about plagiarism

**Viewers:** 138, 404 on YouTube (3 Oct 2010)

**Comments:** *'The best film on plagiarism I have ever seen....' ... "Hilarious"*

**The metaphors?**

'Reeking of plagiarism'

Machine guns, handcuffs, 'secret weapons' Threats of death 'Termination'



**The claim?** Bergen can stop cheating with software...

**The production values?:** Amazing!!!



# Plagiarism: Real worries and false worries

**YES:** A real and growing issue - worldwide

More diverse students

More opportunities

More 'credentialism'

Different use of texts, reading, sources

**NO:**

More cheating; most cases are cheating

Most plagiarists 'escape'

It is unstoppable

Threatens the integrity of our awards

"Students can't learn to write"



## The good news:

Loads of good practice guidance

Answer = Teach 'authorship'. Don't focus on 'avoiding plagiarism'.

Value the process of writing and the final product

Be realistic about students' chances to bypass effort..... and protect students from trying it



# The bad news

‘Old ways’ of assessing and teaching can stop students from learning [*‘Boiling’, ‘hands off’ supervision .....*]

Threats [*expulsion, ‘termination’, ‘we will get you’ etc*] don’t work.

Software [Ephorus, Turnitin etc] cannot solve this problem

Writing from sources is complex & time consuming – it is probably harder than it has ever been

**All** teachers are writing teachers ‘Academic apprenticeship in thinking in the discipline’



# How I will spend the time:

- What is plagiarism? What is 'writing from sources'?
- ...the problem in Scandinavia?
- Standard holistic approaches to deterrence
- Linking teaching writing from sources with deterring plagiarism.....





# What is student plagiarism?

**[For the person who plagiarises]:** If I submit someone else's work product as if it is the result of my own work and I claim credit for the work (*'Here is my work'*)

**[For the reader /examiner]:** The work creates a false impression about

-who did this work?

-how truthful and transparent is this work?

-whether **the work shows the student's learning**  
**the student's understanding**

and

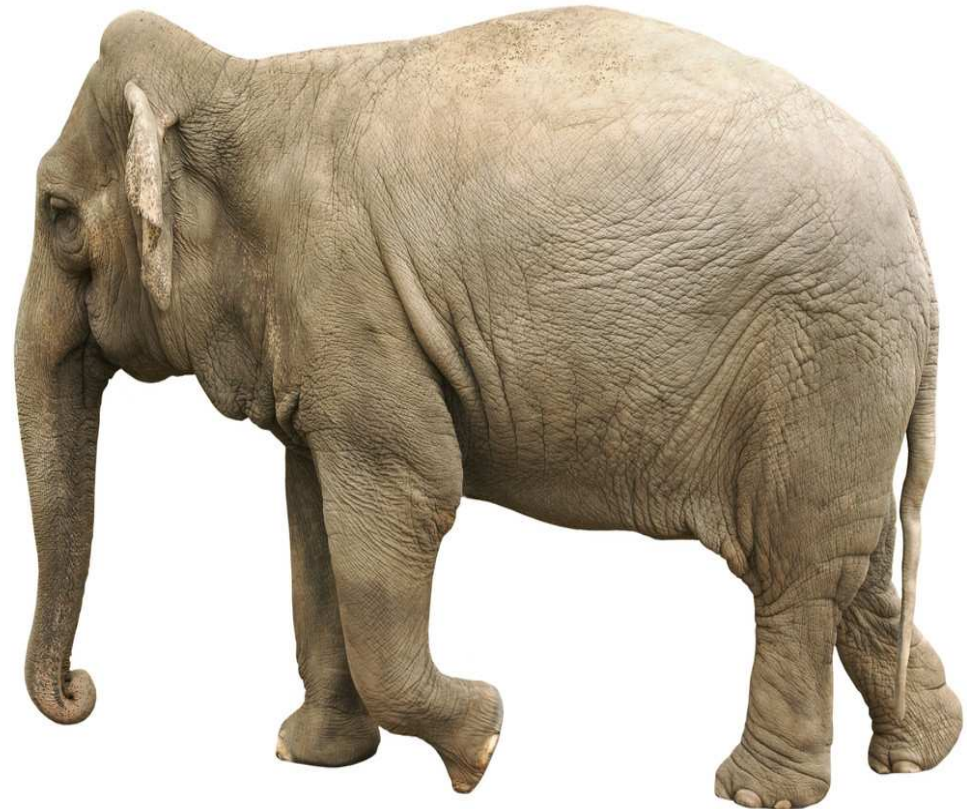
**What is 'Plagiarism cheating':** Deliberate attempt to deceive

# What is the problem in Scandinavia?

Do the students know about plagiarism?

Do the teachers know?

Do the students know what to do to avoid it?





# Guesses about plagiarism in Scandinavia?

As likely here as anywhere .....

Recent use of 'coursework' for assessment

Recent rise of teaching in English

More a **legal** and **moral** issue; less a **learning** issue

Policies and procedures assume it is rare & serious .... [ policy not applied in lesser cases]

Result? Few full cases, many 'blind eyes', much confusion..... growing fear amongst students. Targeting of international students.

Student does not know the rules; does it wrong

Student knows, does it wrong

Cheating, intent to deceive

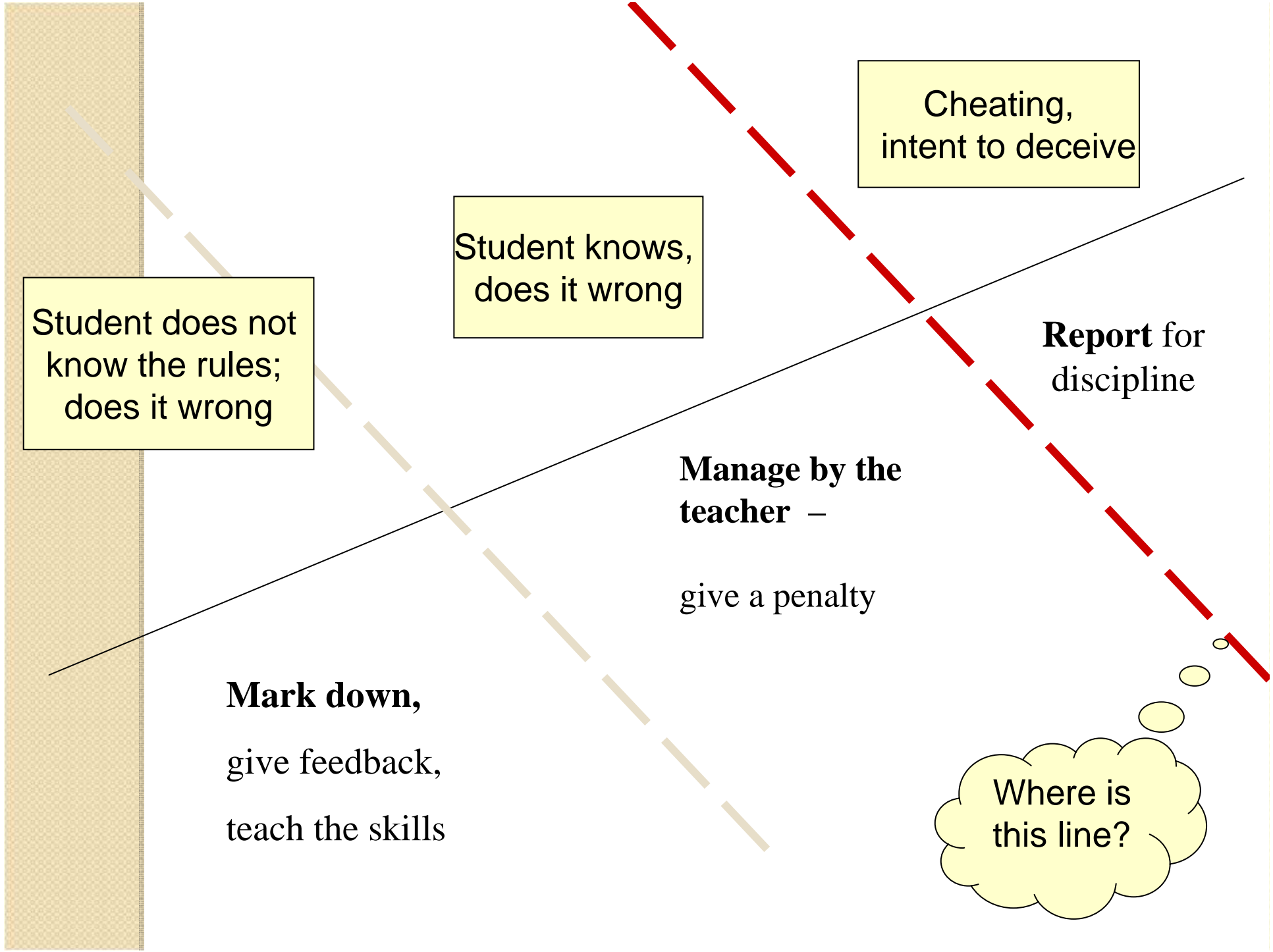
**Report for discipline**


**Manage by the teacher –**

give a penalty

**Mark down,**  
give feedback,  
teach the skills


Where is this line?





What  
students do  
when they  
plagiarise

1. **Copy** without making the source clear
2. **Take** without referencing the source (for ideas, structure, research, images, dance etc)
3. **Commission.** They pay someone
4. **Re-use.** Hand in twice.
5. **'Freeload'** in groups



*‘Plagiarism is submitting someone else’s work without correct acknowledgment and then claiming credit for the work as if it was your own.’*

# So, what is cheating by plagiarism?

*'I know this is not my own work*

[shows understanding of ownership]

*I know I have not acknowledged the person who actually did this work*

[shows knowledge of the rules about transparency]

*I know I have not done the acknowledgements correctly*

[Understanding and skill in citation. Knows **where to cite** **Knows** the customs and **ways of citing** in this case]

*But I am trying to make it seem like I **have** done these things*

Shows trying to hide, trying to fool the reader

*... so give me credit.'*

**I want to avoid learning and avoid effort and still get the credit.**

**THIS IS CHEATING**



# Focus on copying .....

What are the issues?





## **Plagiarism is not just copying from published sources.....**

.... it can also be plagiarism and cheating if you copy from other students.

**Yes!** Co-operation, discussion, sharing

**No!** Taking another student's work and claiming it is your own

## ***Where is the line when working with others?***

1. Everyone in a class must write an individual paper.
2. Three people in the class choose the same topic.
3. Three discuss the topic together and discuss how to find information.
4. They all look for information in the library. They search databases.
5. 1 person finds lots of information. He reads it. He tells the other two where he looked for it and he tells them what he found.
6. He gives them his notes. They discuss his notes.
7. He gives his friends a draft of his paper. They all discuss it and all have good ideas. Each one writes notes/changes on the draft.
8. Each person writes a paper. Two of the 3 papers are based on personal research, plus one friend's notes, plus the revised draft. This is not stated.
9. All three papers are very similar: same structure, same research, same sources, and the same conclusion. 70% of the text matches.
10. All 3 hand in a paper and sign a claim ***'This is my own work'***.

Do you know...

.... where we  
draw the  
line  
between

co-operation  
and  
collusion?

*"I think people in Saudi Arabia grow up helping each other. It's a good thing to share and wish the best for your friends but it becomes a problem for [here]. We share questions with others and we think it's a common thing. In Saudi Arabia, your accomplishments are not recorded by your name, but by your tribe or family. For instance, when a guy from Najran succeeds, it's considered as a success for the whole city. Here, this is not the case."*

*Di Maria, quoting a student, Magied Alsqoor, in Al Jamiat Magazine, 4 June 2009*



## **Students explaining why they copied:**

*“This person writes exactly what I think.”*

*“This person writes it better than I do.”*

*“This person writes English better than I do.”*

*“There is only one way to write this.”*

*“These are my own words. I copied them myself.”*

*“These are my own words. I copied from a book but I bought the book.”*

# What software can do to help with copying





## Stopping copying

1. Acknowledge students' previous experiences
2. Recognise language issues
3. Empathise with students' unwillingness to change
4. Provide many exemplars + opportunities to interact with them
5. Practice, practice, practice
6. Penalties that reflect the reality



## ***Telling students 'No copying' does not solve plagiarism***

Students plagiarise if they take others work and do not acknowledge the recognised owner.

This requires them to:

1. Understand what is 'owned' and what is not
2. Understand what work needs acknowledgement
3. Understand how to acknowledge
4. Do the acknowledgement skillfully

**So many  
questions!**

If it is on the Web, it  
is reliable, right?

What needs a  
reference?

How much  
must I  
change it?

'Do my own  
work'... can I ask  
for help?

How do I find  
good sources to  
show what others  
did?

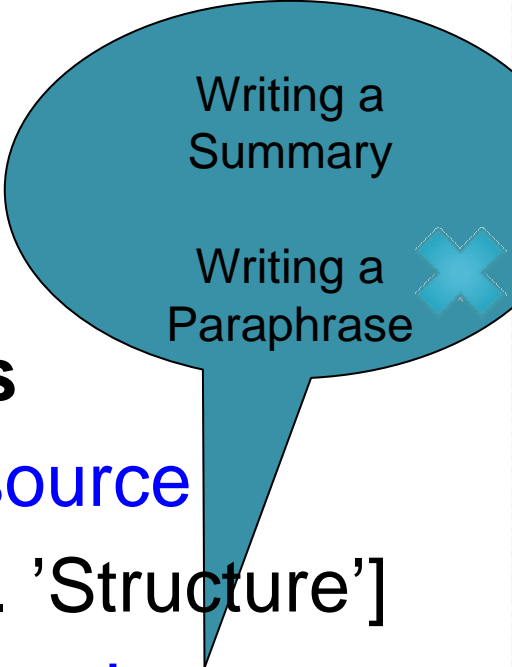
I did not write  
down references  
during my  
reading..... Does  
that matter?





## 'To avoid plagiarism? Write from sources.'

1. Locate sources
2. Judge sources
3. Read sources and **make notes**
4. Keep a link between notes & source
5. [Organise themes, paragraphs. 'Structure']
6. Using others' words in the student's text
7. Using others' **ideas/ data** in the student's text
8. **Marking use of others' work with a reference**
9. Creating a bibliography of all sources



Writing a  
Summary

Writing a  
Paraphrase

Why do we cite?	Students	Published work	Both
1. <b>Credibility.</b> It shows that what I write can be believed.			
2. To show that knowledge is a <b>collaborative</b> project by individuals.			
3. To show how a theory or an idea is <b>built on</b> other people's work.			
4. <b>Authority.</b> We can evaluate the sources. Is a key research referred to? Are sources up-to-date?			
5. To show <b>key terms are used correctly</b>			
6. To show what I have read. Show my <b>scholarship.</b>			
7. Show that I have <b>researched</b> the issue.			

‘Teach students **how**’ = Teach **all** the skills the students will need.’

*If I told you the rules of cricket, could you play it?*

***What would you need to be a good cricket player?***





## **Deterring students from 'taking' without crediting**

1. Teach academic writing
2. Provide exemplars + opportunities to interact with them
3. Practice, practice, feedback, feedback
4. Assessment criteria that reward skill
5. Penalties that force time and effort....



# Key issues for teaching **how**

- **Targeting students** who find this especially hard: which ones?
- **Providing practice and feedback over time** : how can this be done?
- This must happen **in the subject area** but teachers do not want to give up time: who can do this? When?



## Complex problem, **holistic** solution

1. Students know what to do **and how to do it**
2. Programmes and tasks are designed to make copying, finding and faking difficult
3. Detection using a range of strategies to identify *'not the student's own work'*
4. Policies and procedures that are fair, fast and efficient