

## PEN® Plagiarism Guidelines



Writing content for the PEN® database means following guidelines for professional ethics and integrity. One of the many aspects of professional integrity is acknowledging the work of others that one uses in their own written work. Lack of proper acknowledgement is plagiarism which is considered a serious misconduct both in the academic and scientific worlds. If you are not certain if something you have written could be considered as plagiarism, please discuss it with a member of the PEN® team. Both plagiarism and self-plagiarism are considered in relation to PEN®.

There are many definitions of plagiarism, one is:  
"taking over the ideas, methods, or written words of another, without acknowledgment and with the intention that they be taken as the work of the deceiver" (1)

If you are taking content word-for-word from someone else's work then quotation marks around the content with the appropriate reference is the most common way to acknowledge the work of others.

Copying text from another source and paraphrasing it or changing or adding a few words here or there or replacing words with synonyms does not constitute creation of original work. If you use part of an article or an abstract word-for-word you would need to put that content in quotation marks and reference it. This can become an issue when summarizing a study and the study results for the PEN® evidence statements. When summarizing, one must also make certain that the exact meaning of the author's words has been reflected in your summary. In order to do this one needs to have a good understanding of the information presented, including the terms used in the original content.

A definition of self plagiarism in writing is:  
"self-plagiarism occurs when authors reuse their own previously written work or data in a 'new' written product without letting the reader know that this material has appeared elsewhere." (2)

Self-plagiarism is relevant to PEN® if one were to publish essentially the same content you have written for PEN® in more than place, without any indication that the content has been published in PEN®.

For more information on this topic, including examples, you are encouraged to read the following document:

Roig M. Avoiding plagiarism, self-plagiarism, and other questionable writing practices: A guide to ethical writing. Office of Research Integrity, US Department of Health and Human Services. Available from:

<http://ori.dhhs.gov/education/products/plagiarism/>

1. American Association of University Professors. "Statement on Plagiarism." *Academe*. September/October 1989;75(5):47-48. Not available on-line.
2. Roig M. Avoiding plagiarism, self-plagiarism, and other questionable writing practices: A guide to ethical writing. Office of Research Integrity, US Department of Health and Human Services. 2011 [cited 2012 Jan 18]; pg 16. Available from: <http://ori.dhhs.gov/education/products/plagiarism/>

If the PEN<sup>®</sup> editor or PEN<sup>®</sup> mentor finds an example of plagiarism in a submitted document, the document will be returned to the author to ensure there are no other examples. When signing their contract, authors are agreeing to fully acknowledge the work of others. PEN is not in the business of policing authors for plagiarism but authors are reminded that it is their professional ethics and integrity that are compromised if plagiarism is found in the submitted document.