



POSTGRADUATE Module IN HEALTH SCIENCES

Women's Health in Primary Care

**STUDENT HANDBOOK**

2016-17

Discipline of General Practice; National University of Ireland, Galway

## Staff and Contact Details

Below are contact details for staff involved in this module:

Name	Responsibility	Contact details
Dr. Eva Flynn	Course Director	Discipline of General Practice National University of Ireland, Galway  Clinical Science Institute, University Hospital Galway, Newcastle Road, Galway  Email: <a href="mailto:eva.flynn@nuigalway.ie">eva.flynn@nuigalway.ie</a>

## Timetable for 2017

Online Tutoring: Units start on Fridays. Posts will be answered up to 12 midnight of the following Friday each week.

Unit	Topic	Tutor	Date
1.	The Menstrual Cycle and Common Menstrual Problems	Dr. Mary Fitzgerald, Consultant Gynaecologist, Bons Secour Hospital Galway	21 <sup>st</sup> - 28 <sup>th</sup> April
2.	Contraception	Dr. Deirdre Lundy, General Practitioner with an interest in Women's Health, Bray Women's Health Centre, Co. Wicklow, Women's Health Group Member, ICGP.	28 <sup>th</sup> April - 5 <sup>th</sup> May
3.	Long Acting Reversible Contraception	Dr. Deirdre Lundy, General Practitioner with an interest in Women's Health, Bray Women's Health Centre, Co. Wicklow, Women's Health Group Member, ICGP.	5 <sup>th</sup> - 12 <sup>th</sup> May
4.	Common Problems in Pregnancy	Dr. Eva Flynn, General Practitioner with an interest in Women's Health, Mainstreet Clinic, Loughrea, Co. Galway, Lecturer in General Practice, NUIG, Women's Health Group	12 <sup>th</sup> - 19 <sup>th</sup> May

		Member, ICGP.	
5.	Infertility and Breastfeeding		19 <sup>th</sup> - 26 <sup>th</sup> May
6.	Menopause, Urinary Incontinence and Vulvovaginal Disorders	Dr. Mary Short, General Practitioner with an interest in Women's Health, Rockcourt Medical Centre, Blackrock, Dublin, Chair of the Irish Association of Sexual and Reproductive Healthcare.	26th May - 2 <sup>nd</sup> June

## Getting to NUIG and General Information for Students

The main **NUIG website** can be accessed at [www.nuigalway.ie](http://www.nuigalway.ie) and contains a wealth of information about the campus and the university.

An **interactive map** of the NUIG campus is available here: <http://www.nuigalway.ie/campus-map/>

**Static maps** can be found here: [http://www.nuigalway.ie/buildings/campus\\_map.html](http://www.nuigalway.ie/buildings/campus_map.html)

### Parking & Travel

The following link provides information on parking, park & ride and other options for travelling to NUIG: <http://www.nuigalway.ie/buildings/parking.html>

For the workshops, there are parking spaces available near Áras Moyola but allow yourself a few minutes to find a spot and walk to the building as these spaces are not adjacent to Áras Moyola (see map below).



20 = Áras Moyola

P = Pay & Display Places

S = Staff Parking (available for non-permit-holders on Saturday)

R = Staff & Student Parking (available for non-permit-holders on Saturday)

### Useful Links

A variety of useful information for all current postgraduate students can be found at the following link <http://www.nuigalway.ie/students/>

### Kingfisher

You may wish to take advantage of the Kingfisher gym and swimming pool while you have a student card and are in the area. Please contact them directly for information:

<http://nuigalway.kingfisherclub.com/>

### NUIG Academic Records & Registration Office

This Office includes the Registration Team, who are responsible for:

- Planning, coordinating and delivering all aspects of the registration process.
- Facilitating the course and module registration of all students throughout the year.
- Maintaining and updating student records on an ongoing basis.

More information is available here: <http://www.nuigalway.ie/registration/>

## Library resources

NUIG Library comprises of the:

- James Hardiman Library (on the Main Campus),
- Medical Library (ground floor of the Clinical Science Institute in the grounds of University College Hospital, Galway),
- Nursing & Midwifery Library (at the back of the James Hardiman Library on the Main Campus) and
- Reading Rooms

More information is available here: <http://www.library.nuigalway.ie/>

You can also search databases, access journals and contact the helpdesk via the Health Sciences Portal: <http://www.library.nuigalway.ie/support/healthsciencesportal/>

## NUIG Campus Account, Student emails and Blackboard

Once registered at NUI Galway, each student is automatically assigned a Campus Account and Student Email account. Your Campus Account credentials provide access to Student Email, PC Suites, WiFi, Blackboard, Library Systems, Self-Service Registration, MyCampus, Placement, Exam timetable and Exam results.

Registration (Brid Ryan) have sent you an email with regard to setting up your Campus Account, and logging in to your NUIG student emails and Blackboard.

### CAMPUS ACCOUNT

You can activate your campus account using your student number and temporary password here: <https://cass.nuigalway.ie/xlWebApp/>

There is more information about getting started here: <http://www.nuigalway.ie/information-solutions-services/services-for-students/advicesupport/gettingstarted/>

### EMAIL – STUDENT EMAIL ACCOUNT

#### How do I logon to my Email account?

You can access your student emails using your campus account credentials here:  
<http://studentmail.nuigalway.ie>

**Email as Official Correspondence:** The University will use your student email account to send official correspondence during the academic year. Your student email account is the primary means of communication for fees, exams, registration details etc. so it is important that you regularly check your email account.

## **BLACKBOARD**

Blackboard is the Virtual Learning Environment used by NUIG to enable lecturers to create an online learning environment. A Blackboard account will automatically be created for you within 24 hours of registration with NUIG. Full registration is necessary for your module choices to appear on Blackboard.

### **How do I logon to my Blackboard account?**

1. Go to <https://nuigalway.blackboard.com/>
2. Enter your username and password as with Campus Account and Emails

More information is available here: <http://www.nuigalway.ie/information-solutions-services/services-for-students/blackboard/>

A student guide is available here:

<http://www.nuigalway.ie/media/informationssolutionservices/files/blackboard/Student-Guide.pdf>

## Rationale for Course Development and Educational Philosophy

Welcome to Women's Health in Primary Care. We hope that you find the course enjoyable, challenging and educational. Should you have any queries during your time with us, please do not hesitate to contact the course director by phone or email – see contact details on page 3.

### Rationale

The central importance of primary care within the health services has received relatively recent recognition internationally with the development of concepts such as the Alma Ata declaration in 1978. This defined primary health care as:

*“... essential health care based on practical, scientifically sound and socially acceptable methods and technology made universally accessible ... in the community ... at a cost that the community and country can afford .... It forms an integral part ... of the country's health system, of which it is the central function and main focus ....It is the first level of contact ... with the national health ..., and constitutes the first element of a continuing health care process”.*

Increasingly, the burden of chronic disease management is being shifted to primary care. Increases in the numbers of elderly people, improved survival rates with chronic illness, an explosion in the numbers and types of treatments available, policies of early-discharge from hospital, and the development of shared-care protocols for disease management are just some of the developments that have contributed to the change in the educational needs of general practitioners and practice nurses. In a discipline where the sands shift so rapidly as a result of new understanding and approaches to disease management, practitioners must themselves learn how to manage their own knowledge and skill base. Keeping up to date with health care developments must be one of the greatest challenges facing current clinical practice.

This course aims to meet the learning needs of general practitioners and nurses in the management of women's health in the community. It aims to give practitioners up-to-date, relevant, in-depth understanding and knowledge of common conditions to assist in the management of women's health concerns that present commonly in practice. In addition it will provide practitioners with the knowledge and skills for life-long learning, for the practice of evidence based medicine, for audit, and for critical analysis of published research. The course will provide a forum for the development of transferable skills like teamwork, time management, writing skills, computer skills, and ethical practice. With an increasing emphasis on community-based education of medical and other health sciences students, those working in primary care will have an expanded role in the education of both undergraduate and postgraduate students. This course will therefore offer a module on teaching and learning in the clinical setting.

### Educational Philosophy

This postgraduate module is based, as far as possible, on an educational philosophy of adult-centred learning for continuous professional development and explicit assessment procedures. Your experience will be an important tool in both your own learning and that of the other participants. Women's Health in Primary Care is intended to build on this experience and allow you to critically analyse both your own work and that of the system within which you work. Discussion of key concepts will be encouraged with reflection on their application to your daily work.

Emphasis is placed on explicitly stating what the learning objectives are and how these will be assessed. This allows you to plan your learning and to know what will be expected of you. All relevant assessment procedures and marking grids will be made available to you. As far as possible, we have attempted to ensure that the hidden curriculum is minimised and that assessment is relevant. These principles are more easily applied to some parts of the course than others and some variation will inevitably be encountered.

We particularly value your own opinions on both the course and its delivery. We will therefore formally record your evaluations for each module, but also welcome comments at any stage.

## **Course Aims and Objectives**

### **Aims**

- To develop clinical and therapeutic expertise of practitioners
- To assist the practitioner in providing effective, holistic, patient-centred care in the community
- To allow the development of a critical approach to practice by examining one's own work, learning about work of others and by developing a critical approach to published work
- To provide training in research methods and an appreciation of the existing body of research findings to equip students to undertake their own research and critical inquiry
- To provide the practitioner with the knowledge and skills for teaching in a clinical setting

### **Objectives**

At the end of this course, students are expected to be able to:

1. Have an in-depth knowledge and understanding of the clinical areas you have chosen to study
2. Apply this new learning to the benefit of patient care in your practice
3. Have developed management plans and systems for the management of women's health concerns in your practice
4. Have developed transferable skills such as information management, academic writing, audit and IT skills

## Module Outline

### Diabetes in Primary Care

**Module Code:** GPN03

**Credit Weighting:** 10 Credits

**Teaching Period(s):** Teaching Period 1 or 2

**No. of Students:** Min 15 students, max 20 students

**Pre-requisite(s):** General Practitioner/Practice Nurse

**Co-requisite(s):** None

**Contact Hours:** 14 (plus allow approximately 4-6 hrs per week x 12 weeks distance learning)

**Teaching and learning strategies:** Distance Learning and Workshops

**Module Director:** Dr. Eva Flynn, Discipline of General Practice, NUIG

**Module Objective:** This module aims to develop the knowledge and skills of healthcare professionals in the care of the female patient presenting to general practice with health concerns based on the individual stage of life of the female. Emphasis will be placed on developing a structured system of care and use of evidence based management plans which supports the female patient in general practice. This module will use current guidelines and research in women's health for theoretical and practical lessons. The units will be delivered as a distance learning module on Blackboard. There will also be two workshop days covering practical skills in women's health.

**Module content:** This module consists of six distance learning units supported by two workshop days. Each unit will run for one week The units are:

1. The Menstrual Cycle and Common Menstrual Problems
2. Contraception
3. Long Acting Reversible Contraception
4. Common Problems in Pregnancy
5. Infertility and Breastfeeding
6. Menopause, Urinary Incontinence and Vulvovaginal Disorders

**Learning outcomes:** At the end of this module you are expected to:

- Identify, diagnose and create a management plan for abnormalities in the menstrual cycle including menorrhagia, dysmenorrhoea and amenorrhoea.
- Facilitate a comprehensive consultation for contraception. Educate the female patient on methods of contraception, including side effects, efficacy, method of action, devise and implement appropriate and safe management plan for contraception for the individual female patient.
- Counsel the female patient on the use of long acting reversible contraception, including side effects, efficacy, method of action, identify when long acting reversible contraception is suitable choice for a female patient for contraception and consider other indications for use, carry out a fitting and removal of the long acting reversible contraceptive device.

- Identify, investigate and create an effective management plan with combined antenatal care for common problems in pregnancy.
- Identify, investigate and create an effective management plan with secondary and tertiary care for sub and infertility in female patients and couples.
- Educate the female patient of the benefits of breast feeding and support the mother on choices in infant nutrition.
- Identify, investigate, diagnose and create an effective management plan for the patient suffering from menopausal symptoms.
- Create awareness for the menopausal female for health concerns in this age group and screen for particular health concerns.
- Educate the patient in menopause of treatment options, efficacy and side effects.
- Identify, investigate, diagnose and create an effective management plan with secondary care for the patient suffering from urinary incontinence.
- Identify, investigate, diagnose and create an effective management plan for the patient suffering from vulvovaginal disorders.

**Assessment:** Total Marks 200: Continuous Assessment 200 marks

- E-tivities and online participation; 90 Marks.
- Practice-based assignment on completion of module (an essay of at least 2,500 words and not more than 3,500 words); 110 marks

**Compulsory Elements:** Continuous Assessment; (E-tivities and online participation, workshop attendance, practice based assignment)

**Pass Standard and any Special Requirements for Passing Module:** 50%.

**End of Year Written Examination Profile:** No End of Year Written Examination

**Requirements for Supplemental Examination:** Marks in passed element(s) of Continuous Assessment are carried forward. Failed element(s) of Continuous Assessment must be repeated (as prescribed by the School). All assessments are to be submitted one month after the end of the course

**Assessment:** Total Marks 200: Continuous Assessment 200 marks

The breakdown of marks awarded in each module is as follows:

55% Essay assignment on completion of module (word limit)

45% E-tivities and online participation

**Grade bands are as follows:**

≥ 70%:	First Class Honours
60-69%:	Second Class Honours
50-59%:	Pass
< 50%:	Fail

**Minimum Standard:** Students must achieve a 50% overall mark to pass the course. Compensation between modules is not permitted.

**Marking Criteria:** Detailed marking criteria will be made available to you on Blackboard together with the assignment task. This will allow you to tailor your work to achieve the highest possible mark.

**Receiving Marks and Feedback:** You will be notified by email when marks and feedback for each module are available. These can be viewed on Blackboard.

**Submitting Course Work:** At the end of the module you will be asked to submit an assignment and a specified number of final draft e-tivities by a certain date. Course work is submitted electronically via Blackboard. Clear submission guidelines will be given on Blackboard for each assessment.

**Format for Submissions:** Submissions should be typed on A4 paper. Pages should be numbered. Lines should be at least 1.5–spaced. The first page of each submission should be a cover page containing the following information:

- Your student number
- Name of module
- Assignment/E-tivity title
- Declaration: *I hereby declare that this work is entirely my own and that I have acknowledged the writings, ideas and work of others. Furthermore, I have not knowingly allowed another to copy my work.*

When saving your submission, please include your student number in the document title, e.g. “12123456 minor surgery assignment.pdf”.

Please do not include your own name in the document title or anywhere on the submission (unless asked for it by Blackboard). Assignments and E-tivities are marked anonymously where possible.

### **Have we received your work correctly?**

Blackboard will acknowledge receipt of your submission shortly after you have uploaded it. Please ensure that you keep an electronic copy of your assignment and final draft E-tivities yourself.

If your document looks funny after submission to Blackboard, don't worry! Sometimes the formatting *appears* to have been altered, but the document will always revert back to your originally submitted format when we download it.

**Word Count:** Each assignment (and some e-tivities) will have a specified word count. References and Appendices are not included in the word count. Penalties will be incurred for assignments or e-tivities which go more than 10% over the specified word count: 2% will be deducted from the mark awarded for every 5% extra words used.

#### **Example 1**

Specified word count: 2,000

Upper limit without penalty: 2,200 (2,000 plus 10%)

Possible penalty: 2% for every 100 extra words (2,000 x 5% = 100).

Submitted word count: 2,400

Original mark awarded: 65%

Penalty: 4% (i.e. 2% for every 100 extra words)

Final mark awarded: 61%

**Example 2**

Specified word count: 500

Upper limit without penalty: 550 (500 plus 10%)

Possible penalty: 2% for every 25 extra words (500 x 5% = 25).

Submitted word count: 625

Original mark awarded: 65%

Penalty: 6% (i.e. 2% for every 25 extra words)

Final mark awarded: 59%

**Penalties for late submission of Course/Project Work etc:** Where work is submitted up to and including 7 days late, 10% of the total marks available shall be deducted from the mark achieved. Where work is submitted up to and including 14 days late, 20% of the total marks available shall be deducted from the mark achieved. Work submitted 15 days late or more shall be assigned a mark of zero.

Extensions to submission deadlines can be obtained under exceptional circumstances. If you think you will need an extension, please email or phone the Course Director before the submission deadline. Extensions cannot be granted after the submission date has passed.

**Online Activities:** Much of the course activity is in distance learning format. This will provide you with the opportunity to absorb the study materials at your own pace while participating in class discussions online, to learn from and contribute to the learning of your colleagues. Structured online activities are designed to encourage you to relate material presented in the distance learning materials to your own work and practice.

**Marks for Online Participation:** For each Unit, your tutor will give you a mark based on the quality of your contribution to the discussion *during the designated week only* – late contributions will not be marked. These marks for participation amount to 45% of the overall module marks

Marks are awarded based on the criteria in the table below. For tips on how to improve your mark, see page 23.

Marks (10)	Dimension	Description of Performance
3	Consistency of participation	<p><b>Participates throughout the discussion</b></p> <p>3 = Participates on at least three non-consecutive days (for a two-week Unit) or two non-consecutive days (for a one-week Unit)</p> <p>2 = Participates on at least two days</p> <p>1 = Participates on one day</p> <p>0 = Does not participate</p>
4	Content of posts	<p><b>Appropriate length of posts</b> (general guidelines: one main point per post; respecting the spirit of a “conversation” rather than long individual postings). Try to avoid repeating the content of previous posts. Keep posts succinct.</p> <p><b>Adds value</b> (unique contribution or question; relevant; uses own experience or examples; evidence of reading; goes beyond</p>

		<p>simply agreeing with others; demonstrates critical thinking and highly formed opinions)</p> <p><b>Clarity</b> (well-written; concise; clarity of thought)</p>
<b>3</b>	<b>Responsiveness to other posts</b>	<b>Responds to others</b> (e.g. challenges; clarifies; synthesises; asks questions; answers questions; acts as a “critical friend”; makes constructive suggestions)

### Marks for E-tivities

Some Units contain e-tivities as well as Think Points for online discussion. At the end of the module you are asked to submit a ‘final draft’ of your e-tivities which will then be marked.

Marks for final draft e-tivities amount to 15% of the overall module marks, 5% for each of the three e-tivities

NB: E-tivities are not marked when they are initially posted on the Discussion Board. However, it’s worth posting them on the Discussion Board anyway because it’s an opportunity to get feedback from your tutor and your colleagues before submitting your ‘final draft’.

<b>MARKING CRITERIA: FINAL DRAFT E-TIVITIES</b>					
	≥70%	62-69%	55-61%	50-54%	≤49%
Understanding of topic area	Clear understanding	Very good understanding	Good understanding with some insights	Satisfactory understanding	Understanding not demonstrated
Descriptive Skills	Excellent descriptive skills	Very good descriptive skills	Clear description, good in parts	Satisfactory descriptive skills	Poor descriptive skills
Analysis	Excellent critical skills	Very good critical skills	Clear critical skills, good in parts	Satisfactory critical skills	Poor critical skills
Evidence of learning from feedback and/or other contributions by tutor and/or peers on Discussion Board	Excellent integration of additional learning from online discussion	Very good integration of additional learning from online discussion	Some integration of additional learning from online discussion	Very little integration of additional learning from online discussion	No evidence of additional learning from online discussion
Presentation (incl. spelling & grammar). Also referencing (only if required).	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Poor

## Tips for Successful Online Activity

The aim of the Discussion Board on Blackboard is to create an online 'conversation' and encourage debate and discussion. As adult learners actively working in the health services you will have lots of opinions, experience and perspectives to offer, so this is an opportunity to learn both with and from each other. While your tutor will be there to facilitate your discussions, the real success of Blackboard depends on the extent to which you interact with each other – by commenting, questioning, giving feedback, arguing, challenging, clarifying, building upon, and generally sharing. The importance of this is reflected in the marking criteria.

- Your postings should advance the group's negotiation of ideas and meanings about the topic under discussion, i.e. your contributions should go beyond a "ditto" or "I agree" type of response. Some ways you can further the discussion include;
- making a connection between the current discussion and previous discussions, a personal experience, or concepts from the set readings
- commenting on or asking for clarification of another student's statement
- synthesizing other students' responses, or posing a substantive question aimed at furthering the group's understanding
- expressing opinions or observations

Your tutor will not necessarily respond to each individual posting or student. Tutor responses will often be relevant to several (or all) students in the group. You are therefore expected to read all postings, from tutors and colleagues

In keeping with the conversational style of the Discussion Board, there is no need to formally reference your contributions unless a) your tutor asks you to, or b) you feel the context would benefit from, or requires a reference

Log on early and often! There are several advantages to this:

– Your tutor (and most of your colleagues) will only be online during the designated week for that Unit, so you won't benefit from their feedback on your contributions unless you're there too

– You will only be marked on your contribution during the designated week – late contributions will not be marked (your tutor will be too busy dealing with the next Unit's discussion)

– Finally, if you fall behind it's difficult to catch up so try to keep on schedule to avoid being overwhelmed

**Note:** In case Blackboard "goes down" while you are working online, both students and tutors have been known to "lose" their work before submitting, effectively wasting hours of inspirational thoughtfulness! The very simple solution is to draft your contribution in a Word document first. When you are ready to submit it to Blackboard, just copy and paste

## Using Blackboard for Learning and Assessment

You can find short, clear guidelines on various aspects of using Blackboard at:

<http://www.nuigalway.ie/media/informationssolutionservices/files/blackboard/Student-Guide.pdf>

### Facilitating online discussions

#### Finding Your Discussion Area

1. Log in to Blackboard and select the module.
2. On the left of your screen in the red area, click on 'Discussions.' This will bring up the Discussion Board.
3. A list of 'Forums' will appear (one for each Unit). Within each Forum there are usually two or more 'Threads' (think points or e-tivities).

### Responding to a Discussion Board Post

As users respond to the initial and subsequent 'posts' (messages) on the Discussion Board, replies build on one another to construct a conversation.

1. Click on any post in the Discussion Board.
2. Click 'Reply' to that post. Enter a Subject and a Message. It is also possible to attach files to your post.
3. Click 'Save' to store a draft of the post or click 'Submit' to add your post to the Discussion Board.
4. Your post will appear in the thread underneath the original post.

### Tips for Successful Online Discussions

If you're planning a long message, in case the system goes down, to avoid losing your work draft it first in Word, then copy and paste it into Blackboard when you're ready to submit.

### "Collecting" Discussion Board Posts (to make them easier to read)

"Collections" are a good way to display a bunch of messages for quick reading; especially if there have been several contributions since you last logged on.

1. Open a Discussion Board forum by clicking on its title.
2. Near the centre of the page, click on "Select All" to mark all messages in the discussion forum.

3. Click on the 'Collect' button to gather all postings into one location. (Note: this will NOT preserve any file attachments posted with messages).
4. Collections can then be sorted by Author, Date, Subject or Thread.
5. The results can be printed to PDF or saved as HTML.

### **Submitting Assignments**

1. When preparing your assignment for submission, please follow the guidelines for submission
2. When you are ready to submit, follow steps 1-3 of 'Getting Started' above.
3. On the left of your screen, click on 'Assignments'.
4. Under the title of the assignment, click 'View/Complete'.
5. When you have entered the requested information and uploaded your document, click 'Submit'. Don't worry if the format appears to have been changed – it will revert back to the correct format when we download it from Blackboard.
6. You should receive an automatically generated confirmation when your assignment has been correctly submitted. If you haven't received this, contact the course coordinator.

### **Checking Your Grades**

You can keep an eye on your marks for the different components of each module by following steps 1-3 of 'Getting Started' above, and then clicking on 'Course Tools' and then 'My Grades' on the left of your screen.

You will be notified by email when your assignments and e-tivities have been marked. You can then check your grades and receive feedback via Blackboard as follows:

1. On the left of your screen, click on "Assignments".
2. Under the title of the assignment you want feedback for, click "View/Complete".
3. Near the bottom right of your screen click "Show details".
4. Again near the bottom right of your screen click "View".
5. Your assignment will appear in a new window. Your grade appears in the top right hand corner. To see any general comments the tutor has made about your assignment, click on the grey callout box near the bottom right of your screen.

Your tutor may also have inserted specific comments at particular points in your essay. To see these, click on this icon (beside the grey callout box). Alternatively you can scroll through your assignment and hover over any blue callout boxes.

## Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

### Academic Honesty

When preparing your course work for assessment, it's important to access a range of appropriate information resources. Your ability to transform the information you find into an original, thoughtful and persuasive argument is even more important. Don't be afraid to bring your personal reflections into your work, and be careful when referring to the work of others not to plagiarise it.

### What is plagiarism?

Many people think of plagiarism as copying another's work, or borrowing someone else's original ideas. But terms like "copying" and "borrowing" can disguise the seriousness of the offense. Plagiarism is an act of fraud: it involves both stealing someone else's work and lying about it afterward.

- All of the following are considered plagiarism:
- Submitting 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

### How can plagiarism be avoided?

Most cases of plagiarism can be avoided by citing your sources. Simply acknowledging that certain material has been borrowed, and providing your reader with the information necessary to find that source, is usually enough to prevent plagiarism. See section on 'Referencing' for information on how to cite sources properly.

Changing the words of an original source is not sufficient to prevent plagiarism. If you have retained the essential idea of an original source, and have not cited it, then no matter how drastically you may have altered its context or presentation, you have still plagiarised.

### How can plagiarism be detected?

All coursework you submit for assessment will be automatically submitted to "Turnitin", a plagiarism detection software programme which compares submitted documents with hundreds of thousands in their database, as well as internet sites (billions of pages). See [www.turnitin.com](http://www.turnitin.com)

### What are the consequences of plagiarism?

The Department of General Practice complies with the procedures outlined in the University policy on plagiarism, which has been reproduced for you in Appendix 1 below. Penalties may include automatic failure or disciplinary procedures.

*The information above has been adapted from [www.turnitin.com](http://www.turnitin.com)*

## Referencing Guidelines

There are a number of different ways you can acknowledge your sources of information. Whichever style you choose, it is important that you are consistent. Examples of three styles are given below (reference 1 is a journal article and reference 2 is a book). More detailed information on each reference style is easily available on the internet.

### Vancouver and BMJ styles

The Vancouver style or BMJ style are most commonly used in the medical field. This means allocating a consecutive number to each source as it is referred to for the first time in the text, and listing all references in numerical order at the end of your document.

Examples:

*BMJ style:* Information has been published on treating cold urticaria.<sup>1,2</sup>

*Vancouver style:* Information has been published on treating cold urticaria.[1,2]  
In your reference list at the end

1. Soter A, Wasserman SI, Austen KF. Cold urticaria: release into the circulation of histamine and eosinophil chemotactic factor of anaphylaxis during cold challenge. *New England Journal of Medicine* 1976; 294:687-90

2. Osler AG. *Complement: mechanisms and functions*. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1976.

### Harvard style

In the social sciences the Harvard referencing style is more commonly used. This means putting the author's name plus year of publication in brackets in the text, and listing all references in alphabetical order of first author at the end.

Examples:

Information has been published on treating cold urticaria (Soter et al., 1976; Osler, 1976).

In your reference list at the end

Osler, A.G. (1976) *Complement: mechanisms and functions*. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall

Soter, A., Wasserman, S.L. & Austen, K.F. (1976) Cold urticaria: release into the circulation of histamine and eosinophil chemotactic factor of anaphylaxis during cold challenge. *New England Journal of Medicine* 294:687-90.

**APPENDIX 1**

**UNIVERSITY CODE OF PRACTICE FOR DEALING WITH PLAGIARISM**

<http://www.nuigalway.ie/plagiarism/>

## APPENDIX 2: ESSAY WRITING

### How to get better marks without (necessarily) doing more work

We'll assume that you've read widely about the particular subject of your essay and have a good understanding of the broader area within which that topic is located. Broad and deep research is the essential basis of an essay. You will have lots of notes on the subject.

So now it's time to write the essay. You sit down in front of the keyboard and start typing: you put the title, you try to group some similar bits of information or argument together, and then you put a conclusion on the end saying that there are many interesting points of view on this subject. Right?

No, of course you don't. You've got to start off with an essay plan. By designing this you'll come up with the structure. A well thought-out structure is at the heart of every good essay.

What is good structure?

It isn't enough to make sure that you have an introduction at the start, a conclusion at the end and other stuff in between. So what do you need?

1. You do need a solid introduction. It will probably contain something about how you have interpreted the question. It is also a good idea to state a thesis (an argument) which you are going to illustrate or explore in the body of the essay. You may prefer to save the 'findings' of your exploration to the end, in which case you have to introduce the question carefully.

2. And you need a tight, powerful conclusion *which is the logical consequence of everything that has gone before*. The good essay will have developed a number of related strands which the conclusion ties together. It may also contain an extra, surprising thing which you saved to throw in at the end with a flourish.

3. So what happens in between? Well...

\* *This Guide has been adapted from the Institute of Communication Studies Website, <http://www.leeds.ac.uk/ics/>*

### Six really awful ways to begin the essay:

'Why have baked beans become so popular in twentieth century Britain?'

1. "The question of why baked beans have become so popular in twentieth century Britain is an interesting ..."
2. "The Oxford English Dictionary defines 'baked beans' as..."
3. "In this essay I will explore the question of why baked beans have become so popular in twentieth..."
4. "The Penguin English Dictionary defines 'popular' as..."
5. "The twentieth century has been going for quite a while now and..."
6. "The Collins English Dictionary defines 'twentieth century' as..."

❖ *Why are these awful? Because they are so predictable, uninspiring and limp*

❖ *What should you do instead? Something else!*

### Two dull kinds of essay structure:

#### ***The one that's not well enough organised:***

1. Definition of the thing
2. Some stuff about the thing
3. Summary

#### ***The one that's too formulaic:***

1. Introduction, saying that we will discuss the thing
2. Three arguments in favour of the thing
3. Three arguments against the thing
4. Summary of the above

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You need to organise your material so that it flows from one area, sub-section or argument to the next in a logical order. Each part should build upon, or at least reasonably follow on from, the previous parts, and the whole thing should be pulling the reader clearly and inescapably to your triumphant conclusion.

The box on the right shows unimaginative kinds of essay structure, which are likely to get low marks. But what can you do instead?

One good approach is to look through your notes and identify a handful of themes within the discussion and to structure your essay around consideration of those. You should order the analysis of each theme so that the essay builds towards the conclusion.

### **Don't know how to start?**

If you've got some notes but you don't know how to start the next stage, get a nice big clean sheet of paper and write down phrases which summarise all of your thoughts about the subject, the different questions and ideas you've had in your mind, and the areas and problems that have been covered in your reading. Then look for similarities and related concerns and group them together in whatever way makes sense to you. After that, see if you can number these areas into an order – the order in which you will weave your way through the material. And, Voila!, you've accidentally created an essay structure. Now just check it, tweak it a bit to make it more coherent, and you're ready to go.

### **More analysis = more marks**

You will often need to *describe* something before you give an *analysis* of it, but the more analysis the better. Only include as much description as is needed for the analysis to make sense. It is the analysis for which you will get marks. Of course, a muddled, illogical and unsubstantiated analysis can still leave you with no marks. We'll be looking for a clear, coherent and consistent analysis, supported by evidence.

Don't just repeat what some books (or your lecture notes) say; we want *your* analysis. However, you should also show your awareness of other people's analyses.

**Don't wander off the subject!**

Answer the question, and only the question. And keep checking that you are remaining on track throughout the essay. If there's something interesting that you want to include, but which is of dubious relevance to the main argument or theme of the essay, put it in a *footnote*.

**Don't rush**

You might remember that you 'did all right' last time you stayed up all night on pharmaceuticals the day before the deadline to research and write an essay. But this most likely means that you would have done much *better* if you had started reading and researching, and then writing, days or weeks before that. It is always obvious to your tutors when an essay is rushed.

**Don't cheat**

Plagiarism – using other people's words and ideas without acknowledging where you got them from – is regarded as an enormous sin, the penalties for which are actually *worse* than just getting zero for the essay. Just say no. Or more specifically, make sure that you have got perfect references.

**Style as well as substance**

Whilst it would be 'nice' if the ideas of a genius were appreciated even when written in horrible prose, you should not bank on this. The good student not only has good ideas to write about, but can write about them *well*. And it seems particularly wasteful to be losing marks just because you didn't spend a little bit of time learning a few style tips.

**Waffle and padding: not the keys to success**

Don't use superfluous words, phrases or sentences. If a sentence means the same thing with a word taken out, take it out. The same applies to whole phrases and sentences within the wider context of a paragraph. Using words and phrases which don't add anything to what you're saying will mean that your examiners will conclude that (a) you don't have enough to say to meet the required essay length, and that (b) you are trying to hide this by means of a slow, repetitive and boring writing style. This is not clever.

<b>For example don't write:</b>	<b>When you could write:</b>
<p>Greg Dyke transformed the BBC, changing it so that it was altogether different from what it had been like before.</p> <p>Some people feel that he is a megalomaniac who wants to take over the world, whilst at the same time other people feel that he is a fundamentally weak man who lacks strength.</p> <p>Nevertheless, we can certainly see that he clearly wields a considerable and substantial degree of direct power, influence and the ability to change things around within the organization</p>	<p>Greg Dyke transformed the BBC. Some people feel he is a megalomaniac; others contend that he is fundamentally weak.</p> <p>Nevertheless, he clearly has a considerable degree of direct power within the organization.</p>

The left hand column contains 250 per cent more words than the right-hand column, but it contains zero per cent more information. Your examiners spot this kind of thing.

Furthermore, by not inflating her essay with space-filling nonsense, the pithy writer of the right-hand column has got room to show her understanding of the subject by expanding on all of these points: *What* did Dyke do? *Why* might he be seen as power-crazed, or weak? *How* has he demonstrated his personal power? In other words, she has got room for lots of *analysis*. This, as we established above, is good news.

### **CAN I SAY “I FEEL THIS ARGUMENT IS WRONG BECAUSE...”?**

There are different preferences about whether you should use “I” in an essay or not. Sometimes it can look really good if you confidently say “Rather, I would argue that...” But saying “I feel this argument is wrong because...” can look a bit ponderous, and some tutors don’t like it. A solution to this is to be even more assertive and say “However, this argument is weak, since...” It will still be clear to your examiners that you are making your own argument – and we definitely *do* like you to make your own argument. Whatever you are saying, make sure you back it up with *argument* and *evidence*.

### **Surely this stuff about ‘style’ is just superficial and isn’t very important?**

Wrong. If your essay is badly-written, you will lose marks. And, in the outside world, you would lose readers (whether you are writing books and screenplays, or company reports and letters...or even job applications). It is very important to write in a crisp, clear style, with good sentence construction and proper punctuation. Needless to say, spelling mistakes also fail to impress.

<b>TWO MORE EXAMPLES OF BAD WRITING</b>	
<b>Bad Thing:</b>	<b>What’s wrong with it?</b>
The film was criticised for its drug-taking, violence, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ You only put an apostrophe in “it’s” where you are using it as an abbreviation of “it is” (e.g. “it’s a great film).</li> <li>❖ The writer should really have put “...criticised for its depictions of drug-taking...” – otherwise the reader might wrongly infer that the <i>production</i> of the film involved actual drug-taking and violence.</li> <li>❖ The use of ‘etc.’ shows that the writer wanted to suggest that the film had been criticised for other things, but hadn’t got a clue what these were. It’s better to simply say: “The film was criticised for its depictions of drug-taking and violence”.</li> </ul>
The theory was very popular, Foucault was said to be ‘more popular than the Beatles’.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Two units of meaning – parts that could stand alone as sentences, such as “The theory was very popular” – cannot just be strung together with a comma in the middle. In this case the comma could be replaced with a full stop or a semi-colon (which represents a more emphatic pause than a comma and suggests connection between the material before and after it). Or add a connecting word: “The theory was very popular, and Foucault was said to be ‘more popular than the Beatles”.</li> <li>❖ Of course, you also need a reference for that quote.</li> </ul>

### The complete short tips collection...

The tips below (like this entire guide) are based on an informal survey of teaching staff which established what they do and don't like in essays. Each point has been kept brief, so that you can write each tip on a piece of coloured card and turn them into a lovely mobile to hang above your bed!

Answer the question.	A clear, logical structure is essential.	Give your own analysis, not mere description.	We want to see a fresh, original approach.
Clear, consistent references are essential.	Base your essay on extensive relevant reading and research.	Indecisive 'it's a bit of both' essays are disappointing.	Argue your case, with your own point of view.
Use commas properly. Learn how to deploy semi-colons.	We want to see evidence of independent thought.	Try to avoid formulas, clichés, and the obvious approaches.	Have a clear, relevant introduction and conclusion.
It's important to know the difference between "it's" and its alter ego, "its".	Don't allude to anything you've already read without giving a reference for it.	Avoid a purely 'journalistic' style, in academic essays.	Don't waffle. It's not cunning; it just suggests you've got little to say.
Illustrate your points with up-to-date examples.	Construct your sentences carefully.	Use the internet – but with care and discrimination.	Don't fill an essay with irrelevant historical data.
Use electronic resources to find material.	Check your spelling and punctuation. Seriously.	Ensure your essay is the required length.	Bring the subject to life!