



# Law reform essay competition 2025

## Plagiarism policy

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The essay must be the sole creation and original work of the entrant.

Entrants are expected already to be aware of and to follow any plagiarism guidance and policies of the academic and professional training institutions to which they currently belong or have belonged. The Bar Council's guidance reproduces and adapts information from two such policies for the purposes of its Essay Competition. The Bar Council is grateful to both institutions for permission to do so.

### Definition

Plagiarism occurs where an entrant copies from any other source (published or unpublished) in an unauthorised manner and attempts to present that work as if it were the entrant's own in order to obtain an unfair advantage.

Examples of plagiarism include:

- 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 misleading information about the source of a quotation.
- Changing words but copying the sentence structure of a source without giving credit.
- Copying so many words from a source that it makes up the majority of your work, whether you give credit or not.

## Citation/quotation

Quotations from recognised sources are usually acceptable, but must be clearly acknowledged and a reference given for the source (i.e. sources must be cited). The following situations almost always require citation:

- Whenever you use quotes.
- Whenever you paraphrase.
- Whenever you use an idea that someone else has already expressed.
- Whenever you make specific reference to the work of another.
- Whenever someone else's work has been critical in developing your own ideas.

**In the case of any doubt, citation is recommended.**

## Bar Council plagiarism checks

The Bar Council may proactively seek out instances of plagiarism, for example by the use of an electronic plagiarism detection system or service to scan submitted essays.

## Penalty

Any entry which is found not to be the sole creation and original work of the entrant ("plagiarism") will be disqualified from the Law Reform Essay Competition.

Where plagiarism is found after the making of an award to the entrant, the entry will be disqualified and the entrant must return the award and any prize money to the Bar Council. The essay will be removed from the Bar Council website and the entrant must not refer to the award as one of their achievements (whether on their CV, personal website etc.).

Whenever plagiarism is found in any essay submitted for the competition the Bar Council reserves the right in serious cases to report the matter to the entrant's:

1. Place of academic study
2. Inn of Court (or intended Inn of Court)
3. Chambers (or intended chambers)
4. Relevant professional representative or regulatory body