Why do Students plagiarise?

**Cultural differences**
In some cultures, copying verbatim is considered a mark of respect and critical thinking is not encouraged. Such students may need extra support to understand why copying is not acceptable.

**Poor learning environment**
If a lecturer seems disengaged with their subject and offers out of date course materials, then a student may plagiarise in order to do the work with the same minimal effort.

**Poor time management**
Students who leave work until the last minute or who have multiple deadlines looming can often feel compelled into taking shortcuts and copying work from elsewhere. Staggering deadlines can help with this last minute panic and encourage students to manage their time effectively. Students may need extra support especially if they are juggling their studies with external pressures such as work commitments or childcare responsibilities.

**Improving marks**
Students with little confidence or those who feel pressurised to get high marks, often see plagiarism as a means to an end.

**Ignorance**
Many students simply don’t understand the precise nature of what constitutes plagiarism and so they don’t realise they are doing anything wrong. Institutions should provide guidance on academic writing and explain what the various forms of plagiarism are with examples students can easily relate to, and ensure the message is reinforced on a regular basis.

**Beating the system**
Sometimes students just want to see if they can ‘beat the system’. If plagiarism prevention software is used as part of a general approach in educating them about academic integrity, then these instances of plagiarism should be reduced.

**Irrelevant courses**
Students who feel that a particular module is not directly relevant to their final qualification can be tempted to plagiarise in order to get the required mark with the least work possible.