Data Protection Act

The mission statement found at the Data Protection Commission website (http://idpc.gov.mt/) is this: "Our mission is to protect the individual's right to privacy by ensuring the correct processing of personal data."
The Office of the Information and Data Protection Commissioner is committed to protect the individual's right to privacy by ensuring the correct processing of personal data. The Office aims to safeguard this fundamental human right which is enshrined in the Constitution of Malta.

The Data Protection Act of the European Parliament and of the Council was completely brought into effect on 15 July 2003. The main objectives of the law are twofold:

- the regulation of data controllers, the persons to determine the purposes and means of processing, who are obliged to process the personal data in accordance with inter alia the requirements and criteria established by law;

- the protection of privacy rights of an individual, including the right to information, the right of access and the right to rectify, block or erase personal data not processed in accordance with the Act.

In the implementation of the local legislation, the data protection supervisory authority has been vested in the Information and Data Protection Commissioner who enjoys the same independence attributed to a Judge in the local courts and acts independently without being subject to any direction or control of any other person or authority.

The Act empowers the Commissioner, among other things, with the following functions:
- to create and maintain a public register of all processing operations being notified by Data Controllers;
- to institute civil legal proceedings in cases where the provisions of the Act have been or are about to be violated;
- to encourage the drawing up of suitable codes of conduct by the various sectors;
- to order the blocking, erasure or destruction of data, to impose a temporary or definitive ban on processing, or to warn or admonish the controller;
- to collaborate with supervisory authorities of other countries to the extent necessary for the performance of his duties.

The following are the Principles of Data Protection. They are nine principles of 'good information handling'. The controller shall ensure that:

- Personal data is processed fairly and lawfully;
- Personal data is always processed in accordance with good practice;
- Personal data is only collected for specific, explicitly stated and legitimate purposes;
- Personal data is not processed for any purpose that is incompatible with that for which the information is collected;
- Personal data that is processed is adequate and relevant in relation to the purposes of the processing;
- No more personal data is processed than is necessary having regard to the purposes of the processing;
- Personal data that is processed is correct and, if necessary, up to date.
- All reasonable measures are taken to complete, correct, block or erase data to the extent that such data is incomplete or incorrect, having regard to the purposes for which they are processed;
- Personal data is not kept for a period longer than is necessary, having regard to the purposes for which they are processed.

Plagiarism

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. All of the following are considered as plagiarism:

- turning in 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 (see our section on "fair use" rules)

Most cases of plagiarism can be avoided, however, by citing sources. Simply acknowledging that certain material has been borrowed and providing your audience with the information necessary to find that source is usually enough to prevent plagiarism.

By the way, this information about plagiarism was taken from the site http://plagiarism.org/. If I did not tell you so then I would have plagiarised.

Plagiarism software exists. This is capable of saying the approximate percentage of plagiarism is a text.

Some software manufacturers provide source code, but this is useful only if you are an experienced programmer.