



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
MELBOURNE

ACADEMIC SKILLS UNIT

# Using Sources and Avoiding Plagiarism

*organisation*  
*essay* Referencing  
Critical thinking  
Referencing  
**results** *exams* seminars  
READING *academ*  
*exams* Argumentation  
Referencing **writing**  
Critical thinking  
**reports**  
*presentations*  
seminars **skills**

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# AVOIDING PLAGIARISM

A key aim of university education is for students to acquire expertise and knowledge in their chosen field. To do this, students are expected to read research literature and present their own ideas and the ideas of others in their field following formal academic conventions. In academic writing, for example, students are expected not only to present original work and to demonstrate wide reading but also to appropriately reference and incorporate the views of experts in the field of study into their essays. In order to do this correctly, you need to adhere to the academic conventions for referencing and acknowledging sources. By not following these conventions, a student may be found guilty of *plagiarism* – or being seen to claim as his/her own, the words, ideas or research of other people.

Plagiarism is a form of dishonesty and can have serious consequences such as failure in a subject or even expulsion from a course. While there are cases of deliberate plagiarism or cheating, most cases of student plagiarism are the result of ignorance, carelessness or a lack of advanced writing skills. That's where this booklet can help. It will help you to understand what plagiarism is and to recognise examples. More importantly, the booklet focuses on strategies for avoiding plagiarism and provides valuable techniques to ensure you acknowledge sources and integrate quotations appropriately in your writing.

## 1. WHAT IS PLAGIARISM?

The first step in avoiding plagiarism is knowing exactly what it is.

Plagiarism is defined by the University of Melbourne as 'the act of representing as one's own original work the creative works of another, without appropriate acknowledgment of the author or source' (The University of Melbourne, 2005). It is important to note that this definition extends beyond words printed in text and refers to all the elements in someone else's work including: ideas and arguments; images such as diagrams, charts and pictures; compositions; and organisational structures (Carroll, 2002). In short, plagiarism is a form of intellectual dishonesty or theft.

Appropriately, the word *plagiarism* is derived from the Latin words for 'kidnapper'. When a person plagiarises, he/she is 'kidnapping' or stealing someone else's words or ideas and passing them off as his/her own. Although the definition of plagiarism may seem simple, the subject can be quite confusing for students as plagiarism comes in various forms. Some examples of plagiarism listed on the University's *Academic Honesty and Plagiarism* webpage include:

- Copying (or allowing to be copied) text, ideas, concepts, research results, statistical tables, computer programs, designs, images or sounds, or any combination of these
- Paraphrasing another person's work with minor changes, but keeping the meaning, form and/or progression of ideas of the original
- Piecing together sections of the work of others into a new whole
- Submitting part or all of an assignment twice for separate subjects or marks
- Presenting an assignment as independent work when it has been produced in whole or part in collusion with other people, for example another student or a tutor (The University of Melbourne, 2005).

# EXAMPLES OF PLAGIARISM

Students, often without realising, may be guilty of plagiarism. Copying another person’s work, or colluding with other people to produce an assignment that is submitted as independent work, are clear examples of intentional plagiarism. However, most cases of student plagiarism are unintentional. Some examples include incorrect or inappropriate use of sources.

In order to avoid plagiarism, you must be able to acknowledge and reference sources well. A major aim of this booklet, furthermore, is to help you recognise the difference between acceptable and unacceptable use of sources.

Look at the passage from Janet Yong’s article (source text for the information) and the five versions of writing that follow. Pay special attention to the comments explaining why the first four versions are unacceptable.

**Original text:**

The Internet has changed the appearance of libraries and how librarians work today. The library is no longer confined to the four walls of a building. It has, instead, extended into cyberspace. Many librarians have gone into cyberspace to locate online resources (p.294).

Yong, Janet Y. 2001 ‘Malay/Indonesian speakers’ In M. Swan and B. Smith (eds), *Learner English: A teacher’s guide to interference and other problems*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 279-295.

**Version 1:**

Today, the Internet has changed the appearance of libraries and how librarians work and the library is no longer confined to the four walls of a building. Instead, the library has extended into cyberspace and so many librarians go into cyberspace to locate online resources.

X

**Comments:** This version is a clear example of plagiarised work. Much of it has been copied directly from the original without acknowledgement.

**Version 2:**

Today, the Internet has changed the appearance of libraries and how librarians work and the library is no longer confined to the four walls of a building. Instead, the library has extended into cyberspace and so many librarians go into cyberspace to locate online resources (Yong, 2001: 294).

X

**Comments:** This is still plagiarised work. Although this version has acknowledged the source of the information by providing an in-text reference, the writer has not put quotation marks around the words copied directly from the original text (direct quotations).

**Version 3:**

The library is no longer confined to the four walls of a building. It has, instead, extended into cyberspace and many librarians have gone into cyberspace to locate online resources. The Internet has thus changed the appearance of libraries and how librarians work today (Yong, 2001: 294).

**X**

**Comments:** This paragraph also constitutes a plagiarised piece of work as the sentences have merely been rearranged and most of the original wording has been copied without acknowledgement. Rearranging is not paraphrasing – paraphrasing requires the writer to reformulate the ideas in the original text in his/her own words.

**Version 4:**

Recent developments in Internet technologies have brought about a major transformation of libraries and the way that librarians conduct their work. Extending beyond the physical space of the library itself, many resources are now found online and are therefore easily accessed by library users and librarians alike.

**X**

**Comments:** In this version, the writer shows an understanding of the topic and has paraphrased effectively by using the information (rather than the words) of the original text to create a more original piece of work. However, the writer has failed to acknowledge the original source of information and therefore has plagiarised.

**Version 5:**

Recent developments in Internet technologies have brought about a major transformation of libraries and the way that librarians conduct their work. Extending beyond the physical space of the library itself, many resources are now found online and are therefore easily accessed by library users and librarians alike (Yong, 2001: 294).

**✓**

**Comments:** This writer uses the original text appropriately. The paragraph shows the writer's understanding of the topic and lets the reader know that the information has been obtained from another source.

## CONSEQUENCES OF PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism can have very serious consequences for you in your future studies. If found guilty of plagiarism, you may be...

- required to complete additional assessment in the subject
- given a mark of zero for the piece of assessment
- given a fail grade for the subject
- referred to a committee investigating under Statute 13.1 for Academic Misconduct which may result in termination of enrolment and expulsion from the University. In other words, in serious cases you may even be asked to leave the university!

**Plagiarism can be intentional or unintentional.  
Ignorance or carelessness is no excuse.**

For more information on the University's policy on plagiarism and the possible penalties see <http://academichonesty.unimelb.edu.au/policy.html>

## 2. ACKNOWLEDGING SOURCES

To avoid plagiarism, you must give credit whenever you use another person's work. This means that whenever you use information obtained from another source including ideas, examples, theories or opinions, you must give a full reference to that source.

### WHAT HAS TO BE ACKNOWLEDGED?

#### Direct quotations

A direct quotation means using another person's exact words. When you use direct quotations, it is important to make clear to the reader that you have taken someone else's exact words. Acknowledging the source with a reference alone is not sufficient; you must also place the words in quotation marks (for shorter quotes) or indent paragraphs (for longer quotes).

For example:

*According to Kramsch (1998: 10) foreign language teachers should 'objectivize the learner's native discourse patterns'.*

*Crozet & Liddicoat (1997: 18) argue:*

*The aim of language teaching is not to assimilate the learner into the native speaker community but rather to encourage them to adopt a position in which they are comfortable in dealing with native speakers and are able to achieve personal and communicative goals.*

## Paraphrases of another person's words or ideas

A paraphrase is an indirect quotation and means rewriting someone else's ideas in your own words. Plagiarism often results from students' misunderstanding that they only have to acknowledge someone else's work when copying or quoting words directly from a text. This is incorrect. When you paraphrase, you must cite the source of the ideas (see examples in previous section).

Another common mistake made by students is partial paraphrasing – that is, changing only some of the words from the original. To paraphrase correctly, you must change and rewrite the original language completely, including the original sentence structure. If you retain even short phrases or distinctive words from the original text without enclosing these words in quotation marks, it is plagiarism.

### Acceptable paraphrasing...

- **accurately relays the information in the original source using your own words**
- **acknowledges the source of information**
- **is incorporated into your discussion to add to or support your own ideas and argument.**

## Summaries of another person's ideas

A summary is also an indirect quotation, but is much shorter than the original text as it only includes the main points of the original author's ideas or argument. To avoid plagiarism, you must cite the source whenever you summarise another person's work.

## Tables, figures, graphs, diagrams or images obtained from any source

When you use information from any source, including information contained in tables, graphs, figures or diagrams, you must acknowledge the original source. This is also the case for images that you obtain.

## Information obtained from lectures and personal communication

If you want to use information or an idea that you have obtained from a verbal discussion with someone or from your lectures, you have to acknowledge the source of the information in your work. Just because the other person's work has not been published in print form, it does not mean that the ideas do not belong to that person. If you use another person's ideas without acknowledgement, then you are plagiarising.

**To avoid plagiarism, you must give credit whenever you use other peoples' work – including their ideas, arguments, theories and opinions.**



## WHAT DOES *NOT* HAVE TO BE ACKNOWLEDGED?

1. Your own ideas, arguments, theories, images, diagrams, graphs or results from research
2. Common knowledge – unless it is a direct quote from a specific source
3. Facts available from various general reference books such as textbooks, dictionaries or encyclopaedias. Statistics taken from these sources should still be cited, as this will increase the credibility of your information.

## WHAT IS COMMON KNOWLEDGE?

Sometimes you do not need to acknowledge the source of your information. For example, when a topic is part of what we assume to be general or 'common knowledge', or information that is in the public domain, you usually do not have to provide a reference. For example, statements such as *Bob Hawke was Prime Minister of Australia from 1983 to 1991* or *World War I began in 1914 and ended in 1918* are generally known information so you do not need to provide a reference even though you may not have known these facts before you started your research. However, if you use the exact words of the reference source, you must place the words in quotation marks and acknowledge the source.

If you are not sure whether a particular point is considered to be common knowledge in your field, consult various general reference books. If you find the fact in more than one general reference book, you can consider it 'common knowledge'.

Note that 'common knowledge' is limited to facts and does not include opinions or arguments that you could disagree with or argue against (Carroll, 2002: 53).

For example, compare the following two statements:

*J.S. Bach was a famous composer during the Baroque period.*

*J.S. Bach was the greatest composer of the Baroque period (Sterling, 1977).*

The first sentence is a fact that is commonly known by many people. The second sentence is an opinion, which people can disagree with and therefore needs to be referenced.

Look at two more examples:

### **Example 1:**

Personal safety is of great concern to political leaders in today's world. The history of presidential assassinations in the Western world began with the murder of Abraham Lincoln and continued when President John F. Kennedy was shot in Dallas in 1963. Later, when an attempt was made on President Ronald Reagan's life, a large security presence immediately bundled him into a waiting car and sped off, away from the danger.

**Comments:** In this example, a reference is not needed because the details that are given are general rather than specific, and they are details that are generally known – that is, common knowledge.

### Example 2:

1. Personal safety is of great concern to political leaders in today's world. 2. The history of presidential assassinations in the Western world began with the murder of Abraham Lincoln on April 14, 1865, by John Wilkes Booth, a 26-year-old Confederate sympathiser (Lincoln Research, 1996) and continued when President John F. Kennedy was shot in Dallas at exactly 12:30pm on November 22, 1963 (Eggins, 1963). 3. Some writers have argued that this assassination was the most significant event in modern American History as it changed the face of politics and political security (McNabb, 2001; Ernst, 1989). 4. This was evidenced in 1981, when during an assassination attempt on President Ronald Reagan by John Hinkley Jr., a large security presence immediately bundled Reagan into a waiting car and sped off, away from the danger (Searcy, 2003) 5. These days, world leaders are frequently seen travelling in bullet-proof vehicles accompanied by security agents.

**Comments:** In this example, a number of exact dates are given as well as details of the people involved (sentences 2, 4). By providing reference information the reader knows that these are not just facts or figures for which you have no evidence. The reader (usually an examiner) can then check these references to ensure that details are correct. In sentence 3, the idea that JF Kennedy's assassination was the most significant event in modern American History is not a fact but an interpretation or argument; consequently, it must be cited. The last sentence does not need to be referenced because the facts are common knowledge.

By recognising that some facts are common knowledge, you can avoid filling up your page with unnecessary references.

**However, if in doubt, be cautious and cite the source.**

## 3. REFERENCING STYLES

Evans (1995: 52) defines referencing as 'the labelling of material you have drawn from other writers with enough information for the reader to be able to locate the source'. Referencing (or citing) is an essential feature of academic writing and is extremely important as it enables you to...

- acknowledge someone else's ownership of words and ideas
- show that you have researched widely to give your writing credibility
- allow readers to access the same sources for themselves
- add evidence and authority to statements or arguments and demonstrate that your work is based on solid evidence
- help maintain academic values such as exchanging knowledge and recognising intellectual work
- *avoid plagiarism.*

# METHODS OF REFERENCING

There are three main methods of referencing used in academic writing:

1. In-text: *your text* (Kirkwood, 1995: 4) (e.g. Harvard, APA, MLA)
2. Numeric: *your text* (4) (e.g. Vancouver)
3. Footnotes: *your text*<sup>7</sup> (e.g. Cambridge, Chicago A)

References must be accompanied by a list of 'works cited', a 'reference list' or 'bibliography'.

**When submitting work for assessment, you must follow the referencing style recommended by your department or lecturer.**

## 1. In-text referencing styles

In-text referencing styles use brackets for citations within the text. Examples of in-text referencing styles used at the University of Melbourne include:

- APA – e.g. (Bailey, 1990, p.34)
- Harvard – e.g. (Bailey, 1990: 34)
- MLA – e.g. (Bailey 34)

Note that for direct quotations, you must include the page number in the in-text reference. This is also true when you use specific information such as definitions, statistics or when you take tables, diagrams or figures from another source. Compare the two examples citing Crozet and Liddicoat:

*Culture does not only determine what information is conveyed but also 'how information is conveyed and how it is accepted or rejected or otherwise acted on' (Crozet & Liddicoat, 1997: 15).*

*Culture determines the ways in which information is expressed (Crozet & Liddicoat, 1997).*

In-text references must be accompanied by a full list of references (on a separate page at the end of your assignment). Only works cited in the text are included in the reference list in alphabetical order. Look at the following example (Harvard style):

---

### References

Evans, D. 1995, *How to Write a Better Thesis or Report*. Carlton: Melbourne University Press.

Kramsch, C. 1998, *Language and Culture*. Oxford: OUP.

Lee, W.Y. 1995, 'Authenticity Revisited: text authenticity and learner authenticity', *ELT Journal*, vol.49, no.4, pp. 34-38.

## 2. Numbered referencing styles

In numbered referencing styles, references are indicated by superscript numbers<sup>3</sup> or numbers in brackets (3). For example:

*Culture does not only determine what information is conveyed but also 'how information is conveyed and how it is accepted or rejected or otherwise acted on'. (2)*

The number corresponds to a particular source so more than one number may appear – <sup>3, 5-7</sup> – showing that the idea is discussed in several sources.

Sources are detailed in a reference list ordered according to 'order of appearance' in the text. An example (Vancouver style) is given below.

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### References

1. Lee WY. Authenticity Revisited: text authenticity and learner authenticity. *ELT Journal* 1995; 45(4): 34-38.
2. Kramsch C. *Language and Culture*. Oxford: OUP; 1998.
2. Evans D. *How to Write a Better Thesis or Report*. Carlton: Melbourne University Press; 1995.

## 3. Footnote styles:

In footnote referencing styles, citations in the text are followed by a number in superscript<sup>1</sup>. Footnotes provide complete bibliographic information at the bottom of the page and include full details of the source (author, title, year, page number). For example:

*According to Claire Kramsch, culture does not only determine what information is conveyed but also 'how information is conveyed and how it is accepted or rejected or otherwise acted on.'<sup>1</sup>*

---

1. Claire Kramsch, *Language and Culture*, Oxford: OUP, 1998, p.15.

The first time you cite a source, the footnote should include the full publication information (plus the page number). For subsequent references to the same source, you generally use a shortened version of the reference. Check your style guide.

A Bibliography at the end generally lists all works cited (again) *plus* works consulted but not cited, in alphabetical order. For example (Cambridge style):

---

### Bibliography

Evans, David. *How to Write a Better Thesis or Report*, Carlton, Melbourne University Press, 1995.

Kramsch, Claire. *Language and Culture*, Oxford, OUP, 1998.

Lee, Wang Y. 'Authenticity Revisited: text authenticity and learner authenticity'. *ELT Journal*, 49, 1995, pp. 34-38.

## WHAT IS A SECONDARY CITATION?

This is when an author refers to someone else's research or when he/she takes information from another source, and you want to use this information. While it is always best to use information from primary sources this may not always be possible. In this case, you can do a *secondary citation*, giving credit to the original source *and* the text that you have actually consulted. However, *never* use information as a tertiary citation!

For example, if Jordan (1997) refers to results from Nunan's research (1995), your text might look like this:

*Results from Nunan's study (1995; cited in Jordan, 1997:12) also show that 'intrinsic motivation is crucial to successful language acquisition'.*

## WHAT TO DO IF MORE THAN ONE REFERENCE SUPPORT THE SAME POINT?

Refer to the two (or more) sources which support the same point. When referencing more than one source, list authors in alphabetical or chronological order (see which order your department prefers). For example:

*Motivation is an essential factor in second language acquisition (Krashen, 1982; Ellis, 1985; Nunan, 1995).*

**Do you know which referencing system you are expected to use?  
Get hold of a referencing style guide and follow the rules carefully!**

## 4. USING SOURCES CORRECTLY

A source can appear in your paper in several ways:

- As a direct quotation
- As a paraphrase of a statement or passage
- As a summary of the main ideas or information.

In other words, there are two types of quotes you can use: direct quotes (someone else's exact words) and indirect quotes (paraphrases and summaries). Look at these examples:

*In discussing the importance of teaching study skills, Jordan (1997: 8) comments that 'study skills are not something acquired instinctively'.*

→ **Direct quotation**

*As students do not obtain study skills automatically, it is very important to teach them these skills (Jordan, 1997).*

→ **Paraphrase**

*It is important to teach study skills to students (Jordan, 1997).* → **Summary**

Note that the words taken directly from Jordan's text are enclosed in quotation marks. It is important that you do this whenever you use someone's exact words. Whether you use single or double quotation marks depends on the referencing style you use. If you don't use quotation marks, you could be penalised for plagiarism.

## DIRECT QUOTATIONS

In general, quotations of an author's exact words should be used sparingly. Whenever possible try to paraphrase and summarise rather than quote directly. Using your own words shows that you understand the information.

### You should only use quotations when:

- **The original phrasing is unique and cannot be paraphrased without changing the meaning.**
- **The writer has made a point so clearly or succinctly that it cannot be improved upon or expressed more concisely.**
- **The original words create a particular effect or reveal something about the author.**

Avoid quoting large sections of text and relying too heavily on the author's words.

Overusing quotations can make your writing look like a 'cut and paste job' and it does not communicate your understanding of the ideas or information being discussed. You should always integrate quotations into your writing rather than leaving them to speak for themselves.

Look at the following examples:

#### Original source:

Those who profit from crime have a natural propensity for tax evasion. The rate at which they voluntarily pay tax on their illegal earnings is extremely low. In America it has been estimated at 5 per cent, and there is no reason to believe that it is any higher elsewhere. It follows that if revenue authorities are to fulfil their duties adequately in respect of the taxation of illicit income, and thereby redress the inequity between honest taxpayers and criminal profiteers, they will need to adopt proactive enforcement strategies. Special programmes staffed by multidisciplinary personnel are required. Such programmes have operated with considerable success in America and Australia (discussed below), as well as Canada, New Zealand and Ireland (Lusty, 2003: 209).

Lusty, David (2003) 'Taxing the untouchables who profit from organized crime' *Journal of Financial Crime* Vol.10, I. 3; pp. 209-28.

#### Example 1:

Profit-making criminals have 'a natural propensity for tax evasion' (Lusty, 2003: 209). The voluntary rate of tax paid 'on their illegal earnings is extremely low' (Lusty, 2003: 209). According to Lusty (2003: 209), tax revenue authorities need 'to adopt proactive enforcement strategies' if they are to 'fulfil their duties adequately in respect of the taxation of illicit income'. He adds that they need to carry out special programs which 'have operated with considerable success in America and Australia ... Canada, New Zealand and Ireland' (Lusty, 2003: 209).

**Comments:** The 'string of direct quotations' merely shows that the writer knows how to 'collect' relevant material. The writer has made no attempt to analyse or form an argument and the text does not show that he/she has understood the material.

Now look at another example.

### Example 2

There is much to suggest that people who commit crimes evade paying tax from their ill-gotten gains. However, if taxation authorities were to implement 'proactive enforcement strategies' with a view to following through on the collection of taxes from these people, then they may be able to 'redress the inequity between honest taxpayers and criminal profiteers' as has been done in a number of Western nations (Lusty, 2003: 209).

**Comments:** This is a much better use of direct quotes. The original text has been paraphrased effectively and the student has summed up the main points, only using direct quotes for emphasis. By referencing only at the end, the reader is able to read through the text uninterrupted by the series of in-text references. If you are unsure of how often to reference, it is better to err on the side of over-referencing, but if you can summarise or paraphrase effectively, then you will not need to reference so often.

From the example above, you can see that sometimes it is more effective to just use a small quote, especially when the rest of the original wording is not very unique and can be easily paraphrased. In these cases, quoting just a few words is enough.

## Using direct quotations correctly

- Direct quotations must be copied exactly. Do not change the words, word order, spelling or punctuation.
- Quotations longer than three lines should be:
  - Indented
  - Not enclosed in quotation marks
  - Referenced at the beginning or end depending on the referencing style
- An *ellipsis* (...) should be used to indicate that words have been omitted. For example:  
*According to Saville-Troike (1989: 38), 'meaningful context includes understanding aspects of a communicative event, ... of holistic scripts for the negotiation of meanings, as well as observable aspects of the setting.'*
- Square brackets [thus] are used to indicate that you have added text to the original quote, usually to clarify meaning. For example:  
*According to Saville-Troike (1989: 38), 'meaningful context includes understanding [culturally defined] aspects of a communicative event, ... of holistic scripts for the negotiation of meanings, as well as observable aspects of the setting.'*
- Square brackets are also used to make the original quote grammatically consistent with your sentence. For example:  
*According to Colbert (2001: 70), Angela was taught from a young age to 'nourish your soul as well as your body.' [incorrect]*  
*According to Colbert (2001: 70), Angela was taught from a young age to 'nourish [her] soul as well as [her] body.' [correct]*
- The word [sic] is used to indicate that you have quoted the text exactly, although it may look like a misquote. For example:  
*Puten (1995: 24) claims it was 'the imperative of the Jewish-Bolshevist system to maintain their power of [sic] cultural elites.'*

# PARAPHRASING

As mentioned in earlier sections of this booklet, paraphrasing requires more than just changing a few words of the source material. Correct paraphrasing means completely reworking the passage by reordering and reorganising the information and rewriting it in your *own* words. Your aim should be to demonstrate that you understand the concepts and ideas presented in the passage and that you are able to incorporate this in the discussion of your ideas and arguments.

The key to correct and accurate paraphrasing is being able to manipulate the language and grammatical features of the text so that you keep the meaning (and acknowledge the source of the ideas), while making the words your own. This requires highly-developed writing skills and may be difficult for you at first; however, with experience and practice, your skills will improve.

## Useful language skills for paraphrasing

### 1. Using synonyms

Synonyms are words or expressions which have similar meanings –for example, help/assist; construct/build/make. The best resource for finding synonyms is the thesaurus but remember to take care when using words that you are not familiar with as words can often have multiple meanings depending on the context in which they are used. Also, it is important to keep in mind that using synonyms is not sufficient on its own. Changing a few words does not mean that you have paraphrased; you are expected to change the sentence structures as well.

### 2. Changing word forms

Changing the form of words – e.g. from an adjective to a noun, or from a noun to a verb – is a useful technique in paraphrasing as changing the word form often necessitates changes in sentence structure and organisation. Look at the following example.

“Accountants are expected to know tax laws.”



There is an expectation that accountants are knowledgeable about tax laws.

### 3. Changing the structure of sentences

Changing the structure of a sentence is a useful technique for paraphrasing. An easy way to do this is to change active sentences to passive or vice versa. Look at the following two sentences:

“Clients expect their accountants to be familiar with the laws regarding taxation.” (active)



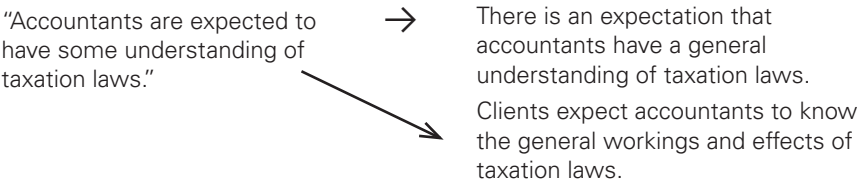
Accountants are expected to be familiar with taxation laws. (passive)

In the first sentence, the ‘clients’ are doing the action of ‘expecting’. In the second sentence, there is no mention of who is doing the action of ‘expecting’ – the sentence is therefore ‘passive’.



4. Expanding and defining words

Some terms can be expanded and defined when paraphrasing. For example:



SUMMARISING

Summarising means reducing the source text to its main points. By summarising the source material, you can avoid overusing direct quotations and paraphrasing large sections of the original text. This forces you to understand the meaning of what you have read and present the material using your own words. Of course, you still need to acknowledge the source of the information, and you should also add your own comments to show your analysis and interpretation of the work.

Suggested steps:

- Skim the text to gain an overall impression of the information.
- Identify the main points presented.
- Highlight or underline main points or cross out the minor details.
- Make notes of the main points taking care not to copy word-for-word.
- Using your notes, write the summary in your own words, starting with the main idea followed by other major points.
- Reread your summary checking that your summary makes sense and that you have captured the important points.
- Remember to include a reference.

Look at the example:

Original Text	Summary
<p><u>Every individual has a personality, a self image and an identity which have been developed in their first language context and these need to be respected and accepted in language learning.</u> The learner cannot be expected to abandon or deny the self in order to embrace the other... <u>The aim of language teaching is not to assimilate the learner into the native speaker community but rather to encourage them to adopt a position in which they are comfortable in dealing with native speakers</u> and are able to achieve personal and communicative goals.</p> <p>(Crozet &amp; Liddicoat, 1997: 18)</p>	<p>Crozet and Liddicoat (1997) emphasise the importance of acknowledging that each student comes to the language class with unique characteristics and individual identities. The language teacher therefore, should focus not on helping students ‘fit in’ to the new society, but rather on building the students’ confidence in communicating effectively with native speakers.</p>

## 5. INTEGRATING QUOTATIONS

A common mistake in using quotations is to simply 'drop' quotes into the text without integrating them into the discussion. When using source materials, you should aim to integrate them into your own argument, making it clear to your reader *how* they add to your discussion. Some techniques to integrate quotations into your writing are provided below.

### INTEGRATING SHORT DIRECT QUOTATIONS

1. Introducing a quotation with a complete sentence and a colon:

*As Kramsch (1993: 46) notes, language learners need to be aware of how a speaker's words relate to the pragmatic context of the speech: 'Context is the matrix created by language as discourse and as a form of social practice.'*

2. Introducing a quotation with an introductory phrase and a comma:

*Language is ambiguous, and as Scollon and Scollon (1995: 16) note, 'If language was unambiguous there would be no need to make inferences about what is meant.'*

3. Introducing a quotation using *that*:

*For successful communication, Scollon and Scollon (1995: 22) argue that 'shared knowledge of context is required'.*

4. Weave the quotation into your own sentence:

*Lakoff and Johnson (1980: 12) introduce the idea that culture is encoded not only in 'the semantic structures of a language', but also in its 'idiomatic expressions'*

**Use quotations as concisely as possible!  
Aim to present *your* ideas as well as those of others.**

### INTEGRATING LONGER DIRECT QUOTATIONS

Some basic guidelines include:

- Try not to drop quotations into the text without providing clear signal phrases to prepare readers for a quotation.
- Do not end a paragraph with a block quotation.
- After you have presented the quotation tie it to your main point or argument.

Look at the example below.

To provide an example illustrating the importance of ‘context of culture’, Anderson (1983: 26) writes:	Single phrase introduction
An American will never meet, or even know the names of more than a handful of his fellow Americans. He has no idea of what they are up to at any time. But he has complete confidence in their steady, anonymous, simultaneous activity.	Block
Based on this example, one can argue that a language learner cannot claim to have native-like control of a language until he/she is able to understand the community’s ‘established shared knowledge’.	Link with your argument

INTEGRATING INDIRECT QUOTATIONS

There are two ways to incorporate indirect quotes in your writing: ‘author-prominent’ and ‘information-prominent’. As the name suggests, author-prominent paraphrasing includes the author’s name as part of the sentence. For example:

- Nery (1999) argues that all children should be taught how to read music at primary school.*
- According to Moloney (2001: 2), bean curd has just as much iron as red meat.*
- The main cause of Howard’s downfall was identified by Fraser (2003).*

In information-prominent paraphrases, the focus is on the information or idea so the author’s name is not part of the sentence; it is added at the end of the sentence in brackets. For example:

- Teaching music to children has numerous benefits (Nery, 1999).*
- Bean curd has just as much iron as red meat (Moloney, 2001: 2).*
- Dishonesty was the main cause of Howard’s downfall (Fraser, 2003).*

USING VERBS TO INCORPORATE QUOTES

In referring to other authors’ work, try to use a variety of ‘announcing verbs’ and choose a verb carefully to capture the attitude of the authors. Writing an introductory phrase such as: *Zielinski (1990) disputes this theory and claims that...* conveys attitude and is much more analytical than a phrase like: *Zielinski (1990) states that...* Here is a short list of verbs that can be used to introduce and integrate quotes:

agree /disagree	allege	argue	assert
believe	claim	comment	consider
contend	contradict	convince	criticise
debate	defend	describe	differ
discuss	dispute	establish	evaluate
examine	hold	illustrate	inform
insist	instruct	investigate	maintain
persuade	propose	propound	refute
remark	report	suggest	uphold

## 6. STRATEGIES FOR AVOIDING PLAGIARISM

There are several effective strategies for avoiding plagiarism. Learn them and incorporate them into your academic work. Below six strategies are explained:

### STRATEGY 1: UNDERSTAND WHY STUDENTS PLAGIARISE AND PLAN AHEAD

Why do students plagiarise? Common student excuses include:

- 'I ran out of time and I got desperate at the last moment.'
- 'I couldn't keep up with the workload in my course.'
- 'I couldn't do it on my own! I didn't know enough.'
- 'I can't express my ideas as well as the authors can.'
- 'My English is not good enough so I used the author's words.'
- 'I didn't know how to reference properly.'

The first important step in avoiding plagiarism is to plan ahead and avoid putting yourself in a panic situation that could result in plagiarised work.

#### **Make sure that you...**

- **understand the requirements of the assessment task and your lecturer's expectations**
- **check the referencing style you are required to use and ask questions early on**
- **manage your time well - take note of all your deadlines and make a realistic timeline**
- **do not expect extensions**
- **plan to complete your work independently but seek assistance early on if you need help with your writing skills. Speak to your lecturer or book an individual tutorial with an academic skills adviser through your student or precinct centre. The ASU also provides free writing workshops.**

### STRATEGY 2: MAINTAIN DETAILED RECORDS OF ALL THE SOURCES YOU USE

One of the most important steps in avoiding plagiarism is developing good note-taking and research habits. When taking notes from readings and research, it is important to ensure that details on the source of the information (i.e. author's name, publication, page numbers) are not lost. Before taking notes from any source, record all the bibliographic information. A useful tool for doing this is EndNote, a bibliographic management software package available free of charge to all University of Melbourne students. For more information check the library website (<http://www.lib.unimelb.edu.au/endnote>).

#### **Details you need for a paper citation:**

- **Author's or editor's or organisation's full names**
- **Title of article, book or chapter (if each chapter has a different author)**
- **Name of the book, journal or periodical**
- **Version or edition**
- **Name of publisher**
- **Year of publication**

- **Place of publication (for books only)**
- **Volume and issue numbers (for journals only)**
- **Page numbers (for articles and chapters only)**

### **Details you need for an electronic citation (web pages):**

It is important to remember that unlike standard published material, electronic publications are easily updated and revised. Therefore, it is important that you note details such as:

- **Name of the author or editor (or organisation)**
- **Title of the page**
- **Title of the site (i.e. Homepage)**
- **Date the site was created**
- **Date the page was last modified or updated (or copyright date)**
- **Date you accessed the material**
- **The full URL address**

### **Details you need for audio and multimedia works:**

For audio and multimedia works, which include audio and video recordings, film and CD-ROMs, record details such as:

- Author/organisation/director (if available)
- Title
- Format (e.g. Video recording, film etc.)
- City of recording
- Date of recording

## **STRATEGY 3: DEVELOP AN ORGANISED NOTE-TAKING SYSTEM**

There are numerous ways of organising notes and you should develop a note-taking system that works for you. The most important thing to remember is that you must distinguish carefully between direct quotes (taken word for word) and your own words. To do this, some students organise their notes by highlighting direct quotes or by using a colour coding system (e.g. blue for direct quotes, red for paraphrased passages, and yellow for their own ideas and thoughts). Other students use symbols to distinguish direct quotations from paraphrases and summaries.

The important thing to remember when taking notes, whether you are quoting directly or paraphrasing, is to keep the author's name near the text in your notes. Look at this example from a student's notes.

Essay topic: ‘Museums are no longer places to learn about history and culture. These days they are more like large department stores’. Discuss.

Source:	My response / comments:
<p>Note full details of the — ➞</p> <p>The page number has been noted and the symbol Q shows that this is a direct quote ↘</p> <p>The symbol P shows that this is a paraphrase – still needs to be referenced ↘</p> <p>The symbol S shows that this is a summary of the information – still needs to be referenced ↘</p> <p>Duncan, Carol (2002) ‘Museums and Department Stores: Close Encounters’ in Jim Collins (ed) <i>High-Pop: Making Culture into Popular Entertainment</i>. Blackwell: Massachusetts, USA.</p>	<p>Good article, very relevant and written by a leader in museum studies. Supports the contention</p> <p>Limitation: Duncan studies only American museums. Are Australian museums different?</p> <p>Shows analysis &amp; critical reading &amp; critical reading</p>
<p>‘Museum stores, once small shops or even single counters selling postcards and a few publications, have grown into superstores...’ (p. 129) Q</p>	<p>This is useful – it supports my argument and challenges the views of Smith (1996) and Jones (2000).</p> <p>Student’s own ‘voice’</p> <p>Compares with other articles</p>
<p>According to Duncan, museum shops have grown from small outlets that sold few products, to large ‘superstores’. (p. 129) P</p>	<p>Is this true in Australia too? Any evidence to support this?</p> <p>Shows critical thinking</p>
<p>Duncan claims that museum shops are now look like huge department stores. S</p>	<p>I don’t need too much detail – just the support of her argument.</p>

### When taking notes, remember to:

- Put quotation marks around everything that comes directly from the text.
- Rewrite the text fully when paraphrasing. Don’t just rearrange sentences or replace a few words.
- Check your rewritten version against the original text to ensure that you have not inadvertently used the same phrases or words.

## STRATEGY 4: ANALYSE AND EVALUATE WHAT YOU READ

As a tertiary student, you are expected to form your own ideas and opinions about different issues, and you are expected to be able to support your arguments with literature and the research of scholars in your field. That is why it is important to add your own comments and responses to your notes from reading as you go along (see example of note-taking above). This will help you to recognise the difference between your own ideas or 'voice', and the ideas of other writers or researchers. Also, in analysing and evaluating the literature, it is sometimes useful to read several articles at the same time so that you can compare and contrast different authors' ideas and arguments.

### Using electronic sources

Electronic sources are usually gathered from an internet site and as these are relatively easy to access, students are increasingly searching internet sites to obtain information. When using electronic sources, it is important to consider the validity of the information. This is because it is much easier for anyone to produce an electronic publication than it is to publish a book or get an article accepted for publication in a journal (most academic journals have referees who judge the research merit of an article before it is accepted for publication).

When you are using an electronic source, you have to be more critical and ask questions to determine the validity of the information.

### Ask questions such as:

- **Who are the authors? (If the work is authorless it should be regarded suspiciously)**
- **What do you know about the authors?**
- **What is the perspective of the author?**
- **How old is the material?**
- **Are the arguments logical and well-supported by reliable evidence?**
- **Is the material referenced fully and/or linked to other information?**

#### Note:

**Hi-tech graphics do *not* necessarily mean that the source is professionally researched & academic.**

## STRATEGY 5: LEARN HOW TO USE SOURCES CORRECTLY AND APPROPRIATELY

As mentioned earlier in this booklet, there are three main ways to use sources in your writing:

- **Quoting** directly from a source and providing a reference
- **Paraphrasing** words or information and providing a reference
- **Summarising** or synthesising information and providing a reference

Do not copy extensively from the original; understand what you have read and write it in your own words. Remember to always acknowledge the source of your information by providing a reference.

## STRATEGY 6: LEARN THE RULES OF REFERENCING

In order to reference correctly and avoid plagiarism, it is important for you to look at the relevant style guides carefully so that you can follow the particular referencing style 'rules' even down to the positioning of commas and full-stops. As different lecturers may prefer different referencing styles, it is essential for you to ask your lecturers which referencing style he/she expects you to use and to be consistent in using that style for the whole assignment.

Many departments now provide students with a referencing style guide so ask your department and/or your lecturer. You can also access numerous referencing style guides online:

### **Harvard referencing style**

<http://www.lib.monash.edu.au/tutorials/citing/harvard.html>

<http://www.dtls.cqu.edu.au/clc/pdfs/referencing.pdf>

<http://www.lib.unimelb.edu.au/recite/citations/harvard/generalNotes.html>

[http://www.waikato.ac.nz/library/learning/g\\_harvard.shtml](http://www.waikato.ac.nz/library/learning/g_harvard.shtml)

### **Numbered styles (Vancouver style)**

<http://www.lib.monash.edu.au/tutorials/citing/vancouver.html>

<http://www.library.uq.edu.au/training/citation/vancouv.pdf>

<http://www.lib.unimelb.edu.au/cite/unistyles.html>

### **Footnote styles**

<http://www.lib.unimelb.edu.au/cite/unistyles.html>

<http://www.wisc.edu/writing/Handbook/DocChicago.html>

[http://www.waikato.ac.nz/library/learning/g\\_mhra.shtml](http://www.waikato.ac.nz/library/learning/g_mhra.shtml)

<http://www.lib.monash.edu.au/tutorials/citing/chicago.html>

### **APA style**

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/2/10/>

<http://www.lib.unimelb.edu.au/recite/citations/apa5/generalNotes.html>

[http://www.waikato.ac.nz/library/learning/g\\_apaguide.shtml](http://www.waikato.ac.nz/library/learning/g_apaguide.shtml)

### **MLA style**

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/2/11/>

<http://www.lib.monash.edu.au/tutorials/citing/mla.html>

[http://www.waikato.ac.nz/library/learning/g\\_mlaguide.shtml](http://www.waikato.ac.nz/library/learning/g_mlaguide.shtml)

### **Citing electronic sources**

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/584/02/>

<http://www.cite.auckland.ac.nz/index.php?p=quickcite>

[http://www.lib.unimelb.edu.au/sg/document/bib\\_introt.html](http://www.lib.unimelb.edu.au/sg/document/bib_introt.html)



## 7. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)

### **Can't I just list all the sources I have used in the bibliography?**

No, you need to give the reference immediately after you mention the idea or information you have obtained from another source. It is best to integrate your acknowledgements into your discussion rather than to just give a reference at the end of the paragraph. One way to do this is by naming the authors or making the quote 'author-strong' – for example:

*Smith (2002) states that...*

*Lee (1999) argues...*

### **Is it still plagiarism if I make an honest mistake and accidentally forget to put in quotation marks or the reference?**

Yes, it is. It is very difficult for an academic to distinguish between intentional and unintentional plagiarism and students have been known to fail assignments for 'forgetting' to add quotation marks and references. The surest way to avoid unintentional or accidental plagiarism is to take extra care by maintaining good practices in research and note-taking, and by proofreading and editing carefully. As the saying goes: 'It's better to be safe than sorry', so be over-diligent in referencing and acknowledging sources of information.

### **Do I still have to write the reference details in the text if I change all the ideas into my own words?**

Yes, you do. You must acknowledge that someone else is the 'owner' of these ideas and you have to signal to the reader that you have obtained these ideas or the information from a particular source. If you have established a strong argument then this should not be a problem as the information from the sources will merely be providing examples for, or supporting, your argument.

### **When paraphrasing, how much of the original text do I have to change to be sure I'm not plagiarising?**

There is no magic number of words that you can add or change to make a passage your own. You have to understand the passage and rewrite it completely in your own words. Also, the passage should be placed in the context of your own work – this usually means that you will have to expand on the original passage.

### **But what if I can't remember where I got the information?**

This really isn't an excuse for plagiarism. The fact is if you use information obtained from another source without providing a reference, then you are not acknowledging that source. This is plagiarism. The best way to avoid this kind of situation is by maintaining good research and note-taking habits, jotting down all reference details as you go. If you have not done this, then you really only have two choices: 1. Try to find the source of the information or a source that says similar things (not always possible if the idea or argument is very unique or 'new') or 2. Don't use the information – using someone else's work without acknowledgment is plagiarism.

**The subject of my paper was completely new to me and I obtained all my information through research. Does this mean that I have to give a reference for every point I make?**

Not if some of your points are 'common knowledge' – that is, facts generally known by people in the field or information that is in the public domain. For example, statements such as: 'Wolfgang Mozart was a child prodigy and grew to become a famous composer' or 'George Washington was the first US President' do not need to be referenced. If you're not sure about whether a specific fact is common knowledge in your field, check a few general reference texts (e.g. encyclopaedia, textbooks) or ask your lecturers.

**Do I have to come up with my own ideas? I'm not an expert! Why can't I just paraphrase different experts' ideas and provide references?**

While you may not be an 'expert' on a particular topic, you do have a unique and individual opinion. Sometimes this opinion is only formed after reading widely on the topic. An important part of the process of academic writing is to come up with your own perspective or argument and then draw on the research and ideas of other 'experts' to support your argument.

**But I come from a country where using someone else's work is a sign of respect. How can I be penalised for plagiarising when I don't really know why plagiarism is a problem here?**

Even if you really don't understand why plagiarism is wrong, you are responsible for your actions and your work so you will be penalised if you submit plagiarised assignments. This means that you have to become familiar with the academic expectations and conventions, and you have to learn how to avoid plagiarism. Reading this booklet is a good first step but you also need to know what is expected by your department and lecturers.

**Do I have to reference sources even if they haven't been published?**

Yes, you do. You have to acknowledge someone else's ideas and any further information that you have obtained from another source (except common knowledge). In other words, you have to give a person credit for his/her ideas – some people call this 'intellectual integrity' while other people call it 'good manners'.

**What if my friend helped me to write the paper?**

Unless you have been instructed to work in groups or to collaborate with classmates, you should never assume that it is OK to get others to help you write a paper. This is known as collusion and is a form of plagiarism. It is probably safer for you to think that it's not OK to work collaboratively until you have asked your lecturer or supervisor.

If you have a friend who has a lot of knowledge (or experience) on your assignment topic, and you discuss the subject with him/her at length, then you have to give proper credit for this information and acknowledge your friend as the source of that information.

### **Are lecturers more 'forgiving' or lenient towards international students when they plagiarise?**

Absolutely not. Basically, it is the responsibility of every student regardless of their background, to learn how and when to cite sources. If you have any questions or are finding it difficult, you should see your lecturer or seek assistance from the Academic Skills Unit (<http://www.services.unimelb.edu.au/asu/>).

### **What do I do when I really want to use information from the internet but there's no mention of the author?**

If the information was written by an organisation or company then they are the author. If there is no mention of an organisation or company then you need to reference as much of the website as you can. If the page has a title or heading at the top, note that and put it in quotation marks (e.g. 'History of Conflict'). Scroll down to the bottom of the page and look for information on when the website was first posted or the date it was last modified. Also, remember to be critical in using websites – it's easy for anyone to write something for the web. You should be especially suspicious of authorless articles.

### **Where can I go to get help with my writing skills?**

The University's Academic Skills Unit runs various free writing workshops and provides individual tutorials for all students. Go to <http://www.services.unimelb.edu.au/asu> to find out how the ASU can assist you.

## 8. REFERENCES AND RESOURCES

### WORKS CITED

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### RESOURCES

#### On study skills

The Academic Skills Unit at The University of Melbourne provides a range of pamphlets on various study skills available on their web site:

[www.services.unimelb.edu.au/asu/](http://www.services.unimelb.edu.au/asu/)

#### On using sources

From Hamilton College: <http://www.hamilton.edu/writing/citations.html>

#### On plagiarism

<http://www.northwestern.edu/uacc/plagiar.html>

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/589/1/>

<http://gervaseprograms.georgetown.edu/honor/system/53377.html>

<http://www.unc.edu/depts/wcweb/handouts/plagiarism.html>



<http://www.services.unimelb.edu.au/asu/>

## Academic Skills Unit

Ph: 8344 0930

[asu-enquiries@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:asu-enquiries@unimelb.edu.au)

[www.services.unimelb.edu.au/asu/](http://www.services.unimelb.edu.au/asu/)

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Published by Academic Enrichment Services

Authorised by The Director,  
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[www.unimelb.edu.au/unisec/privacypolicy.htm](http://www.unimelb.edu.au/unisec/privacypolicy.htm)

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