



Plagiarism and referencing

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Introduction

This tutorial will help you to understand:

- Plagiarism.
- Referencing.
- How to avoid plagiarising.
- How to reference correctly in your assignments.

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What is plagiarism?

“The practice of taking someone else's work or ideas and passing them off as one's own.”
(Oxford Reference, 2022)

Plagiarism includes:

- Claiming any part of another person’s (academic or fellow student) work as your own.
- Copying information word for word without including quotation marks or references.
- Paraphrasing or summarising without referencing the original source.
- Re-submitting a piece of work, or parts of a piece of work, that you have already submitted (without proper acknowledgement).
- Working in a group to produce work, then submitting it as your own.

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Plagiarism quiz

For each scenario below, answer **Yes** or **No** to the question “is this an example of plagiarism?”. The answers are given at the end of the document.

1. Copying and pasting text from a newspaper.
2. Using text paraphrased from an article and referenced.
3. Resubmitting your A-level extended project when you are at university, as the topics are the same.

Finished? [Check your answers](#).

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What is referencing?

Correct referencing is an essential component of academic writing.

Whenever you use another source to inform your work, you must reference that source.

This includes any source of information, including books, webpages, videos and images.

You must reference when you:

Quote

Quoting is when you copy a piece of text word for word, as stated in the original source. This could be anything from a short phrase to a paragraph.

Paraphrase

Paraphrasing is when you use your own words to express someone else's ideas (written or spoken). This does not mean changing the odd word/sentence or rearranging the sentence. Your words must convey the original meaning of the text.

Summarise

Summarising is when you use your own words to express someone else's ideas (written or spoken). This does not mean changing the odd word/sentence or rearranging the sentence. Your words must convey the original meaning of the text.

Common Knowledge

You don't need to reference when you state something that is considered 'common knowledge'. This generally means undisputed facts, for example: London is the capital of England, Queen Victoria died in 1901.

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How do you paraphrase?

The quote to paraphrase:

"Achievement is talent plus preparation. The problem with this view is that the closer psychologists look at the careers of the gifted the smaller the role of innate talent seems to play and the bigger the role preparation seems to play" (Gladwell, 2008, p. 38).

Gladwell, M. (2008) *Outliers: the story of success*. New York: Back Bay Books.

An example of good paraphrasing

As Gladwell (2008, p.38) observes, summarising studies on the highly successful, we tend to overestimate the role of talent and underestimate that of preparation.

This paraphrases the original quote succinctly without copying the sentence structure and the author uses their own writing style.

An example of bad paraphrasing

Success seems to depend on a combination of talent and preparation. However, when psychologists closely examine the gifted careers, they discover that innate talent plays a much smaller role than preparation (Gladwell, 2008, p. 38).

This example follows the sentence structure of the original too closely, as well as using language that it is too similar or the same as the original.

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Why reference?

- To display how widely you have read and researched.
- To back up your ideas and arguments with evidence.
- To acknowledge the work of others (which is important in avoiding plagiarism).
- To distinguish between your ideas and arguments and those of others.
- To enable your tutor to locate the items you have used.

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How do you reference?

Exactly how you reference depends on the referencing style.

In this tutorial we will refer to Harvard referencing but there are many different referencing styles in use. Usually at school or university your tutor will let you know which style they want you to use.

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Harvard referencing

Referencing in the Harvard style is a two-part process:

1. Citation in the text

This is the brief indication of the source within the text of your work immediately following the use of the source whether quoted, paraphrased or summarised. Citations which are used with direct quotations, or are referring to a particular part of a source, should include the page number.

See an example for a short quotation:

There is still a labelling issue when it comes to flavourings in food, it is noted that, "flavours such as vanillin which occur naturally in food are called 'nature-identical'. The label does not have to state where it comes from." (Wilson, 2009, p. 257).

2. Reference list

This is a complete list of all the items you have used in your work, with full details about each item. The list should be alphabetical by author/editor/organisation. The list will allow to follow up the references and find the original sources.

See an example of an entry in a Reference List:

Bryman, A. (2016) *Social research methods*. 5th edn. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Harvard Referencing Guide

You reference differently according to the type of source you are using. It is important that your references are consistent.

To make referencing quicker and easier, make sure you note down the details of any item you're using when you make notes.

The [Harvard style guide](#) shows you how to reference different sources.

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Plagiarism quiz answers

1. **Yes, this is plagiarism.** If you copy and paste you aren't putting your evidence into your own words or forming your own ideas.
2. **No, this is not plagiarism.** The text is not plagiarised as it has been put into the writer's own words (paraphrased) and the source has been correctly attributed (referenced).
3. **Yes, this is plagiarism.** If you re-submit previously submitted work you are not forming new ideas or learning from new evidence.

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Summary

You have reached the end of this resource. This information has been adapted from the [Plagiarism and referencing tutorial](#).

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Full URLs

'Plagiarism' (2022) in *Oxford Reference*. Available at:
<https://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/oi/authority.20110803100329803>
(Accessed: 15 November 2022).

Harvard style guide: <https://librarydevelopment.group.shef.ac.uk/preentry/harvard.html>

Plagiarism and referencing tutorial:
https://librarydevelopment.group.shef.ac.uk/preentry/plagiarism-referencing/story_html5.html

Pre-entry tutorials: <https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/library/study/pre-entry>

Library FAQs: <https://libraryhelp.shef.ac.uk/>

University Library's referencing page: <https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/library/study/research-skills/referencing>

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