

## Plagiarism

Academic writing involves referring to the work of other people. Therefore, it is really important to know how to correctly acknowledge sources. There are two parts to referencing; in text and the list of references at the end.

### How plagiarism occurs

In written assignments, plagiarism occurs if the sources of information are not acknowledged when:

- using sentences or paragraphs word for word (quoting)
- presenting someone else's structure, graphs or images )
- using someone else's ideas in different words (paraphrasing)
- giving a short account of someone else's ideas (summarising)

#### Example of plagiarism—misuse of sources

If the following sentence appeared in an essay:

... to be a successful tertiary student you need to be an independent learner.

The reader would assume that these ideas, words and thoughts were the writer's own ideas.

**However, these words have been directly copied from a text book.**

*Why is this plagiarism?*

- a) It appears in the writer's essay without quotation marks
- b) There is no reference to the original author

### There are two main ways to avoid plagiarism

#### Paraphrasing (with sources acknowledged)

Paraphrasing is rewriting other people's ideas in different words and referencing them. This is better than quoting because too many quotations will lead to a poorly written assignment.

#### Direct quotes (with sources acknowledged)

To use an author's exact words, quote (cite) the author by using quotation marks and referencing the quotation. This would be either in the text or in a footnote at the bottom of the page\*.

**Check with your course guide or teachers for the appropriate style for your assignments.**

\*See **Quick Tips: Referencing—in text** and **Referencing—footnotes** for further assistance.