PARAPHRASING & QUOTING

WHY DO WE INTEGRATE EVIDENCE?

Most academic writing requires students to use evidence. We integrate evidence into our assignments for a variety of reasons:

- To **support** a claim or premise
- To **acknowledge** a counterpoint or argument
- To **evaluate** the arguments of others
- To **justify** an interpretation or decision
- To **explain** or **define** a process, method, or experience

When you are writing assignments and working with other people's texts and wish to incorporate their ideas or words into your written work, you can do so by **paraphrasing** or **quoting**. When we do so, it is important to consider how the language we use demonstrates the relationship between the evidence we are using and our purpose. These methods, combined with the correct use of a referencing system, will help you maintain academic integrity and demonstrate your understanding of the material.

SEE THE GUIDE ON USING THE RIGHT LANGUAGE →

WHEN SHOULD I PARAPHRASE AND WHEN SHOULD I QUOTE?

When you have found some information or ideas which you wish to include in your written work, ask yourself the following questions:

QUESTION	QUOTE	PARAPHRASE	SUMMARISE	IGNORE
Is it interesting but not quite on my topic?				✓
Is it important information which will be further discussed?	✓	✓		
Can I express the idea in my own words without it losing impact and meaning?		✓		
Is it a famous quote?	✓			
Is it a key statement by a key author in my field?	✓			
Does it define a key term?	✓			
Is it to provide an overview of a work?			✓	

Note: The number of quotes considered acceptable in your work varies according to the discipline for which you are writing. Generally, more quotes are used in the humanities than in the sciences. It may be helpful to look at published work in your field as a guide. You should also check with your lecturers as to their views on this.

NEED TO PROVIDE AN OVERVIEW OF THE WHOLE WORK? SEE THE GUIDE FOR WRITING A SUMMARY →

PARAPHRASING

Paraphrasing involves using someone else's ideas but expressing them in your own words. It is important to remember that, when paraphrasing, the focus should be on expressing the idea in your own way to support the point you are making, **not** on simply substituting enough words with synonyms to avoid plagiarism. A reference to the original author is also required, using a standardised referencing system.

Good paraphrasing demonstrates **your understanding** of the concept or idea. It also allows you to communicate the idea in your own style and voice and more clearly connects evidence to your argument.

TIPS FOR PARAPHRASING

- Ensure you understand the original! Until you fully understand the idea that you are interested in using, do not attempt to incorporate it into your work. If you have a clear understanding of the idea or information, then you should be better able to express it using your own words and writing style.
- Concentrate on the overall meaning of the original paragraph or section rather than the individual words and sentences.
- Consider why it is important to your own writing. What do you want your reader to understand about the idea?
- Put the original aside and write down the idea as a first step without worrying about perfect grammar. Try dot points or short phrases that capture the key idea and then work on improving your expression afterwards.
- Try telling someone else the idea or saying it out loud to yourself. If you can verbalise the idea, you can write it in your own words.
- Return to the original. Have you captured the original author's intended meaning? Revise to ensure it both captures the idea and is expressed in your own words.
- Consider synonym use carefully. Not all words retain the same meaning in all contexts. Incorrect synonym use can be an easy way to identify poor paraphrasing.
- Similarly, not all words should be replaced with synonyms. It is important to retain certain language, such as discipline specific terminology or names. If the structure of the sentence and other language has changed sufficiently to reflect your own voice, you can retain key words.
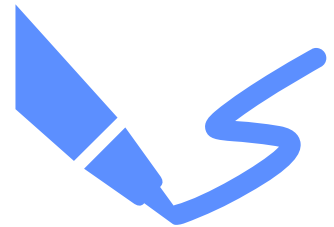
Always provide a citation in the appropriate referencing style!

WHAT IS CONSIDERED TO BE ACCEPTABLE PARAPHRASING?

Below is an example of A) an original extract from a paper, B) an acceptable paraphrase, and C) an attempt at paraphrasing which would be considered plagiarism, as it is too similar in wording and structure to the original, and easily recognisable.

EXAMPLES:

A) An original extract

'International students, or more particularly Asian students, have a willingness to make connections with Australian society but often express disappointment that this is hard to achieve because of a combination of lack of proficiency in colloquial English as well as unfamiliarity with the norms and conventions of Australian life. In contradiction to the image of a friendly and "laid back" country, Australians can appear ambivalent, distant and disinterested in international students and foreigners in general. This is attributed to "busy lifestyles".' (Kell & Vogl 2006, p. 8)

B) An acceptable paraphrase of the above

According to Kell and Vogl (2006, p. 8), although many Asian students would like to engage more with Australian society, their lack of familiarity with Australian cultural norms and their difficulty in understanding Australian colloquial language are barriers. In addition, while Australians have a reputation as being relaxed and friendly, they often have busy lives, and can appear to lack interest in interacting with foreigners.

Note *that the focus is on the point being made, not on the wording, although much of this has been changed.*

C) A plagiarised version

'International students, or more **specifically** Asian students, **are willing to connect** with Australian society but often express disappointment that this is **difficult** to achieve because of a lack of **skills** in colloquial English as well as unfamiliarity with Australian life. In **contrast** to the image of a friendly and "laid back" country, Australians can **seem** ambivalent, distant and disinterested in international students and foreigners. This is **blamed on** "busy lifestyles".' (Kell and Vogl 2006, p. 8).

FOR MORE ABOUT PLAGIARISM, SEE THE GUIDE ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

QUOTING

Quoting involves using someone else's words **exactly as they appear** in their work and is clearly identified by the use of quotation marks and a citation. Quotes can add an authoritative voice to support your statements. However, if you include too many quotes, they lose their impact and it is difficult to identify what is most important. If the reason for including a quote is not made clear and if it is not linked to your discussion, your grade may suffer. They can also obscure your own voice and style, so consider their use carefully.

FORMATTING QUOTES

Quotes need to be relevant to the point you are making. See below for examples of how to introduce short and long quotes. All quotes need to be introduced to the reader by providing the author's name and a reporting verb.

SHORT QUOTES (of less than approximately 30 words or 3 lines)

Short quotes can be integrated into your sentences. Quotation marks must be placed accurately to indicate exactly where a quote begins and ends. Referencing details must be included, either in brackets or by using a numbered note system, according to the referencing style you are using (see the SLSS referencing guides).

As Eveline says, 'the merit of a university employee, student or written product is viewed as being assessed on objective, rational criteria' (2004, p. 102).

Source: Eveline, J 2004, *Ivory basement leadership*, University of Western Australia Press, Perth.

LONG QUOTES (of more than about 30 words or 3 lines**)**
Long quotes are separated from the rest of the text by an extra line space. The left side (and often the right side also) is indented. Quotation marks are not required because the spacing indicates that it is a quote. Often the font size is reduced to further demarcate it (refer to the relevant referencing style guide). Long quotes are introduced with your own words and a colon (:).

As Keuskamp and Sliuzas (2007, p. A-97) point out:

> Students need to have a solid understanding of academic literacy and how arguments are constructed. Unless students understand these concepts, there is the likelihood that in attempting to paraphrase other people's work, they will rely heavily on the words and sentences of the original authors, rather than focussing on paraphrasing and discussing their ideas.

Source: Keuskamp, D & Sliuzas, R 2007, 'Plagiarism prevention or detection? The contribution of text-matching software to education about academic integrity', *Journal of Academic Language and Learning*, vol. 1, no. 1, pp. A91-A97, viewed 2 July 2019, http://www.aall.org.au/journal/ojs/index.php/jall/index.

COMMON FORMATTING QUESTIONS

ERRORS: It is important that when quoting, the section of text that is copied is **exactly** as it appears in the original. If there has been an error (e.g. a typing error) in the original, you must reproduce it exactly as it appears in the original. You can, however, indicate that the error is not yours by adding [sic] immediately after the error, and then you will not be held responsible for it.

'It is there [sic] opinion that…'

SINGLE OR DOUBLE? Single quotation marks are most commonly used to identify quotes, and double quotation marks indicate a quote or an important term within a quote. However, if you are following the APA 7 style guide, you should use double quotation marks to identify quotes, with single quotation marks to mark a quote within a quote.

Eveline (2004, p. 174) pointed out that 'people who spoke out about a problem that nobody else was noticing were liable to be labelled as "the problem" if their work colleagues and supervisors were not sensitive to the issues. Gender was a classic example of this'.
Source: Eveline, J 2004, Ivory basement leadership, University of Western Australia Press, Perth.

CHANGE TO THE ORIGINAL: *You do not have to use a whole sentence or paragraph from the original work. Select the section of relevance to your work and manipulate it, if necessary, using the following methods:*
- Ellipsis (…) indicates that part of the quote has been omitted.
- Square brackets ([ ]) indicate that you have added something to make the quote make more sense to the reader.

Johnson (as cited in Hendricks & Quinn, 2000, p. 49) claims that 'the purpose of a case study is to describe the case in its context… [including] aspects of the environment that pertain to that case and shed light on the research question'.
Source: Hendricks, M & Quinn, L 2000, 'Teaching referencing as an introduction to epistemological empowerment', Teaching in Higher Education, vol. 5, no. 4, pp. 49-55.