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How to Avoid Plagiarism

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Introduction

- AAA subscribes to the values of academic honesty and integrity.
- What does this mean for assignment writing?
- You have probably relied heavily on books and other sources of information to gather ideas for your assignments, however THESE ARE NOT YOUR IDEAS.
- If you use the actual words or ideas from another source in your assignment or essay without acknowledging these, you are guilty of plagiarism.
- **All theory assignments must be subjected to Turnitin. Only scores of 30% or less will be accepted. If the Turnitin score is above 30% the student will be asked to re-do the assignment (as a first offender) or receive 0%. The student will be warned and continued plagiarism will result in suspension of the student.**

What is Plagiarism

- Plagiarism is STEALING the words or ideas of another writer.
- Plagiarism is a criminal offence like cheating in an examination or stealing.
- If evidence of plagiarism is found the matter will be dealt with very strictly, which may include disciplinary action and, in the extreme, expulsion.

Guidelines to Avoid Plagiarism

Understand the context

- Do not copy–paste the text verbatim from the reference paper. Instead, restate the idea in your own words.
- Understand the idea(s) of the reference source well in order to paraphrase correctly.

Guidelines to Avoid Plagiarism

Quote

Use quotes to indicate that the text has been taken from another paper. The quotes should be exactly the way they appear in the paper you take them from.

Identify what does and does not need to be cited

- Any words or ideas that are not your own but taken from another paper need to be cited.
- Cite Your Own Material—If you are using content from your previous paper, you must cite yourself. Using material you have published before without citation is called self-plagiarism.
- The scientific evidence you gathered after performing your tests should not be cited.
- Facts or common knowledge need not be cited. If unsure, include a reference.

Guidelines to Avoid Plagiarism

Manage your citations

- Maintain records of the sources you refer to.
- Use multiple references for the background information/literature survey. For example, rather than referencing a review, the individual papers should be referred to and cited.

Guidelines to Avoid Plagiarism

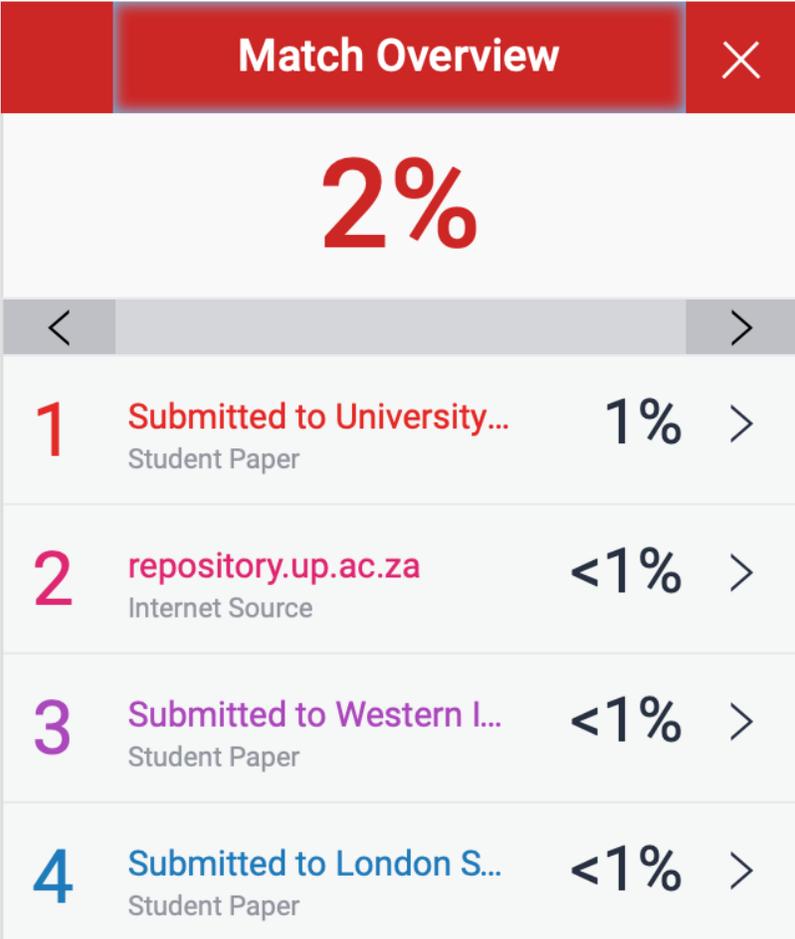
Use plagiarism checkers

- You can use various plagiarism detection tools such as Grammarly (<https://www.grammarly.com>) to see how much of your paper is plagiarised.
- Tip: While it is perfectly fine to survey previously published work, it is not alright to paraphrase the same with extensive similarity. Most of the plagiarism occurs in the literature review section of any document (manuscript, thesis, etc.). Therefore, if you read the original work carefully, try to understand the context, take good notes, and then express it to your target audience in your own language (without forgetting to cite the original source), then you will never be accused with plagiarism (at least for the literature review section).
- Caution: The above statement is valid only for the literature review section of your document. You should NEVER EVER use someone else's original results and pass them off as yours!

Guidelines to Avoid Plagiarism

Turnitin

- At AAA, your lecturers will use Turnitin to check for any plagiarism. Example below. Turnitin allows your lecturer to see where the content originated from



The screenshot shows a 'Match Overview' window with a red header and a close button. The overall match percentage is 2%. Below this, there are four sources listed in a table, each with a rank number, the source name, the match percentage, and a right arrow.

Rank	Source	Match Percentage	Action
1	Submitted to University... Student Paper	1%	>
2	repository.up.ac.za Internet Source	<1%	>
3	Submitted to Western I... Student Paper	<1%	>
4	Submitted to London S... Student Paper	<1%	>

More than Just Words

Many, if not most, people presume that plagiarism refers to copying others' words without giving that person credit. They would be correct; however, plagiarism is more than that. It also involves copying another's "ideas" and data. Ideas, just as words or data, are "owned" by the person who created them. Taking one's ideas as your own without proper credit is just as serious as copying his or her words without credit. Plagiarism is a serious professional infraction.

Quoting vs. Paraphrasing

In a research paper, references are used throughout to support findings. To help the author, journals provide guidelines for in-text citations and references (e.g., articles, books, essays) based on the recommended style guide. It is also important to determine whether to quote a reference directly or paraphrase it. What's the difference? Again, don't be pulled into the trap of believing that paraphrasing won't be considered plagiarism. You must be very careful here.

Quoting

Quoting is reproducing someone else's words. Although it is often necessary, quotes should be used sparingly. When necessary, quotes are used to clarify, define something in the text, or support a claim.

Example:

The elephant is the largest mammal in the world and can weigh nearly eight tons. It has a “massive body, large ears and a long trunk, which has many uses ranging from using it as a hand to pick up objects, as a horn to trumpet warnings, an arm raised in greeting to a hose for drinking water or bathing.”

(Source: <https://www.worldwildlife.org/species/elephant>)

This quote (note the quotation marks) gives a good verbal description of what an elephant looks like. We don't need to add anything to it and it would be difficult to paraphrase and retain the visual. We have given credit to the source in the parentheses.

Direct Quotations

- **Author's name not part of sentence:** When an author is acknowledged, but does not form part of the sentence, his/her surname will appear inside the brackets with the year and page number(s). Note that the full stop will be after the in-text referencing.
- **Author's name as part of sentence:** When an author is acknowledged as part of the sentence, his/her surname will appear outside the brackets, whereas the year and page number(s) will appear inside the brackets.

Paraphrasing

Paraphrasing is using your own words to express what someone else has written. As with quotes, paraphrasing must also be cited. Remember to give credit even when paraphrasing. When paraphrasing, ensure that the reference is provided and the main idea/concept is not altered.

Example:

The elephant is the largest mammal in the world and can weigh nearly eight tons. Its large floppy ears help to cool its body and protect it from insects. Its proboscis that runs from its head to the ground and is used as a tool and for drinking and bathing. (Source: <https://www.worldwildlife.org/species/elephant>)

Here, the information has been paraphrased, but the quoted version is a better definition. As mentioned, quotations can be quite useful for defining and clarifying an idea, but must be used only when necessary. Paraphrasing is quite useful but it can be difficult to do. Some good guidelines for paraphrasing are as follows:

- Ensure that you are completely aware of the message behind the quote.
- Compose your paraphrase without referring to the quote.
- Compare your paraphrase with the quote to ensure that the meanings are the same.
- This takes some time but it will help avoid any accusations of plagiarism.

Examples of Paraphrasing

Paraphrasing involves taking a passage - either spoken or written – and rewording it. Writers often paraphrase to deliver information in a more concise way. When paraphrasing, it is important to keep the original meaning so that the facts remain intact. Basically, you are writing something in your own words that still expresses the original idea. Paraphrasing is common when writing a research paper. It allows you to explain important ideas in your own writing style and focus in on the information that is most useful in making your point. Even when you put someone else's ideas into your own words, you must cite the source of your information. This gives credit to the original author for their ideas. Paraphrasing is slightly different than summarising. When you summarise a passage, you focus on restating only the main idea in your own words. Paraphrasing, on the other hand, aims to provide most of the information in a slightly condensed form (or a slightly longer form). Summaries are much shorter than the original passage, while paraphrasing can be slightly shorter (or longer).

Paraphrasing Sentences

Sometimes you only need to paraphrase the information from one sentence. Here are some examples of paraphrasing individual sentences:

- **Original:** Her life spanned years of incredible change for women as they gained more rights than ever before.

Paraphrase: She lived through the exciting era of women's liberation.

- **Original:** Giraffes like Acacia leaves and hay, and they can consume 75 pounds of food a day.

Paraphrase: A giraffe can eat up to 75 pounds of Acacia leaves and hay daily.

- **Original:** Any trip to Italy should include a visit to Tuscany to sample the region's exquisite wines.

Paraphrase: Be sure to make time for a Tuscan wine-tasting experience when visiting Italy.

- **Original:** Symptoms of influenza include fever and nasal congestion.

Paraphrase: A stuffy nose and elevated temperature are signs you may have the flu.

- **Original:** The price of a resort vacation typically includes meals, tips and equipment rentals, which makes your trip more cost-effective.

Paraphrase: All-inclusive resort vacations can make for an economical trip.

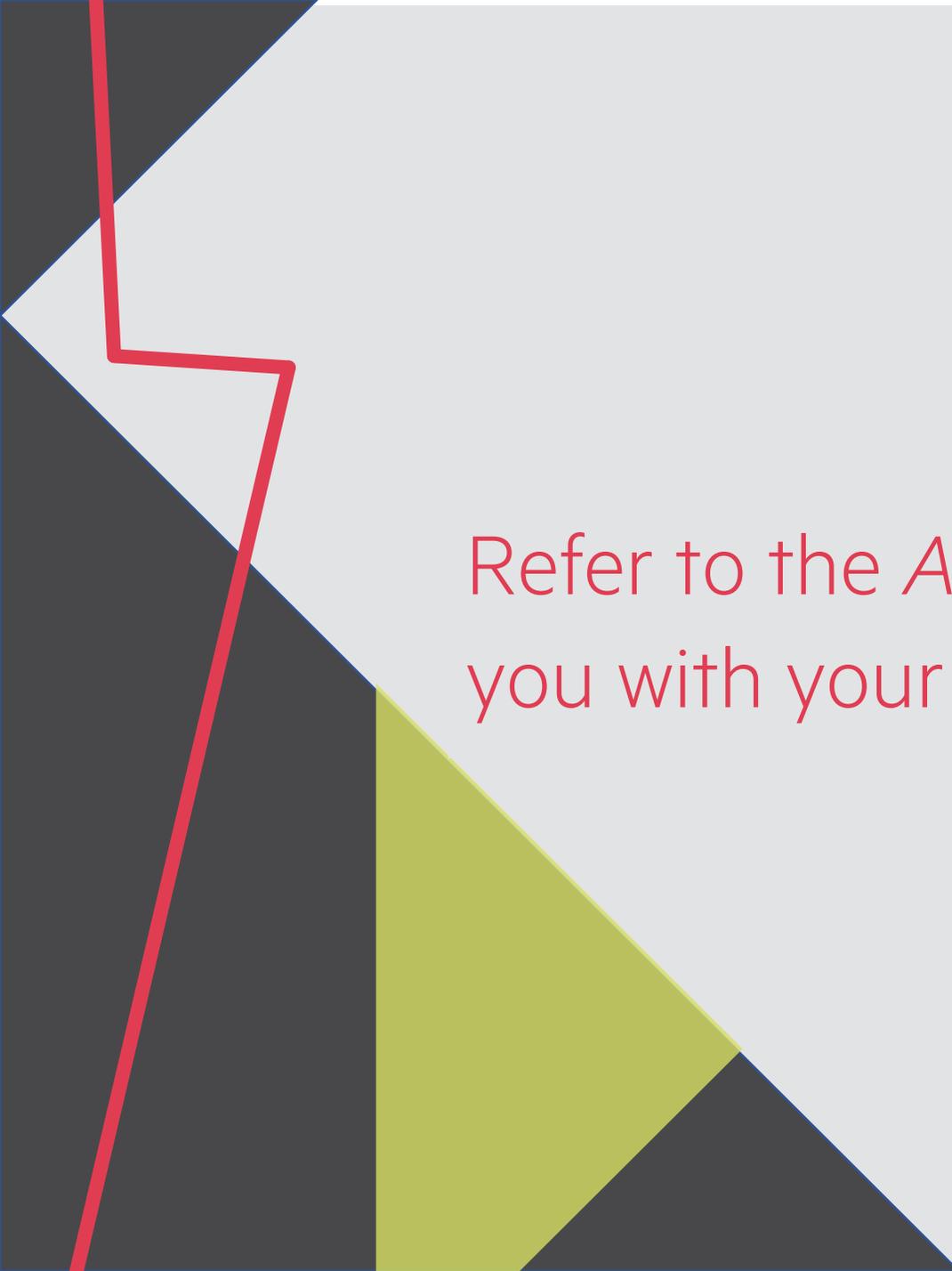
- **Original:** He has tons of stuff to throw away.

Paraphrase: He needs to get rid of a lot of junk.



Patchwriting

Patchwriting refers to text that is too similar in format and wording to the original quote. This can be a sign of not fully understanding the message. Be mindful of this. It is not acceptable to simply use synonyms to replace original words. It is easy to simply copy text off the Internet for just about anything we want to discuss. We copy and paste it into a blank virtual piece of paper. We cut out superfluous information and add our own words. This is patchwriting, and it is still plagiarism.

A decorative graphic in the bottom-left corner of the slide. It features a dark grey triangle pointing downwards, a light green triangle pointing upwards, and a red line that zig-zags across the top and left edges of these shapes.

Refer to the *AAA Referencing Guide* to assist you with your referencing list/Bibliography

THANK YOU

