

Plagiarism – Made Simple

What is plagiarism?

Simply put, plagiarism is **intellectual property theft**. In other words, it is the act of using someone else's work without acknowledging them as a source. This includes:

- Claiming that a piece of work partly or wholly written by someone else is yours.
- Using the words of someone else – for example, directly quoting from a publication – without referencing them.
- **Paraphrasing** without referencing.
- Referencing sources that you have not used.
- Reusing work you have previously written, submitted or published. This is known as **self-plagiarism**.

Other than being academically unacceptable, plagiarism could be considered to be morally wrong, as it means that you are claiming to have done work actually done by someone else.



How can I avoid plagiarising?

Easy – use **referencing**! Referencing is the way in which you can acknowledge where you got your information from, giving credit to the author(s) involved. A lot of people find this daunting at first, but **don't worry** – there are plenty of guides on correct referencing that will help you.

Try not to copy-and-paste information from the internet. Not only could you accidentally plagiarise within your work, but the information could be inaccurate. Instead, read through everything, make notes, and jot down the details you would need to create a reference later.

In your notes, detail the information needed to reference your sources, and highlight it so that you will be able to find it easily.

Manage your time well. Allowing time for checking your work means that you will be able to make sure that your references are present and correct.

Remember that some things are **common knowledge**; for example, Elizabeth II is the Queen of England. You **do not** generally need to reference information such as this.