



Avoiding Plagiarism

Study Development Factsheet

Plagiarism is a form of theft and deception. As a student, you are expected to adhere to values of honesty, integrity and fairness. To do this you should acknowledge and build on the ideas of other scholars, making it clear where their ideas end and yours begin. There are two main ways of doing this: quoting and paraphrasing. Both forms require a reference to the original source in the style required for your course (see 'referencing guides' on the library website).

Quoting

Direct quotations are sections of text copied word for word from the original source. They should be kept short (fewer than two lines) and used only when the wording is remarkable in some way, or when you are examining the wording or discussing the phrasing. Quotations should begin and end with quotation marks, clearly separating the author's words from yours, and you should also include page numbers. If you need to include a longer quotation (more than two lines), it should be indented, and without quotation marks.

Short quotation example: Rogers (1961, p. 237) famously defined empathy as "sens[ing] the client's private world as if it were your own, but without ever losing the 'as if' quality".

Paraphrasing

Paraphrasing means summarising someone else's ideas in your own words. This allows your marker to see that you have really understood the idea you are discussing, and is therefore generally preferable to quoting. A good paraphrase captures the idea faithfully, but uses completely different sentence structures and words (except for essential keywords and technical terms). Just replacing a few words with synonyms is not enough, and can still count as plagiarism.

Inadequate paraphrase: Rogers (1961) defined empathy as being able to sense the client's private world to the extent that it could be your own.

Adequate paraphrase: Some definitions of empathy, such as that of Rogers (1961), revolve around the idea that it means being able to fully experience the client's lived experience whilst retaining enough distance to keep it separate from your own.

3 steps for effective paraphrasing:

1. Read the passage until you understand it fully.
2. In other words, what does it mean? (The answer to this is your paraphrase!) Alternatively, make a note of key ideas and then reconstruct as a new phrase.
3. Re-read the original to check that you have not changed the meaning too much.

It is important that you complete the [Academic Integrity module](#) to avoid 'unintentional plagiarism'.

What does 'referencing' mean?

Referencing means providing your reader with the information that will allow them to track down the sources you have used in your work, and evaluate the strength of your evidence. For any quotes or paraphrasing in your assignment, you will typically need to provide the following information:

1. In-text references

The in-text reference is that which appears in the body of your essay, accompanying direct quotes, or paraphrasing of the ideas of others. There are two ways of making an in-text reference: integrated, and non-integrated. You can use either, or both, depending on how you write.

Integrated in-text referencing

This is when the name of the author forms part of the grammar of your sentence. For example:

- According to Xu (2015), there are three main reasons for the emergence of this ideology.
- Xu (2015, p.21) cites 'serendipity' as the main reason for the emergence of this ideology.

Non-integrated in-text referencing

This when the name of the author is not part of the grammar of your sentence, but is included within parenthesis before the full stop. For example:

- There are three main reasons for the emergence of this school of thought (Xu, 2015).
- 'Serendipity' is seen as the main reason for the emergence of this ideology (Xu, 2015, p.21).

2. Reference list

The reference list is appended to the end of your essay and lists all the books, articles and sources you used in your essay. This list is organised in alphabetical order of authors' surnames, so that your reader can easily find the full information for the name listed in your in-text reference. Entries in the reference list also include the date of publication, full title, and other details depending on the type of source.

Important! There is more than one 'style' of referencing used at York St John. All require a reference list, but the formatting, and in-text referencing, varies considerably. Check which style your course uses and consult the guidelines by following the 'Referencing' link on the Library homepage.

What you need to reference:

- Other people's words and ideas; statistics or evidence gathered by others; information found on reputable websites.

What you do not need to reference:

- Your own ideas and conclusions; your own reflections and observations; commonly known facts.

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