

What is plagiarism?

Good academic writing is based on developing original ideas, and the appropriate use of ideas and theories of others. **Plagiarism** is using other people's words and ideas in your assessment task (e.g. essay) without proper citation. Proper citation means that any ideas or passages used from another source are identified through the use of an in-text reference/footnote and included in a complete list of references. The [complete definitions of plagiarism and related academic honesty](#) used at University of Sydney.

It is unacceptable to submit a research essay without appropriate citations and a reference list.

Patchwriting is the practice when you put together borrowed and only slightly modified sentences to form text which resembles authentic writing. This is academically dishonest and a common reason why students new to an academic writing often unintentionally plagiarise. You may end up patchwriting because you cannot think of a better way of phrasing a thought than the one you have already read. Correct paraphrasing is the way to avoid this problem.

 When you are unsure if what you are planning to do amounts to plagiarism, talk to your Unit of study co-ordinator or tutor before submitting your work.



More Resources

If you wish to learn more about plagiarism, you can start by visiting the following websites:

- Online Writing Lab (OWL) - [Plagiarism](#)
- Princeton Writing Program - [Plagiarism and writing](#)
- University of Toronto Writing Support - [How Not to Plagiarize](#)
- Indiana University - [How to Recognize Plagiarism](#) (Exercises)
- University of Sydney Academic Board - [Academic Honesty in Coursework](#)

 Examples of plagiarism include:

- copying (e.g. by cutting & pasting) from another assessment task, book, journal or internet source in its entirety
- copying from a source and making only minor changes
- using an author's phrases, expressions or graphs without acknowledgement
- using an assessment task from a student in the previous year and making minor changes, e.g. changing the order of the paragraphs, and handing the work in as your own
- handing in an assessment task written for a different assessment or purpose
- borrowing sentences from different sources and connecting them to form a paragraph without clear citation or attribution (patchwriting)
- borrowing a sentence from a book or other source and substituting one or two words with a synonym (patchwriting)

