ACADEMIC INTEGRITY & PLAGIARISM

Academic integrity refers to the practice of honesty around using and reporting academic research, texts and ideas and the research process in general.

When a person uses another person’s words (direct quotations) or ideas and does not give them credit for those ideas in their assignment it is known as “Plagiarism” and this goes against the principles of academic integrity – whether intentional (on purpose) or unintentional, it is still considered a breach or breaking of academic integrity.

What is wrong with plagiarism?

There are many reasons why plagiarism should be avoided:

- Plagiarism is really stealing someone else’s words or ideas and pretending that they are your own.

- It is illegal to copy someone else’s words or ideas and not give them the credit.

- At AUT, if a student plagiarises work in an assessment they may be subject to academic disciplinary procedures as described in the AUT Calendar under “Policy Statements” (AUT, 2013).

- It is disrespectful to other students studying with you. Plagiarism is like when you cheat on an exam. You give yourself an unfair advantage over others who have worked hard to avoid plagiarism.

- It is possible that you could fail your assignment for plagiarising, or even worse, you could be asked to leave the programme you are studying.

- If you do not reference other people’s words or ideas, and someone is really interested in your ideas and wants to follow up your sources, they do not have any idea of where to find your sources if you do not reference them.

- If you do not reference your sources, you are not showing how you are part of the academic community made up of many years of thinkers and writers.
How to avoid plagiarism:

- Manage your time carefully. You need to allow yourself enough time to read your material, write useful notes and complete your assignment.

- Be an effective reader. You will not have enough time to read all the material available so you will need to choose what you want to read. Allow yourself enough time to read the material at least twice so you have a good understanding of what the author is saying before you start making notes.

- As you take notes, collect all the details you will need for referencing the information in the body of your assignment and in the reference list at the end i.e.: author, date of publication, name of book/journal (Vol. & No.), page range of journal articles or chapter, publisher, place of publication, page number where information is taken from.

- Think carefully about the notes you take. After reading an article, you need to summarise the information in YOUR OWN WORDS.

- Keep similar ideas together. When you are reading you may find that several authors have a similar idea. In your notes write down the idea (in your own words) and the authors who think this.

- When you write down the exact words of the author, this is a quote. In your notes you will need to include the page that this quote came from.
Hints to identify plagiarism in your writing

Pretend that you have seen the following opening in Brooksbank’s book *Battle for the market*. You think this is what your lecturer wants to see in your essay.


Smart marketers know that to be successful, their company’s products and services must be well “positioned” in the marketplace ... positioning strategy provides the key to market success.

However, research has also shown that not all managers fully understand either the concept of the process of positioning strategy development. Recent research I conducted suggests that up to 50% of marketing executives in medium-sized companies in the UK fall into this category.

You have read the information and taken notes. Look at what you have written below and decide if you think your lecturer would be pleased.

How a company positions itself in the marketplace can determine the success or failure of the company. However research has shown that not all managers understand the concept or the process of positioning strategy development.  

The first sentence in the above text is fine. It is a summary of what the paragraph will be about. The second sentence, however, is clearly plagiarism. The sentence has been written word for word, except for the word ‘also’. There is no acknowledgment that these words/this idea came from someone else.
Positioning strategy provides the key to market success. Smart marketers know that to be successful, their company's products and services must be well “positioned” in the marketplace.

The above text is also plagiarism. The writer has reversed the two sentences in the opening paragraph, but this is still considered plagiarism.

How a company positions itself in the marketplace can determine the success or failure of the company. Surprisingly, research shows that up to 50% of managers in some UK companies do not understand the importance of effective marketing.

In the text above the writer has paraphrased the ‘idea’ from Brooksbank’s article. However, this is still considered plagiarism as the ideas have not come from the writer and Brooksbank has not been referenced.

**Changing the occasional word for another with a similar meaning is not “writing in your own words.”**

So what does good referencing look like? Have a look at the two texts below. Both have been referenced properly. The first text is an example of paraphrasing and the second is an example of a direct quote.

How a company positions itself in the marketplace can determine the success or failure of the company. Surprisingly, research by Brooksbank (1996) shows that up to 50% of managers in some UK companies do not understand the importance of effective marketing.

How a company positions itself in the marketplace can determine the success or failure of the company. Surprisingly, as Brooksbank (1996, p.48) states, ‘recent research ... suggests that up to 50% of marketing executive in medium sized companies in the UK fall into this category’.
There is nothing wrong with using other people’s words or ideas in your work. In fact, you are encouraged to read what others before you have said and done, this is part of the learning process. However, you must acknowledge these people in your writing. You acknowledge people through referencing, both in the body or your paper and in your reference list at the end of your paper.

**However you must take care to ensure that most of the essay is in your own words - only use a few quotes!**

**TOP TIPS**

Cite every piece of information that is not a) the result of your own research, or b) common knowledge. This includes opinions, arguments, and speculations as well as facts, details, figures, and statistics.

Plan your writing assignments and avoid procrastination.

Take good notes and/or print out/photocopy all source information.

Begin constructing your bibliography or reference list early.

Cite internet sources too.