

A Systematic Guide To Researching, Preparing The Research Report, And Avoid Plagiarizing

Selecting Appropriate Sources For the Research Paper

- 1) Read the assignment tasks more than once.
- 2) Think about what you are asked to do.
- 3) Ask yourself if you are clear on the instructions. If you are uncertain, get help. Ask your tutor, peer or academic support personnel if your interpretation of the task is correct.
- 4) The 1) command verb; 2) key terms, 3) key topics and 4) key issues in the assignment must be identified before you begin.
- 5) Look through the instructions for the number of sources you must cite to pass the course. Usually it's six (6) unless you are otherwise informed.
- 6) Conduct literature search using key parts of the task. You may use a combination of secondary sources: texts and online articles, journals, dissertations etc.
- 7) Read various articles that open in your search and don't just select the first thing that pops up. Pay attention to the relevance of the contents to the topic and task you are executing. Also pay keen attention to the source. Wikipedia, blog pages, and essay sites such Study Mode, and UK Essays etc. are not acceptable.
- 8) Shortlist and save/bookmark the sources with the most appropriate findings to match the task. Keep in mind that your assignment may ask you to use 4 or 6 sources.
- 9) Find ALL the required number of sources and bookmark them before you start writing up the research essay.
- 10) Review the instructions for the tasks again and ensure that you are clear on the task requirements and your information gathered is appropriate.
- 11) Consult the Academic Calendar for the early and late submission deadlines for the assignments. This so you can create a plan/schedule to complete and submit the work on-time.

The Research Report

Pre-Writing Stage

- 1) Access the requirements for the Term-paper – layout of the paper, student exemplar (sample), Harvard Referencing Rules, guidelines for the referencing, and how the paper is to be organized, font size, font style, paragraphing spacing, page numbering, and headers instructions etc. before you start. Go to iTutor: <http://colbournecollege.weebly.com/term-paper-structure.html>
- 2) Review all the other requirements on the same page as these are useful in completing the assignments successfully:
- 3) Carry out the research.
- 4) Pay keen attention to the minimum and maximum words requirement for the task undertaking. You will find this in the assignment brief.
- 5) Review an exemplary of the assignment before you begin writing the report. Exemplary are students' work which were graded and selected for guideline.
- 6) Only when you have read and understood all the above instructions that you should start writing up the report.

Writing Stage

- 7) Use the header for the task same as it is presented to you in the assignment brief e.g. P1 / AC 1.1 Explain the role of Marketing in Business Organizations. Do not abbreviate, reduce or summarize.
- 8) Start with the Introduction in section one. The introduction is a very brief paragraph which states the objectives of the paper and allow for definition of the key term/s. See the exemplar provided.
- 9) Section two is the research findings. In this section, you will list the findings from the various researched sources that directly address your assignment task. Remember to put the information in your own words and cite the sources by surname and year of publication (eg. Samuels, 2014). No discussion of the findings is required in this section. Number list them. Meet the assignment requirement for the number of findings/answers to be cited in your work. See the exemplar that we provided.
- 10) Section three will consist of more than one paragraphs. You will discuss each of the research findings that you presented in section two.

- 11) Take keen notice of the command verb. The command verb is part of the instructions and requirements for the task. Definition and examples of command verbs (e.g. to explain, discuss, assess, compare, analyze) are available on iTutor. Ensure that you understand what this command verb means so you know what you are required to do. Example. if you are asked to analyze means that you must evaluate the different areas of the topic/issue and look at alternate sides of the argument e.g. pros and cons / limitations and benefits / strengths and weaknesses. Go to the definitions of the command verbs here:
<http://www.ocr.org.uk/Images/149928-command-verb-definitions.pdf>

The discussion is the most important section of the paper. Sixty percent of your word limit must be used here in section 3. The reason why: it is the discussion section that brings your task together around the main themes and instructions for the task. In this section, you execute the command around the research findings thus directly addressing the task.

- 12) Section four is a short paragraph to draw conclusion about the task and the findings. Conclusion does not have new information but is a brief summary of what is already in your work, focusing on the problem and results/answers.
- 13) Add your reference page / bibliography. This list must have ALL sources that you cited in your work. Use www.citethisforme.com to create your reference page. Remember that the information on your reference page must be in alphabetic order.

Post-Writing Stages

- 1) Carry out the plagiarism check and download the report.
- 2) Thoroughly read over and edit your work.
- 3) Use www.grammarly.com to do grammar checks.
- 4) Have members of your team read over the work to ensure it's the best outcome.
- 5) Ask a friend or family member to review and provide feedback.
- 6) Act positively to constructive feedback and edit the work in appropriate places.
- 7) Submit the work on-time.
- 8) Pay the printing cost and submit the work by 6:00 PM on the early deadline OR Pay the printing cost and submit the work with late fees by 6:00 PM on the early deadline
- 9) You may credit the charges for the printing by contacting us early on iConnect and await authorization. Once authorization is received you will upload the authorization with the work.
- 10) Assignments are submitted on the same page that you registered for the class.

INTENDED AND UNINTENDED PLAGIARISM

- 1) Academic Research means that you should find credible information to develop the assignment. You will conduct the search guided by a topic to find relevant information/ answers. The sources are the writers/owners of the information you locate, and the information is the research findings.
- 2) If you use the direct words of others in your work without using the open and closed quotation to show where the direct quote is, this is plagiarism/cheating. Overuse of direct quote is Fail Grade. " " does not give you license to cut and paste wantonly into your work. Over-use of the direct quote means that you do not understand the question and your work is inauthentic. Simply put - it is copied - and not yours. In such cases, it is the judgement of the Marker to award you a Fail or Referred Grade for the entire submission. We recommend that you avoid direct quoting.
- 3) Instead, you should read and surmise what the writers are saying, then paraphrase the information. This means that you will put the research findings into your own words and ensure that the information directly addresses the task you are assigned. You MUST tell us in your own words - then cite the source in-text e.g. Samuels (2015) at start of the sentence or (Samuels, 2015) at end of the sentence. DO NOT cut and paste or DO NOT type or copy the direct words from these sources into your works.
- 4) Plagiarism/cheating is also: when you submit work that you did not do. That is whether the person authorized you to use the work. All work that you submit must be done by you and on the said semester that the work is issued.
- 5) If you are part of a team, you are co-owners of the work, and no one member of the team can claim any part of the work outside of the team's effort.
- 6) Thus, if the grade for the team work is Referred, resit of the assignment - which is to be done individually - does not allow for any part of the said team work to be resubmitted by any member of the team. If there are important contents in the prior team work submitted which you would like to discuss in the resit, you must cite the work and sources, same as you do all work used in your research.
- 7) If you plagiarize your grade will be awarded F-Fail. Fail grade means that you must pay for and do over the class for the unit on a future semester.
- 8) When the Marker identifies and evidences that you plagiarized/cheated, you are immediately graded Fail Grade for this assignment and all other work that you submitted on the semester. Plus, all previous work will be reviewed for plagiarism/cheating. You will be sent a letter of warning for plagiarism/cheating which becomes part of your record. If you repeat the offense in the future, you will be immediately dismissed from the program without the opportunity of any form of reparation or resolution.

HERE IS THE EASY WAY TO AVOID COMMON PLAGIARISM INFRINGEMENTS THAT USUALLY LEAD TO FAIL GRADE

- 1) When you are citing work on a paragraph, do not place the citation at end of the work, but cite the individual sentences to link the correct contents to the correct sources. In-text citation is required through-out your work to make it a valuable research. For help and further explanation about how to use one citation at the end of a multiple sentence paragraph, go here:
<http://rasmussen.libanswers.com/faq/32328>
- 2) **So how many words can you take verbatim from a source without citing the text? That is, how much paraphrasing should you do to avoid unintended plagiarism?** Use your own words as much as possible. The 'five (consecutive) words' rule holds that if there are five successive words in your work that are identical to someone else's writing, then you are guilty of cheating/plagiarism.
- 3) If you paraphrase and do not identify the author, you are still guilty of plagiarism – you must always paraphrase or summarize but you must also acknowledge the original author, who is the source of the information. Plagiarism (n.d) cautions that it is plagiarism when you:
 1. *Buy or use a term paper written by someone else.*
 2. *Cut and paste passages from the Web, a book, or an article and insert them into your paper without citing them. Warning! It is now easy to search and find passages that have been copied from the Web.*
 3. *Use the words or ideas of another person without citing them.*
 4. *Paraphrase that person's words without citing them*

Review this link to read about plagiarism and how to avoid it:

https://www.webpages.uidaho.edu/info_literacy/modules/module6/6_4.htm

The key to good and acceptable research is - read, understand, critically think about, and then put everything into your own words.

Please ensure that you read and follow the above guidelines to produce an appropriate paper at the required standards to Pass the assignments on the unit.