Summarising, paraphrasing and quoting

You need to refer the work of experts in your writing for several reasons:

- To support your ideas
- To allow your reader to find your original sources
- To avoid plagiarism.

Four common strategies allow you to refer to the work of others:

- Summary – reporting the main ideas of one text
- Generalisations – reporting the main ideas of several similar texts written in one summary
- Paraphrasing – reporting a specific idea or finding selected from a text
- Quoting – using the exact words of a text

Steps to effective summarising	Steps to effective paraphrasing
1. Read the text to confirm understanding. 2. Find the main ideas in the text. 3. Make notes on the main ideas. 4. Rewrite the main ideas in your own words. 5. Check the content and language of your summary. 6. Synthesize your summary into your essay.	1. Read the text to confirm understanding. 2. Select the specific point you need. 3. Analyse the language of the sentence. 4. Rewrite the specific point in your own words. 5. Check the content and language of your paraphrase. 6. Synthesize your paraphrase into your paragraph.

Using direct quotations

The use of direct quotation can vary according to discipline and assignment type. One reason for this is lecturers want to encourage students to show their understanding of an issue by using their own words. However, you may want to quote directly when giving a definition, referring to a professional standard or regulation, or quoting an interview.

Synthesizing sources into your writing

After creating your summary or paraphrase, you must synthesize it into your assignment. Remember:

- Avoid creating a paragraph that is one citation after another, like a shopping list.
- Ensure your personal voice is evident to the reader – other voices, such as your citation, should support your idea.
- Create a cohesive paragraph following the TEEL/C model – topic sentence, explanation, evidence, link/concluding sentence.
- Demonstrate your critical thinking by drawing links between or elaborating on the paraphrase or direct quotation.

CHARLES DARWIN UNIVERSITY AUSTRALIA