

# PARAPHRASING

*Mastering paraphrasing will help you to improve the quality of your academic writing.*

## What is paraphrasing?

- **Paraphrasing** is a writing skill when you rephrase information from your source in different words or with different structure, without changing its original meaning.
- In other words, a **paraphrase** says the same thing as the original text, but in a different way with different words.
- **Paraphrasing** provides an essential alternative to direct quotes.
- For your assignments you will need to **paraphrase** sentences, paragraphs, or sections of text.
- It should be clear to the reader that you have **paraphrased** someone else's work. You can do this by referencing the author or source.

# Paraphrasing

## Why paraphrase?

- In every day life, sometimes you might find you need to say something in a different way in order to help someone else understand it ... In academic writing, **you need to put something (such as a concept, a process, or a finding) into your own words in order to demonstrate to your tutor that you have understood it.**
- **It is not a good idea to use excessive "direct quotations" in your assignments:**
  - Firstly, because (as mentioned above) you are not demonstrating understanding to your reader.
  - Secondly, an excess of quotations, even if correctly referenced, will cause your similarity to go up; which may not be acceptable to your tutor.
- **If you use a variety of techniques to paraphrase and reference your sources, your assignment will be more enjoyable to read.**

# Paraphrasing

## Strategies for paraphrasing

### (1) Use synonyms (words with the same, or similar, meanings):

#### *Example 1:*

Dissatisfaction with the change in financial regulations was **widespread**.

Dissatisfaction with the change in financial regulations was **prevalent**.

#### *Example 2:*

The results produced **various** points for discussion.

The results produced **multiple** points for discussion.

**To find synonyms you might visit a *thesaurus* website. But be careful!** Do not just accept any word it gives you, as although the word may have the same meaning, it may not be appropriate for academic writing - it could be, for example, old-fashioned, informal, or emotive.

*For example:* **Disquietitude** with the change in financial regulations was prevalent.

- The word 'disquietitude' is indeed a synonym for 'dissatisfaction', however is not appropriate for a finance report.

You can avoid using unsuitable synonyms by following up your visit to the thesaurus website with a visit to **a good quality *dictionary* website**, where you can look up example sentences containing the word you are interested in.

# Paraphrasing

## Strategies for paraphrasing

### (2) Change the phrase:

*Examples:*

ORIGINAL: **52% of all respondents** confirmed that ...

PARAPHRASE: **Approximately half** of all respondents ...

ORIGINAL: **The majority of homes** have access to the internet.

PARAPHRASE: **Most households** have access to the internet.

**Changing the phrase often involves changing the 'word class' - for example changing a *noun* to an *adjective*, or a *verb* to a *noun*.**

*Examples:*

ORIGINAL: It is essential for nurses to be able to **communicate** effectively.

PARAPHRASE Effective **communication** skills are essential in nursing.

- Here the word **communicate (verb)** has been changed to **communication (noun)**.

ORIGINAL: Putting a digital transformation into action is a **risky** strategy.

PARAPHRASE: The strategy of digital transformation is not without **risk**.

- Here the word **risky (adjective)** has been changed to **risk (noun)**.

## Strategies for paraphrasing

### (3) Change the structure of the sentence:

*Example 1:*

ORIGINAL (from Wang, 2015):

**When anthropology and social psychology are compared, various similarities can be found.**

PARAPHRASE:

Several similarities exist between **anthropology and social psychology** (Wang, 2015).

*Example 2:*

ORIGINAL (from the Fawcett Society, 2016):

**The Equality Act (2010) states that everyone should be treated equally regardless of the gender.**

PARAPHRASE: The Fawcett Society (2016) states that women should be treated equally to men, in accordance with The Equality Act (2010).

### (4) Make two shorter sentences into a longer one:

ORIGINAL (from Luba, 2012):

Mr Hawkins was the sole tenant of a Newham council family home. In 2008 he died, and his wife succeeded to the tenancy (Luba 2005).

PARAPHRASE:

Luba (2012) reported that Hawkins had been the tenant of his family home until his death in 2008 when his wife became successor to the tenancy agreement.