

## **Integrating sources, including paraphrasing and synthesis.**

There are various ways to integrate sources in your writing. This study pack reviews quoting, paraphrasing, summarising and synthesis.

### **Quoting:**

Sometimes, it is not just the idea an author has expressed which is important, but the specific way they have expressed it. In these cases, you might choose to quote them by using the words directly from the source. You can quote a longer phrase, or it might be just a word or two. It is important this is cited and referenced correctly – quotes need a citation and page number; check your specific referencing guide to ensure you have done this.

Ensure your quotes are surrounded by explanations and are not just left alone in the middle of the text. Embedding discussion around the quote would show the reader the importance of the selected quote and will emphasise the way the quote relates to your topic. In other words, sandwiching a quote with explanations allows critical discussion around the quotation and strengthens its choice and use. For example:

This creates an opportunity for communication through a network. A “spider's web” (Ebi, 2023, p.49) is established between the groups, suggesting the multi-directional ways communication can then take place.

The approach can be “messy, necessitating further work to clarify and complete the outcomes” (Kennedy and Terry, 2019, p.14), but it is possible that mess is a productive part of the creative process.

Use the [referencing guides](#) to support you with this.

### **Paraphrasing:**

Paraphrasing is expressing the ideas from a source in your own way. Paraphrased ideas are still always cited and referenced.

Paraphrasing gives you the chance to show how the evidence supports your argument, and helps demonstrate your understanding. When paraphrasing, it is important to remember both the context you are writing in, and the context of the source. Avoid taking a sentence out of a source without knowing the context of the sentence. There are different approaches to paraphrasing, but just changing words from the original to put into your writing is not an effective paraphrase.

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Here are some approaches to paraphrasing:

*"I read something and ask myself what the passage is telling me and how I would apply it or use it to help me make my point. It is less about changing the words and more about integrating ideas."*

*"I read the source more than once and think about it in context. Then I put the source out of sight and read my own writing around the point. Sometimes I speak it rather than write it first. I integrate the author's ideas in a way which fits the flow of what I am writing, cite it, and then check the original to make sure it's reflective of the source but without using the same structures."*

*"I usually have my notes about the source as a starting point, and very rarely would I try to just paraphrase a sentence on its own. I usually start from the point of what I want to say, and then try to build the ideas from the source into my own language and phrases. I will try to use it in relation to other sources or evidence."*

Examples of paraphrased sentences:

There are limitations to this approach however, such as its dependence on sufficient funding (Kosgei, 2021, p.41).

Tergat (2019, p.55) suggests this could lead to further engagement in the process, due to its relevance and appropriateness.

### **Summarising:**

Summarising and paraphrasing are connected, as summarising requires the process of paraphrasing. When you summarise, you identify the 'take-home' ideas from a source and express them concisely in your own words. This might be from a whole source, or from part of one. Summarising enables the reader to see you have read and understood the writing in your own context. For example:

Bright (2022) considers this an effective strategy for primary school-aged children, as long as there is reliable parental support.

### **Synthesis:**

Synthesis is bringing different sources together within your writing. It gives you the opportunity to make links between what a range of authors have written, and connect different kinds of source (for example, theory, policy, studies, practitioner guidance and so on). This helps you demonstrate wider reading, your analysis, and how you connect ideas together, which supports critical thinking. As you write at higher levels, there can be more expectation that you use synthesis in your writing.

In order to synthesise, you apply your skills of paraphrasing to multiple sources, and express them together. You can synthesise sources to show agreement,

opposing or differing viewpoints, and other connections. There are many ways to do this but here are some examples:

### **Synthesis to show agreement or consensus.**

Recent studies have found this intervention improved access to services for secondary school children (Appuzzo, 2022; Jones, 2023; North, 2023). *Here, the three authors have agreed on the point, and the writer has combined them instead of citing them separately. This demonstrates concise writing and shows understanding of the reading.*

### **Synthesis to show agreement with added information.**

Nowak *et al.* (2019, p.14) suggest this strategy supports student nurses, with O'Hanlon (2020, p.44) later finding it was particularly effective when mentors led the meetings. *In this example, there is a connection between the two sources. The first and second authors agree, with the second adding an extra piece of related information.*

### **Synthesis to show disagreement.**

While Packham and Fenwick (2022) suggest this is worth pursuing further, Olsen (2023) disagrees, stating the strategy is outdated and focus should shift to newer technologies. *These two sources demonstrate opposing viewpoints, so the writer has brought them together in one sentence to show this disagreement.*

For further support with paraphrasing and synthesising, you can [book a tutorial](#) with Learning Development.

*Sources cited in this resource are invented. UON Harvard has been used in these examples – ensure you use the correct guide for your own course when using sources.*