



THE IMPORTANCE OF REFERENCING WITHIN ACADEMIA

Module Name

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Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to discuss the importance of referencing within academia. The report discusses the many factors that need to be considered when referencing. It argues that referencing is necessary in academia so that information can be traced back to the original source. Also discussed is the importance of using reliable sources, and how their reliability can affect the credibility of an academic work. The topic of plagiarism within academia is also discussed.

The report concludes that all sources need to be accurately referenced within a student's work to avoid being accused of plagiarism. It also highlights the importance of using multiple sources when researching, and how using good quality sources can add validity to an argument or idea.

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1. Introduction

Referencing is a system used within academia to give credit to the author whose work has been used to help create another (Pearson & Sharma, 2015). The Harvard Referencing System is also known as the 'author-date system' and contains two main elements: citing sources within the body of the document, and providing a reference list at the end of the document (Queen's University Belfast, 2015).

A student who fails to reference their sources properly can be accused of plagiarism, which is deemed a serious offense, and is defined as using the literary work of another person without crediting the source (Neville, 2010).

Students within academia are expected to gather accurate and variable sources relevant to their subject matter, and referencing can give credibility to, or reinforce an argument that they make (Pearson & Sharma, 2015; Davies, 2011).

2. Main Findings

For an academic work to be deemed legitimate, it is important that it is referenced properly, and that reliable and variable sources are used. This section will explore these points in further detail.

2.1 The Importance of Referencing within Academia

Accurate referencing is important within Academia for many reasons. Firstly, it enables an idea to be traced back to its source. It is to show that the transmission of knowledge is evident in a student's work, and that they can select information that is relevant to their work (Neville, 2010). A higher education student is expected to spend a lot of time researching a given topic, and effective referencing can show that they have found appropriate information that gives credibility to their arguments (Pears & Shields, 2008).

Referencing must be conducted accurately within academic works to avoid being accused of plagiarism, which is a very serious offense within academia, as it is essentially stealing someone else's intellectual property (Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2016). For this reason, it is important that an original author's work is cited and referenced accurately within a document, as failure to do so could lead to the student inadvertently being accused of plagiarism (Queen's University Belfast, 2015).

2.2 The Importance of Reliable and Variable Sources

It is important that students research and select content appropriate to their subject matter. Furthermore, they should then be able to extract an idea from their source and paraphrase it into their own words (Neville, 2010). For credibility, these sources should be carefully selected, as a poorly selected source could contain inaccurate information that will be transmitted to the student's work. A student should consider five key factors when selecting a source: the credibility of the source, the original author, the age of the source, the intended audience, and whether the source is primary or not (Columbia College, 2016).

Pearson & Sharma (2015) argue that students should ensure to gather multiple sources to support their arguments. It is considered that finding numerous sources that agree on a specific topic can add validity when referenced in a student's work (Neville, 2010).

3. Conclusion

In conclusion, it is evident that effective referencing is important when conducting an academic work. This report has found that referencing should be accurate and should encompass a broad range of sources. There were found to be many reasons that referencing is appropriate in academia. The most prevalent being to avoid the serious accusation of plagiarism. Referencing is also seen to be relevant to give credit to the original author's work, and to give credibility and validity to the student's work.

Furthermore, this report highlighted the importance of selecting credible sources. It was identified that poor quality of the information at source will result in a poor academic work, as the information will not be reliable.

4. Reference List

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