



CITING

the 7 Most Important Questions



1) What do I need to reference?

All statements and results that you take over directly or indirectly from others must be clearly marked. This means: your readers must be able to recognize what you have used and how!

2) What is plagiarism?

Plagiarism is the unmarked copying of other people's ideas, wording, and results. It gives the impression that you have achieved something that you did not do yourself. In examinations, this is an attempt to cheat!

3) Can I plagiarize accidentally?

We only speak of plagiarism if there is an intention to create a false impression. In practice, however, the resulting work looks the same – whether the intent was there or not. Plagiarism is usually the most plausible explanation.

4) How verbatim can my work be?

Many people find it particularly difficult to paraphrase the thoughts of others. There is also no simple rule for determining the line between taking over ideas word for word and 'purely' conceptual reproduction – ask your supervisors/examiners how they would proceed and compare academic papers with each other.

5) How do I cite my sources?

It is essential that your readers can easily understand which publication you are referring to and how you have used it. There are a number of 'citation styles' for literature reference, each with their own guidelines, e.g., the MLA, APA, Harvard or the Vancouver Convention.

6) What kind of works am I allowed to cite?

In most cases, only works that are citable (publicly accessible/properly published) and worthy of citation (that meet scientific standards) qualify as scientific or academic evidence. If in doubt, ask your supervisor/teacher which works are acceptable!

7) Who can help me?

Talk to your supervisors and teachers about the requirements in your subject! For general questions, please contact the office for "Academic Integrity [Akademische Integrität]" (www.akin.uni-mainz.de).

