

Addressing Common Reasons for Manuscript Rejection



Module 6

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When you submit a manuscript to the journal, it may be:



- Accepted with no further revisions

- Accepted with some suggested changes by the reviewers

- Rejected



Common Reasons for Manuscript Rejection

Let us look at the common reasons that lead to the rejection of a manuscript and know how to address them

Lack of Fit

Sometimes, a paper may not align well with the journal's focus, scope, or priorities, leading to rejection.

Steps you should take

Research suitable journals that align well with your paper's content and scope. Tailor your manuscript to fit the focus and priorities of the targeted journal.



Common Reasons for Manuscript Rejection

Lack of Originality

Your research should be original and contribute new insights to the field. If the research topic has been extensively covered in previous publications or lacks novelty, the paper may be rejected.

Steps:

Ensure your research provides novel insights and highlights its originality in the introduction and discussion.

Differentiate your study from previous work and clearly explain how it adds to the existing literature.

Common Reasons for Manuscript Rejection

Poor Research Design

Journals often expect well-designed studies with

- Clear research questions
- Appropriate methodology
- Robust data analysis

A poorly designed study may lead to rejection

Steps:

Revise and clarify your research questions to be specific and relevant to the study's objectives.

Ensure the chosen methodology is appropriate for answering the research questions.

Conduct a thorough and robust data analysis using suitable statistical methods.



Common Reasons for Manuscript Rejection

Inadequate Sample Size

If the sample size is too small to draw statistically significant conclusions or provide meaningful insights, the paper may not be considered for publication.

Steps:

Consider performing a power analysis to determine the appropriate sample size for achieving statistical significance.

If a larger sample is not feasible, clearly acknowledge the limitations and provide insights into future research implications.



Common Reasons for Manuscript Rejection

Incomplete or Insufficient Data

If the study lacks enough data to support the findings or conclusions, it may not meet the journal's publication standards.

Steps:

Ensure that you have collected enough data to support your research findings adequately.

Consider conducting additional experiments or data collection, if possible, to strengthen your conclusions.



Common Reasons for Manuscript Rejection

Flawed Methodology

Issues with data collection, study protocols, or statistical analysis can lead to rejection.

Steps:

Carefully review your data collection process and protocols for any potential errors or biases.

Validate your statistical analysis and consult with a statistical expert if needed to ensure accuracy.



Common Reasons for Manuscript Rejection

Lack of Clarity and Structure

Poorly written papers with ambiguous language, unclear organization, and insufficient explanations may not be accepted.

Steps:

Revise your manuscript for clarity and coherence, making sure your language is clear and concise.

Organize your paper logically with clear headings and subheadings to improve readability.



Common Reasons for Manuscript Rejection

Ethical Concerns

Journals place great importance on ethical considerations. Failure to obtain proper informed consent, the use of plagiarism, or research misconduct can lead to rejection.

Steps:

Address any ethical issues raised by the reviewers or editors promptly and transparently.

Ensure proper informed consent and compliance with ethical guidelines throughout your research.



Common Reasons for Manuscript Rejection

Inadequate Literature Review

A comprehensive review of existing literature relevant to the research is crucial. A weak or incomplete literature review can lead to rejection.

Steps:

Conduct a comprehensive literature review to include all relevant studies in the field.

Analyze and synthesize the literature to demonstrate the gap your research fills.



Common Reasons for Manuscript Rejection

Inconsistent or Contradictory Results

A mismatch between the study objectives, methodology, and the results. Or inconsistent ideas throughout the manuscript.

Steps:

Review your methods and data analysis to ensure accuracy.
If the results differ from expectations or previous studies, discuss potential reasons and provide a plausible explanation



Common Reasons for Manuscript Rejection

Lack of Significance

If the results are inconsistent with the research question or contradict previous studies, the paper may be rejected unless a convincing explanation is provided.

Steps:

Clearly articulate the significance of your study in the introduction and discussion sections. Emphasize how your research contributes to the field and addresses important gaps.



Common Reasons for Manuscript Rejection

Poor Presentation

Manuscripts with subpar writing, grammar, and formatting may be rejected due to a lack of professionalism.

Steps:

Edit and proofread your manuscript thoroughly to improve writing quality and grammar. Format the manuscript according to the journal's guidelines for a professional appearance.



Common Reasons for Manuscript Rejection

Failure to Follow Journal Guidelines

Not adhering to the specific submission guidelines provided by the target journal can lead to outright rejection.

Steps:

Review the journal's submission guidelines carefully and ensure full compliance.

Check the manuscript's format, citation style, and any specific requirements set by the journal.



Common Reasons for Manuscript Rejection

Overinterpretation of Results

Drawing conclusions beyond the scope of the study or making unwarranted claims can lead to rejection.

Steps:

Stick to the facts and avoid making exaggerated claims beyond what your data can support. Clearly state the limitations of your study and discuss potential implications honestly.



Common Reasons for Manuscript Rejection

Inadequate Discussion

A weak or incomplete discussion of the results, implications, and limitations may not meet the journal's standards.

Steps:

Provide a comprehensive discussion of your results, emphasizing their implications and limitations.

Discuss how your findings contribute to the existing body of knowledge and suggest future research directions.





Selecting the right journal is a crucial step in academic publishing. Journal selection should be done based on the paper's aim, scope, and findings relative to the aim, scope, and target audience of the journals.

Journal selection involves picking the journals that would most likely consider a manuscript for peer review and publication.



IMPORTANCE OF MAINTAINING INTEGRITY AND CREDIBILITY THROUGHOUT THE MANUSCRIPT

An author or researcher should maintain integrity and credibility throughout the manuscript.

Let us see why it is important:

It upholds the author's professional reputation

It contributes to the overall credibility of the academic community

It plays a crucial role in the dissemination of knowledge

It strengthens the author's argument and persuasiveness

Maintaining integrity and credibility is an ethical responsibility



IMPORTANCE OF MAINTAINING INTEGRITY AND CREDIBILITY THROUGHOUT THE MANUSCRIPT

It upholds the author's professional reputation

The author establishes themselves as a credible and knowledgeable authority in their field by ensuring that the data presented is accurate, dependable, and supported by evidence.

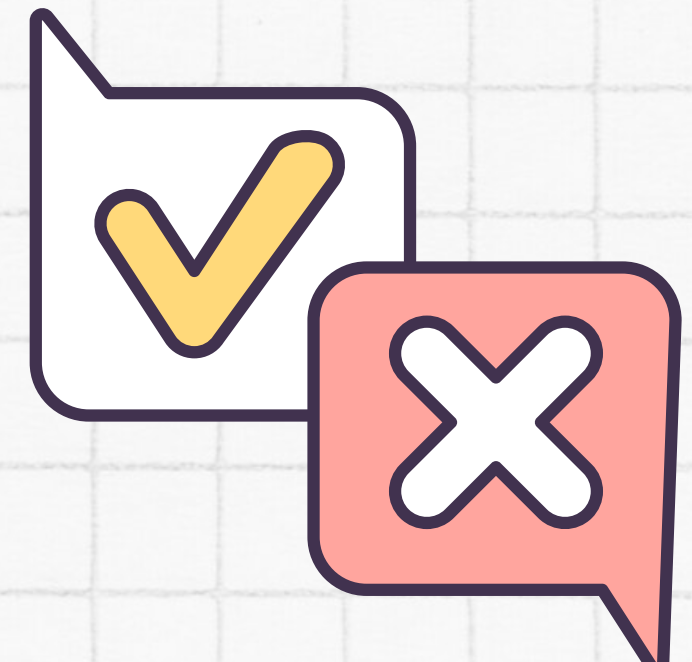


IMPORTANCE OF MAINTAINING INTEGRITY AND CREDIBILITY THROUGHOUT THE MANUSCRIPT

It contributes to the overall credibility of the academic community

When authors prioritize accuracy and ethical conduct, they contribute to the advancement of knowledge and the integrity of scientific and academic processes.

This fosters a culture of trust and dependability among scientists, readers, and the general public.



IMPORTANCE OF MAINTAINING INTEGRITY AND CREDIBILITY THROUGHOUT THE MANUSCRIPT

It plays a crucial role in the dissemination of knowledge

If a manuscript lacks integrity and contains false or misleading information, it could have negative effects.

It may misinform readers, lead them to draw the wrong conclusions, and even endanger people who rely on the information to make decisions or receive medical care.

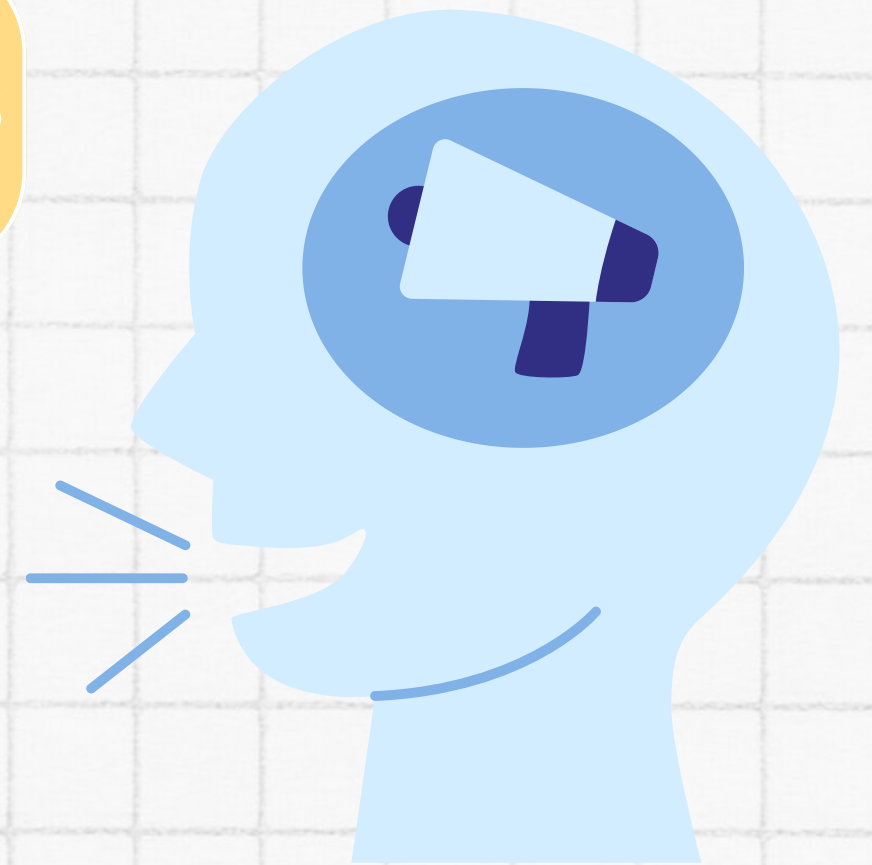
Authors contribute to ensuring the accuracy and applicability of their work to a larger audience by upholding their integrity and credibility.



IMPORTANCE OF MAINTAINING INTEGRITY AND CREDIBILITY THROUGHOUT THE MANUSCRIPT

It strengthens the author's argument and persuasiveness

When authors give information that is clear and easy to understand and when they back it up with valid and trustworthy sources, it makes their arguments more convincing and strengthens the overall impact of their manuscript.



IMPORTANCE OF MAINTAINING INTEGRITY AND CREDIBILITY THROUGHOUT THE MANUSCRIPT

Maintaining integrity and credibility is an ethical responsibility

It is the responsibility of authors to follow moral principles and regulations when conducting research and publishing. Authors show their respect for the scientific community, the research participants, and the readers who rely on their work by upholding these principles.



Role of Institutional Review Board (IRB approval) in research paper publication



Researchers obtain several key benefits from the Institutional Review Board (IRB).



Ethical Approval:

The IRB ensures that the research study adheres to ethical standards and guidelines for the protection of the rights, welfare, and privacy of human study participants.





Protection of Participants:

IRB evaluates the potential risks and benefits associated with the research study and ensures that adequate precautions are in place to minimize the risk of harm to participants.



Informed Consent Process:

The IRB evaluates and approves the informed consent procedure, ensuring that participants receive complete and understandable information about the study's purpose, procedures, risks, benefits, and their right to voluntarily participate.





Study Design and Methods:

The IRB committee ensures that the study design and methods are suitable, scientifically valid, and feasible for achieving research goals.



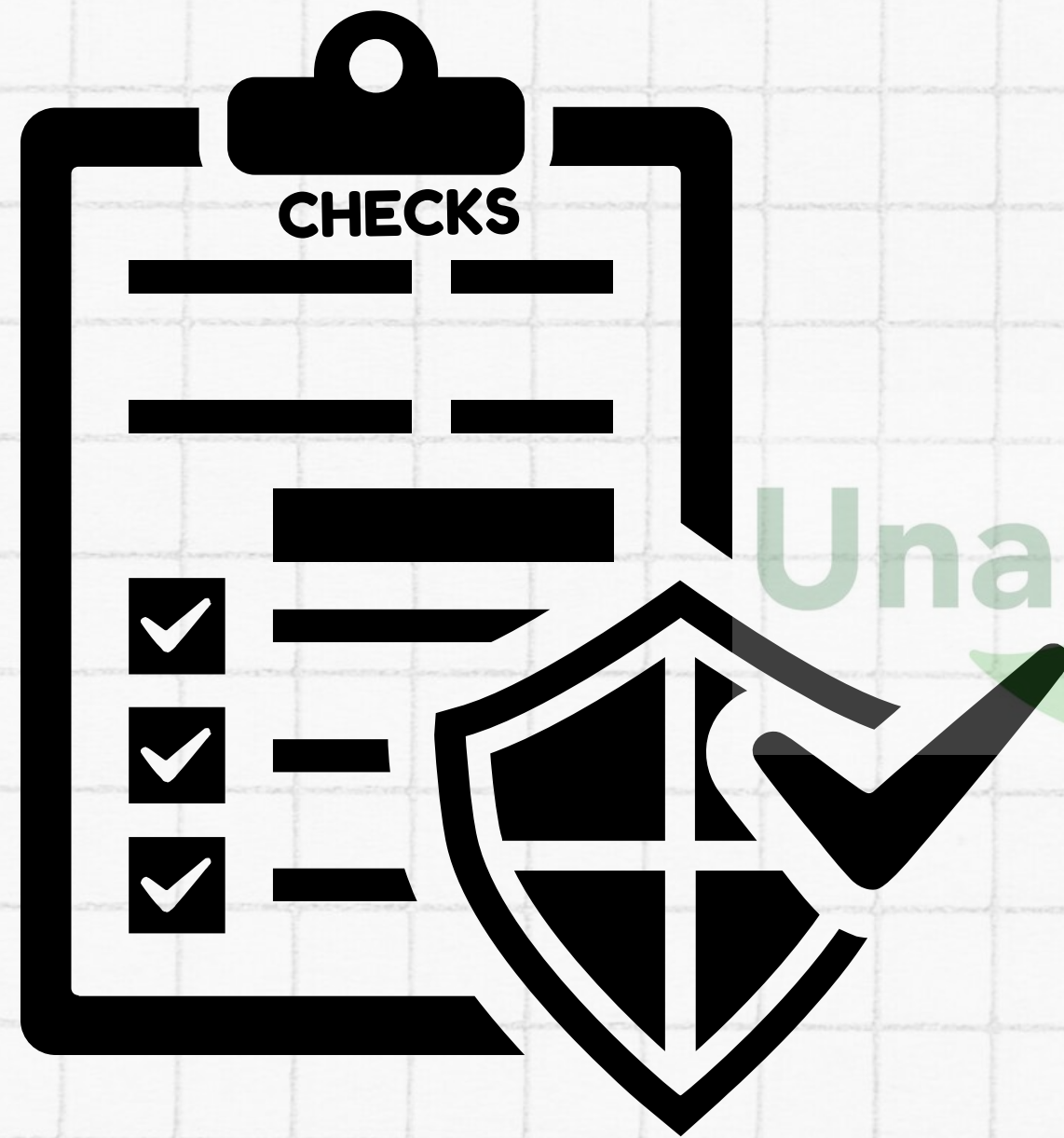
Data Confidentiality and Privacy



DATA
PRIVACY

Researchers must protect participant data throughout the research process, according to the IRB.





Ongoing Monitoring and Oversight:

To ensure ethical and regulatory compliance, the IRB may require progress reports or regular check-ins.



EXPERT



**Expert
Guidance:**

IRB members can help researchers
improve study design, methods, and
ethics.





Institutional Compliance:

By obtaining IRB approval, researchers ensure compliance with institutional policies and regulations related to human subject research.





Professional Credibility:

IRB approval shows that the research study has been ethically reviewed and meets standards, boosting its credibility and integrity.





Publication and Funding Opportunities:

Many journals and funding agencies require IRB approval before publishing or funding research, so IRB approval helps researchers publish and fund their work.



Avoiding Plagiarism



If someone uses someone else's intellectual product (such as texts, ideas, or results), implying that it is their own, it is known as plagiarism. As discussed earlier, plagiarism is a serious offense in academic writing, leading to the rejection of the manuscript.



Types of Plagiarism

01

Global plagiarism

02

Patchwork Plagiarism

03

Verbatim Plagiarism

04

Incremental plagiarism

05

Self-plagiarism

Global plagiarism

If a researcher passes on a complete piece of writing by someone else as your own, he/she is committing global plagiarism.

It involves the following:

- Copying parts of a text word for word, without quotation marks
- Submitting a text that was written entirely by someone else, such as a paper you bought from a ghostwriter.
- Giving incorrect information about a source is also considered a type of plagiarism



Original Text (Ghostwritten Paper):

"A comprehensive analysis of climate change indicates that immediate action is necessary to mitigate its adverse effects on our planet."



Plagiarized Text (Submitted without Attribution):

"A comprehensive analysis of climate change indicates that immediate action is necessary to mitigate its adverse effects on our planet."

Original Text (Source)

"A study conducted by **Smith** and colleagues **(2020)** found that regular exercise is linked to improved cardiovascular health."



Incorrect Information

"A study conducted by **Johnson** and colleagues **(2018)** found that regular exercise is linked to improved cardiovascular health."

Patchwork Plagiarism

Patchwork plagiarism is when you use parts of different sources to make your text.



Original Text (Source 1)

"Regular physical activity is essential for maintaining good cardiovascular health. It reduces the risk of heart disease, lowers blood pressure, and improves blood circulation."

Original Text (Source 2)

"A balanced diet rich in fruits, vegetables, and whole grains provides essential nutrients for the body. It supports overall health, strengthens the immune system, and helps prevent chronic diseases."

Patchwork Plagiarized Text (Combining Ideas from Source 1 and Source 2)

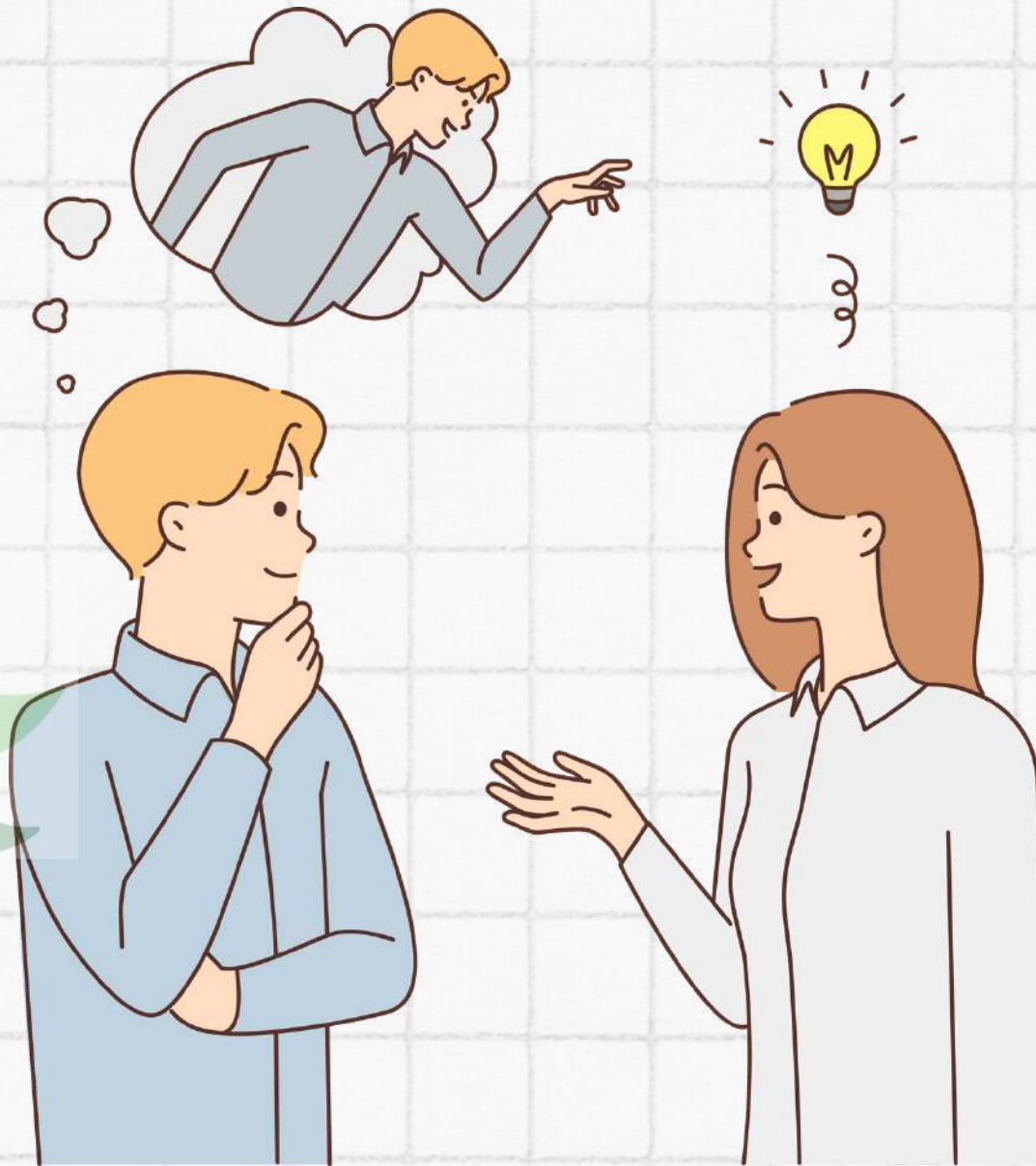
"Regular physical activity is crucial for maintaining cardiovascular health as it helps lower blood pressure and improves blood circulation. In addition, a balanced diet filled with fruits, vegetables, and whole grains is essential for overall well-being, supporting the immune system and preventing chronic diseases."



Verbatim Plagiarism

Verbatim plagiarism is when a researcher takes someone else's words and uses them.

It involves paraphrasing a text by changing a few words or altering the sentence structure without citing the source



Original Text (Source)

"The theory of relativity, formulated by Albert Einstein in the early 20th century, revolutionized our understanding of space, time, and gravity."



Plagiarized Paraphrase (Without Citation)

"Albert Einstein's theory of relativity, introduced in the 20th century, completely transformed how we perceive space, time, and gravitational forces."

Incremental plagiarism

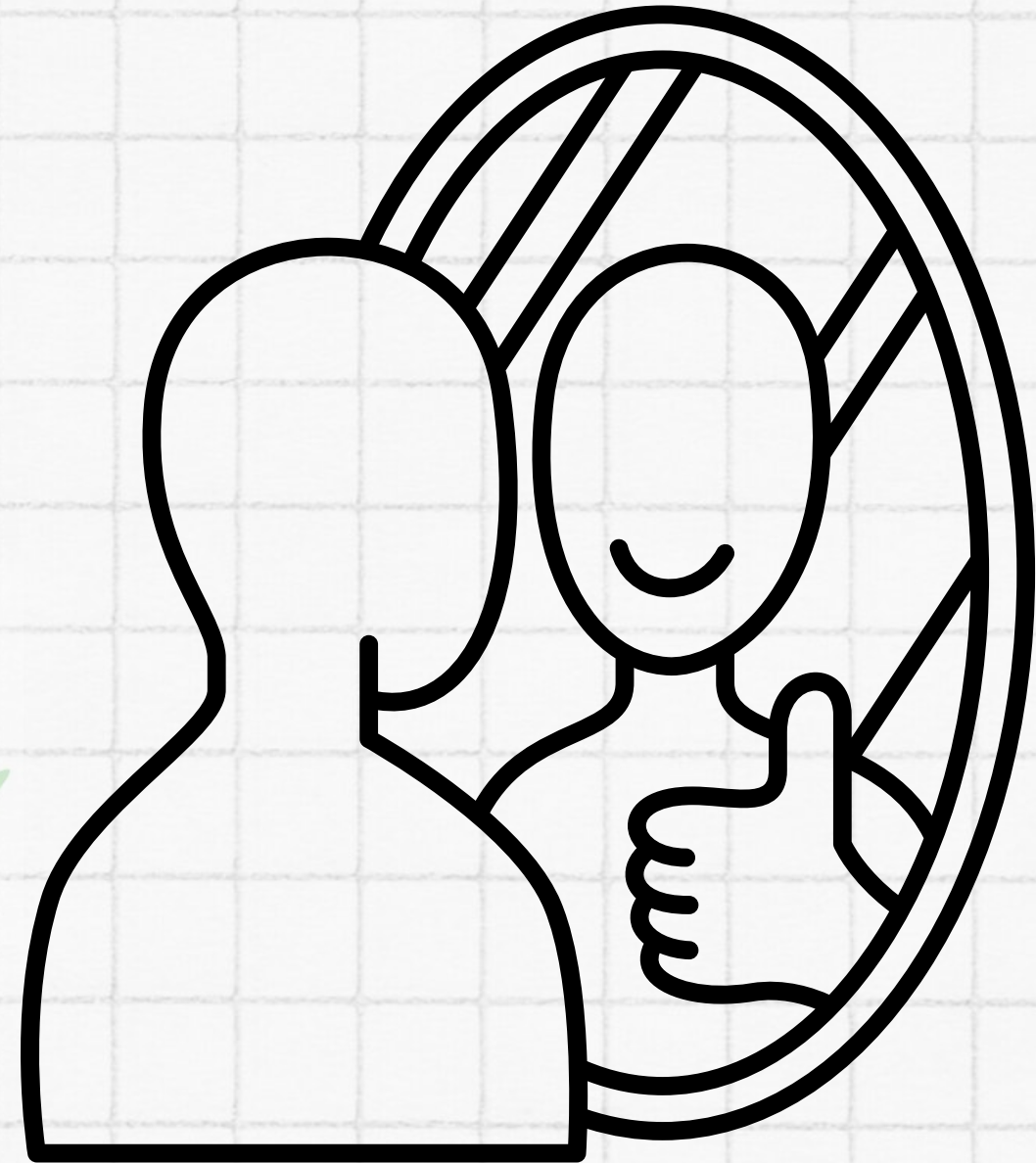
Incremental plagiarism is inserting quotes, passages, or excerpts from other works into your assignment without properly citing the original source.

It involves adding so many quotations from a source that it makes up the majority of your text.



Self-plagiarism

Reusing work you've submitted for a previous assignment, without citing yourself



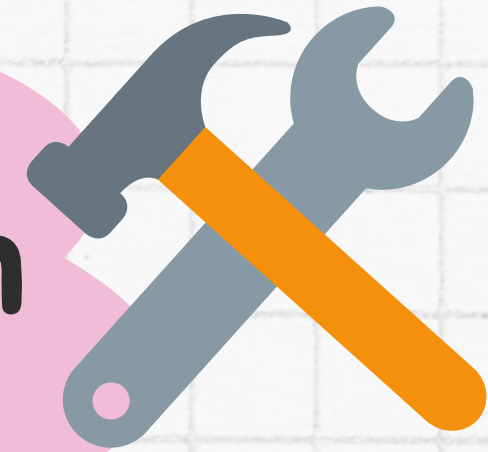
Original Text (Submitted in a Previous Assignment)

"In recent years, renewable energy sources such as solar and wind power have gained popularity due to their environmental benefits and sustainable nature."

Plagiarized Text (Submitted in a New Assignment without Self-Citation)

"In recent years, renewable energy sources such as solar and wind power have gained popularity due to their environmental benefits and sustainable nature."

Tools to check Plagiarism



Plagiarism checkers scan the documents, and generate a report which helps researchers find the following:



Forgotten or
misplaced citations

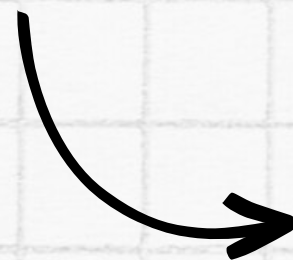
Missing quotation marks

Paraphrased material
that is too similar to
the original text



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and click the button below to check for plagiarism



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Copyleaks is the best plagiarism checker for research papers and journal articles. With access to over 16,000 online journals ranging from medical, engineering, science, and everything in between, the Copyleaks journal and research paper plagiarism checker works hard to protect you and your work.



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Each day the world's largest businesses and educational institutes—along with millions of students—trust our exclusive AI-powered text analysis to identify potential plagiarism and paraphrasing across nearly every language, detect AI generated content, verify ownership, and empower error-free writing.

Enter text here...



Unani PLUS

Copyleaks generates detailed reports of plagiarism

SUBMITTED TEXT

↓

↑

T

●

Identical

Text is copied and pasted exactly as is

The Statue of Liberty (Liberty Enlightening the World; French: La Liberté éclairant le monde) is a colossal neoclassical sculpture on Liberty Island in New York Harbor in New York City, in the United States. The copper statue, a gift from the people of France to the people of the United States, was designed by French sculptor Frédéric Auguste Bartholdi and its metal framework was built by Gustave Eiffel. The statue was dedicated on October 28, 1886.

●

Minor changes

Slight revisions made from the original text

The figure of the statue is Libertas, a Roman robed liberation goddess. She holds a torch above its head with her right hand, and in her left hand carries a tabula ansata inscribed JULY IV MDCCLXXVI (July 4, 1776 in Roman numerals), the date of the U.S. Declaration of Independence.

●

Paraphrased

Use of different words and phrasing to convey the same message

Bartholdi is a French inspired professor of law and a politician, who commented in 1865 that a monument to US independence will be a joint project of the United States and the French people. The progress was delayed by the Franco-Prussian war up until 1875, afterwards Laboulaye proposed that the statue would be financed by France and the US would

RESULTS

Statute of Liberty - Study In USA

<https://highereducationinusa.com/sta...>

This email address is being protected from spambots. You need JavaScript enabled to view ...

44% similar words

W

Statue of Liberty - Wikipedia

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Statue_o...

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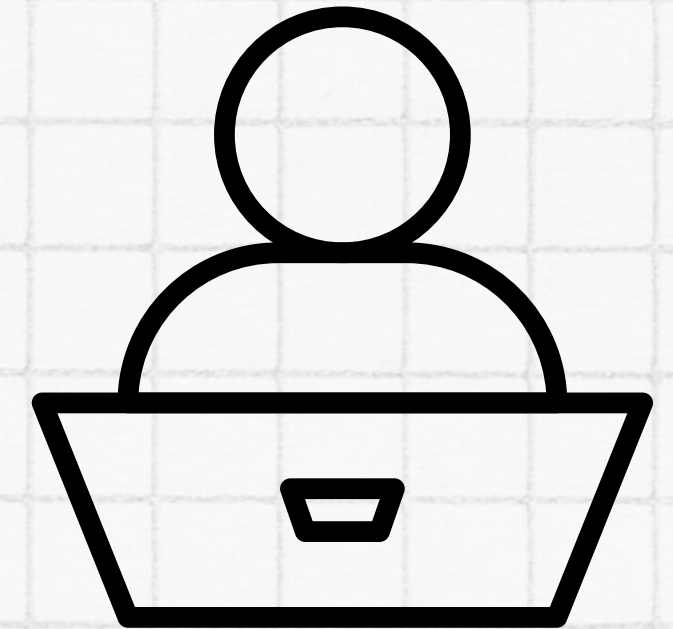
Statue of Liberty From Wikinedia the

Powered By **COPYLEAKS**

Steps to Avoid Plagiarism

While searching online:

- Take careful notes.
- Write down the source (author and year, DOI) for each idea you might use in your work.



While writing:

- Immediately include citations for all the sources in your paper when you paraphrase or quote other authors. Do not wait until later to add citations.
- Paraphrase by using your own words and sentence structure when you use evidence or ideas that came from other authors. Do not rely on other authors' words.
- If you use any previous content that you have written, make sure to cite yourself.



Steps to Avoid Plagiarism

While editing and proofreading:

- Read through the draft to ensure that all material that came from other sources has been clearly and accurately cited.
- Check for plagiarism using the tools available online and paraphrase or cite the content appropriately.



Good Citation Practices

Researchers must follow appropriate citation practices to avoid rejection of the file due to plagiarism. Here are some tips for good citation practices.

Tips for Avoiding Citation Errors

- When citing a source, make sure to follow the guidelines provided by the journal or publisher you are submitting your work to.
- Use reputable sources for your citations, such as peer-reviewed journals or government publications.
- Make sure to properly attribute any ideas or information taken from your sources to avoid plagiarism.
- Use citation management software, such as Mendeley or Zotero, to keep track of your sources and make it easier to insert citations into your work. However, don't rely solely on automated citation tools, as they can sometimes make errors or miss important information.

Good Citation Practices

Tips for Avoiding Citation Errors

- Double-check all of your citations to ensure that they are accurate and complete.
- Be sure to include all necessary information in your citations, such as the author's name, publication date, and DOI.
- If you are uncertain about how to cite a specific source, consult a credible style guide or ask your colleagues or supervisor for assistance.
- If you are using a direct quote from a source, make sure to put it in quotation marks and cite the source correctly.
- We will learn more about referencing and citation in the subsequent modules

Handling reviewer comments and criticisms

When you submit your manuscript to a journal, peer reviewers review it and send minor or major corrections to be addressed before consideration for publication. Once they contact you, they expect a point-by-point response letter from the authors.

(Refer to module 2: Journey of a Manuscript from Submission to Publication for examples of reviewer comments)



Tips to deal with reviewers' comments

Here are the steps you should follow to handle reviewer comments and criticisms:

- Try to approach the review process with an open mind and a willingness to learn and improve.
- Start by carefully reading and considering the reviewer's comments and criticisms. Respond to each comment or criticism individually, addressing any concerns or questions raised by the reviewer.
- Be polite and professional in your responses, avoiding any defensive or confrontational language. Don't take criticism of your work personally.
- If the reviewer raises valid points or suggests changes that could improve your work, be open to making revisions and incorporating their feedback.

Tips to deal with reviewers' comments

Here are the steps you should follow to handle reviewer comments and criticisms:

- Use clear and concise language when responding to comments and criticisms, and be sure to address each point individually.
- If you disagree with any of the reviewer's comments or criticisms, provide a clear and well-supported explanation for why you believe your work is correct as is. For example, "I appreciate your valuable comments. However, I believe the sentence is correct because...."
- If you are not sure how to address a particular comment or criticism, do some additional research or seek input from others in your field.

Tips to deal with reviewers' comments

Here are the steps you should follow to handle reviewer comments and criticisms:

- Make sure to thank the reviewer for their time and effort in reviewing your work, even if you do not agree with all of their comments or criticisms. For example, "Thank you for your time and consideration"
- Responding to reviewer comments and criticisms is a normal and important part of the publishing process. It will make your work as strong and impactful as possible, and constructive feedback can help you improve your work and make it more impactful.



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- <https://www.scribbr.com/plagiarism/how-to-avoid-plagiarism/>
- <https://pressbooks.bccampus.ca/businesswritingessentials2/chapter/10-5-writing-with-integrity/>
- <https://publicationethics.org/>



Thank you

