



## Notetaking

### Reading, Notetaking and planning

The form in which you record your notes will depend on your personal preferences. Certain things are essential however. A good note-taking system should be **relevant**, **accurate** and **selective**. There is nothing more time consuming and frustrating than having to go back to the library to relocate and reread material because (a) you cannot understand your own notes (b) you forgot to write down the essential bibliographical details (c) much of your neatly compiled notes have nothing to do with the topic!

Try to summarise main points in **your own words**. This may be difficult at first but it is an important strategy for improving your writing skills and it will save you a lot of time when you actually begin writing the assignment.

Be careful with direct quotes when taking notes. Always use **quotation marks** so that you will not confuse your own words and thoughts with someone else's. This will help you to avoid unintentional plagiarism.

Make sure that you keep an accurate **bibliographical record** of any notes that you make. These details must be included **in-the-text** of your assignment and **at-the-end** in your bibliography (this will be explained in more detail in a later section).

When you have completed your reading, made your notes, followed up any extra information that has come out through your reading you will have obtained a broad understanding of the topic that you are going to write about. It is now time to reconsider the question in terms of the information that you have researched and to start arranging this information into a plan.

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