**Lake Washington Institute of Technology**

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In academic writing, citations are important for academic integrity. This checklist will help you to follow best practices in academic writing to avoid plagiarism.

**Checklist: Steps to avoid Plagiarism**

**NAME:** Click here to enter text.

**Step** **1 - Note taking**

* Check if the ideas or words are your own.
* If ideas or words are not your own, write down the source of information.

**Step** **2 – Writing**

* Identify your academic citation style: [APA](https://www.lwtech.edu/campus-life/library/teaching-learning/research-references/apa-style-quick-guide/) or [MLA](https://www.lwtech.edu/campus-life/library/teaching-learning/research-references/mla-style-quick-guide/) format.
* Direct quote, paraphrase, summarize: Include in-text citation and for direct quotes use either block quote style (if over 39 words) or quotation marks (if under 40 words)
* Format in-text citation depending on academic citation style.
* All sources used within the body of essay are also to be included in the list of sources using the required academic citation style.

**Step** **3 – Review**

* Double check if all sources have been appropriately cited in either [APA](https://www.lwtech.edu/campus-life/library/teaching-learning/research-references/apa-style-quick-guide/) or [MLA](https://www.lwtech.edu/campus-life/library/teaching-learning/research-references/mla-style-quick-guide/) format.
* Cross check in text citation corresponds to list of sources provided at the end of paper and are correctly cited
* Most of the work in a paper should be coming from the student, as opposed to other sources. Some simple questions that you can use to add your own insight to your sources:
  + Why did you choose this source?
  + Who is the author, and why should that author be trusted on this issue?
  + Why is this information important?
  + Did you find anything surprising or insightful when reading this information?
  + What did you learn about your subject?
* Use free online tools to check for plagiarism.