**Citing Sources in Academic Writing**

At university, students are generally writing in the context of, or in response to the work of others. Whenever you quote a source directly, or use another author’s ideas as the basis for your own ideas, you must indicate the source you used. Sources can come in a variety of forms: books, periodicals, literary texts, reports, government publications, electronic media, etc. If you do not cite your sources, you could be accused of plagiarism, which can have very serious consequences.

**The purpose of citations:**

* Provide your reader with information about where you got your information so they can explore further if they are interested in the topic
* Demonstrate the breadth and depth of the research you conducted to inform and inspire your paper
* Give credit to authors for their ideas
* Provide evidence and credibility for your work by placing it in a broader context

**Two types of citations:**

1. In-text citations are embedded within the text and are closely linked to the content referenced. They point the reader to the source of the material without disrupting the flow of the document.
2. A bibliography or list of works cited is located at the end of the paper and contains all the relevant detail for the reader to uniquely identify the work.

**Citation Styles**

Citation styles were developed to provide consistency in writing format thereby making it easier for the reader to follow. There are many different citation styles in use depending on the academic discipline and the preferences of the instructor. A few examples are:

APA (American Psychological Association) - generally preferred in the social sciences

MLA (Modern Language Association) - often seen in literature and the arts

IEEE – often used by engineering and computer science

Complete style guides and manuals exist for all referencing styles. Quick references to citation styles can also be found on:

<http://libraries.dal.ca/writing_and_styleguides.html>

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/>

* Always consult your course syllabus for the citation style preferences of your instructor