

# scaffolding academic integrity

## an eLearning module for using evidence and avoiding plagiarism

Knowing what plagiarism or collusion is, whilst useful, is not the same as knowing how to avoid it.

A collaborative design, implementation and evaluation of a discipline-based eLearning module (eLM) to raise students' awareness and improve students' understanding of good citation practice and the importance of using evidence effectively in assignments.



### informing the design

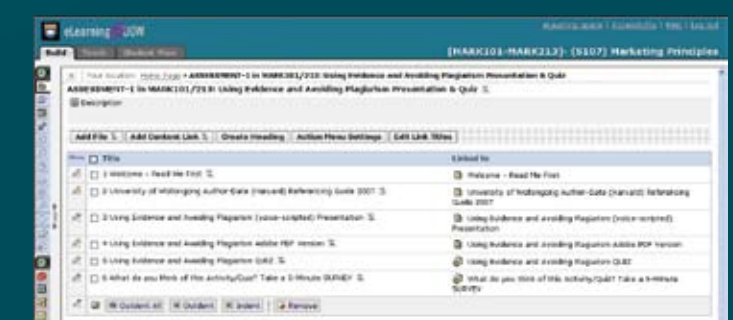
To teach students the purpose of summarising, paraphrasing, sourcing and using evidence to support arguments and making explicit the related skills that allow them to do this effectively.



### implementation

The eLM was developed in the subject's eLearning space as a mandatory but ungraded assessment task in five subjects across all years of study in the Commerce Faculty. It includes:

- streamed lecture,
- a text version of the lecture to download/copy/print,
- a link to the University's Harvard Referencing Guidelines
- [an online quiz](#).



### example of good use of evidence

The first stage of positioning may start with market segmentation; a smaller part of the market needs to be chosen in order to concentrate the organisation's resources effectively (Mercer 1992 p.243). This is a process that is used by marketers to "divide a mass market into groups with relatively homogenous needs or wants for a given product or service" (Cooper & Madden 1993 p.15). There are many ways to segment a market and a combination of different segment variables may be necessary in order to establish an effective way of viewing the market structure (Kotler et al 2001 p.167). The major variables can be classified as geographic, demographic, psychographic and behavioural/ situation usage variables (Cooper & Madden 1993 p.16; Kotler et al 2001 p.167; Mercer 1992 p.252).

This example paragraph which focuses on theory uses evidence effectively: it indicates wide reading and significant analysis and synthesis of the evidence. As a paragraph dealing primarily with theory, the sources include the textbook and related journal articles.

Note that the final sentence brings together the major variables being discussed, and references this analysis to several sources. Referencing ideas to groups of authors in this way indicates a sophisticated analysis and synthesis of the source material.

### the benefit to the learner

The learning module removes the mystery of citation as an embedded skill inside argumentation.

It provides developmental instruction about the use of evidence in developing an argument and provides multiple examples of poor, average and good examples.

Students gain the skills of recognising good and bad practice and acquire a language to articulate why this is the case.

The module is designed in a way that requires students to engage with and develop a deep understanding of the content in order to pass the quiz. It requires students to develop conceptual understanding of what constitutes **good and bad citation practice**, and then apply that knowledge to the evaluation of various examples.



### evaluation

An important evaluation criterion for the efficacy of a discipline-based but 'generalised' learning module is the transferability of the skills that students acquire.

Student comment:

*"In my first-year, I didn't know much about this stuff; so, by making it available, I am able to refer to it whenever I want to...so, it's like a dictionary and an instructional manual put together. Now, when I want to put sentences together, I look at the resource."*



**Venkat Yanamandram**  
School of Management & Marketing  
University of Wollongong  
venkaty@uow.edu.au