Reducing plagiarism through assessment design

Assess the process
Any submission starts with research, writing notes, linking ideas and redrafting, and these preparatory stages of the journey towards the final piece of work should be just as important as the end product. Therefore asking students to submit work-in-progress reports, review notes, drafts or revisions are all strategies that will help students to manage their time effectively and avoid any last minute panics that may lead to plagiarism.

Offer constructive feedback
Providing students with high quality feedback at all stages of the writing process can help to motivate them and address any potential issues long before the final essay is due. Tools such as Turnitin allow tutors to provide detailed and individualised feedback to students.

Make it personal
Invite students to pick a research topic that is relevant to them. This personal perspective is more likely to generate a unique piece of work as it puts the student in control.

Get students to think for themselves
Asking students to simply “list” or “describe” is acceptable at the outset of their studies, however assessment tasks should ideally attempt to stimulate and develop students’ critical thinking skills in order to evaluate and synthesise the work of others and encourage them to find their own unique voice. (Bloom, 1956, cited in Bloom’s taxonomy of learning domains)

References