

Quality Code for Higher Education

Staff Referencing

INTRODUCTION

You **should** introduce your Department's referencing guidelines, outlining their content. You should also list the generic rules of referencing. A suggested wording is:

The golden rules of referencing

- Be consistent – use only the guidelines provided by your Department and stick to them for all your work, unless a lecturer tells you otherwise. Follow the detail in these guidelines absolutely, for example punctuation, capitals, italics and underlining. If you do not do this, you may lose marks for your work. Referencing is all about attention to detail!
- If the source of information you are referencing does not fit any of the examples in your referencing guidelines (see below), choose the nearest example and include enough information for your reader to find and check that source, in a format as close to the example as possible. Remember, always ask your lecturer if you are not sure about referencing.
- Gather all the details you need for your references whilst you have the sources of information in your possession. If you forget to do this and cannot find the sources of information again (they may have been borrowed from the Library, for example, by another reader), you cannot legitimately use them in your essay. If you do so without referencing them, you could be accused of plagiarism.
- Keep the referencing details you have gathered in a safe place. You can use small index cards for this or an electronic database, so that you can sort your references into the order laid down in your guidelines – usually alphabetical by author's surname.

What referencing is -

Staff **must** explain exactly what referencing is, as some students have little or no knowledge of it. A suggested wording is:

- Referencing is acknowledging the sources of information (originated by another person) that you have used to help you write your essay, report or other piece of work. In your academic work, you should use the existing knowledge of others to back up and provide evidence for your arguments. The sources of information you use may include books, journal articles (paper or electronic), newspapers, government publications, videos, websites, computer programmes, interviews etc.

Why you must reference your sources of information -

You **must** give the reasons why students must reference their sources of information, to help them to understand the principles behind the process. A suggested wording is:

- There are several reasons why you must reference your work. In no order, these are:
- As courtesy to the originator of the material.
- To provide evidence of the depth and breadth of your reading.

- To enable your reader to find and read in more detail, a source of information to which you refer in your work.
- To allow your lecturer/marker to check that what you claim is true; or to understand why you have made a particular mistake, and teach you how to avoid it in future.
- To enable you to find the source of information if you need to use it again.
- To avoid accusations of plagiarism.

What plagiarism is -

You **must** explain what plagiarism is, using the following wording:

- Plagiarism is a form of fraud. It is work which purports to be a candidate's own but which is taken without acknowledgement from the published or unpublished work of others. (University of Hull, 2004)
- What is plagiarism? It is work which purports to be a candidate's own but which is taken without acknowledgement from the published or unpublished work of others. Such unattributed taking is plagiarism whether from articles, books, computer programs, data, essays, papers, reports, or any other material originated by another person, whether obtained from written, printed or electronic sources, including via the Internet, the World Wide Web (WWW) or any other computer-based or networked system. It is plagiarism whether the medium is literary (essays and reports), graphical (designs, diagrams, graphics), electronic (computer programs) or mathematical (proofs). Intention to commit the offence is not relevant to the finding of guilt, but may be relevant to the penalty imposed. (University of Hull, 2008)
- In other words, plagiarism is using the work of others without acknowledging your source of information; that is, passing off someone else's work as your own (stealing it).

When you must use a reference in your work -

You **must** tell students when to use references in their work. A suggested wording is:

- You must use a reference whenever you:
 - Use a direct quotation from a source of information.
 - Paraphrase (put into your own words), someone else's ideas that you have read or heard. This is an alternative to using a direct quotation.
 - Use statistics or other pieces of specific information, which are drawn from a recognisable source.

How to use quotations in the text of your work -

You **must** explain the function of quotations within a piece of work and some general principles of their use. A suggested wording is:

- Quotations should be used sparingly, for example as primary source material or as evidence to support your own arguments. They should be fairly brief if possible, so that there is room in your work for plenty of your own arguments, not just those of others. When using quotations in your work:
- Copy the words and punctuation of the original, exactly, except when you wish to omit some words from the quotation. In this case, use three dots ... to indicate where the missing words were in the original.
- If the original has an error, quote it as written but add [sic] in square brackets to tell your reader that you know it is an error but that this is what the original says

- Make minor amendments to grammar if necessary, so that your writing and the quotation flow naturally. Put your amendments in square brackets, for example: “In his autobiography, Churchill says that [he] was born at an early age...” The original says “I was born at an early age...”
- You **must** also explain how to format and present quotations within the text of your work, depending on your department’s preferences. One example is:
 - If the quotation is a line long or less, incorporate it into your text and enclose it in quotation (speech) marks.
 - If the quotation is longer than a line, put it in an indented paragraph (start it on a new line; indent it at either side; single space it; and do not use quotation (speech) marks).

Referencing in the text of your work -

You **must** explain how to reference sources of information in the text of a piece of work, and why the references must be in an abbreviated format. A suggested wording to introduce this is:

- In the text of your work you are expected to reference your sources of information in an abbreviated (short) format, which signposts your reader to the full details of the sources in your list of references/bibliography at the end of your work (see below). You do not use full references in the middle of your work because they are bulky; they break up the flow of your writing; and they are included in your word count.

You **must** then give examples of abbreviated references in the text of a piece of work, formatted according to your department’s preferred referencing system. You should give examples of references for a paraphrased piece of writing, and of references for direct quotations (in which you may require a page number).

Referencing at the end of your work -

You **must** explain how to reference sources of information in the list of references/bibliography at the end of a piece of work, and why the references **must** be in detailed (full) format. A suggested wording to introduce this is:

- The references at the end of your work must give the full details of your sources of information, which are signposted from the short references in the text of your work. These full references enable your reader to find and check your sources of information if they wish to.

You **must** then explain whether you require a list of references, a bibliography or both, at the end of a piece of work. The strict definitions of these are as follows, but you may use these terms differently within your department:

- **A list of references** includes all the sources of information which have actually been quoted from, paraphrased or referred to in the text of a piece of work.
- **A bibliography** includes all references, plus all the other sources of information which have been used to assist with the writing of a piece of work, but which are not actually quoted from, paraphrased or referred to in the text of a piece of work. A bibliography shows better than a list of references, how widely a student has read around his/her subject.

You **must** go on to explain how the list of references and/or bibliography should be arranged, for example:

- Alphabetically by authors' surnames, with all the sources of information in one list, or
- By types of information sources (for example books, web sites, computer programs) and then alphabetically by authors' surnames

You **must** then give examples of full references for different types of information sources, formatted according to your department's preferred referencing system. You must give examples of full references for:

- Books
- Chapters in books that are a collection of chapters by different authors
- Printed journal/periodical articles
- Electronic journal/periodical articles
- Individual work on the Web

You **must** also give examples of full references for the other types of information sources that your students may use, formatted according to your department's preferred referencing system. Examples are:

- Theses
- Films
- CD ROMs/DVDs
- Computer programs
- Television programmes
- Images
- Interviews
- Teaching practice kits
- etc.

You **should** give all the examples of full references in the following tabular format:

- Type of information source (for example, Books)

ELEMENTS OF REFERENCE	ORDER OF ELEMENTS AND FORMAT OF REFERENCE
<p>List all the elements of the reference, in the order stipulated in your department's preferred referencing system, for example:</p> <p>Author: surname, plus initials (or forename) Year of publication Complete title and subtitle Edition (if applicable) Place of publication Publisher's name</p>	<p>Give one or more examples of actual references, formatted according to your department's preferred referencing system and with the elements in the order laid down in the first column. Capitalisation, italics and punctuation should be exactly as stipulated in your preferred system, so that students are not misled or confused. An example using the pure Harvard system is:</p> <p>BLOGGS, S. 1993. <i>The Sixties in profile</i>. London: Hippy Press.</p>

Please note that the Library team can offer advice to staff writing referencing guidelines on how to reference different sources of information, particularly those such as websites and electronic journals, which can be difficult.

Frequently asked questions

You **must** give answers to the most common questions students ask about referencing. These are:

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- What do I do if there is more than one author?
- What about sources of information with no acknowledged author?
- What about sources of information which have an editor, not an acknowledged author?
- What is the difference between an edition and a reprint?
- How do I reference a quotation by an author, which I found as a quotation in a book written by someone else?
- What do I do if the source of information has no date?

Please note that the Library team can offer advice to staff writing referencing guidelines on how to answer these questions.

At the end of the referencing guidelines, you should remind students that the Library team and the HE Achievement Coach offers advice about referencing to students at all level.