Referencing your sources

from My Learning Essentials

Introduction

This resource introduces the idea of referencing your work, focusing on these areas:

1 *WHAT* is referencing **?**

2 *WHY* do I need to reference **?**

3 *WHAT* do I need to reference **?**

4 *HOW* do I read a reference **?**

Note that this resource does not include details about how to format your references in different styles. You can find this information on the referencing guide.

Referencing styles

There are many different referencing styles and you must ensure that you are following the appropriate style when submitting your work.

Commonly used styles at the University of Manchester include: Harvard, APA and Vancouver.

YOU SHOULD ALWAYS CHECK WITH YOUR TUTOR TO BE SURE THAT YOU ARE USING THE CORRECT GUIDELINES AS EXPECTED BY YOUR SCHOOL.

The examples in this resource use the Harvard style, but the underlying principles of referencing are the same no matter what style you use.

What is referencing?

Referencing is a way of acknowledging the sources that you have referred to in your work.

There are a large number of different referencing styles, and they all have slightly different conventions. Your tutors will tell you which style you should use in your work.

What is referencing?

There are two parts to a reference: a citation within your writing, and an entry in your reference list with the full details of the source.

CITATION

A citation should appear in your text whenever you refer to the ideas or work of another author. Exactly how this looks will depend on the referencing style that you use, but it often will be the author's name and year of publication in brackets at the end of a sentence, eg:

The Cynefin framework allows leaders to see things from new viewpoints (Snowden and Boone, 2007)

REFERENCE LIST

A reference list is a complete listing of all of the books, journal articles, websites and other sources that you have referred to in a piece of work. As with a citation, exactly how each entry in a reference list is formatted will depend on the style you are using, but they tend to include the same information, eg:

Snowden, D.J. and Boone, M. E. (2007) "A leader's framework for decision making". Harvard Business Review. 85(11), pp. 68 - 76

Reference list or bibliography?

A **reference list** is a list of all of the sources you have cited in your work.

A **bibliography** also includes sources that you may have used for background reading but not explicitly referred to in your work.

Usually you will only need to include a reference list, though the two terms are sometimes used interchangeably.

As with determining what referencing style you need to use, you should always check with your tutor to ensure you know what is expected in your work.
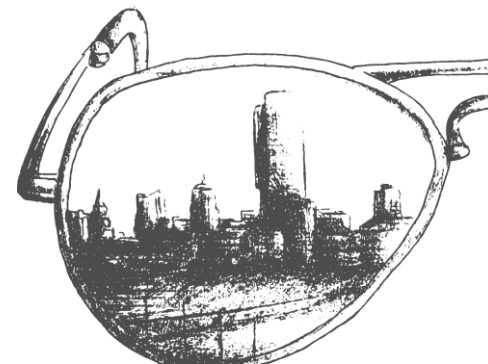
Why do I need to reference?

You may have been told that you need to reference your work, but **why is referencing so important?**

Referencing enables an author to do a number of things . . .

INFORM   **SEPARATE**   **REINFORCE**

DEMONSTRATE   **ACKNOWLEDGE**

We'll learn more about these on the next few pages.

Why do I need to reference?

Referencing enables you to

separate **your ideas from the ideas of others.**

You will often be marked on your ability to assess, compare, contrast, critically analyse and evaluate different arguments.

Accurate referencing will help to make it clear which parts of your writing are based on the work of others and which are your own analysis and evaluation.

Referencing enables you to

demonstrate **that you have read widely.**

Referencing the sources that you have used provides evidence of the depth and breadth of your reading.

Reading around your subject demonstrates that you have been proactive in your research, rather than using just your reading lists.

Why do I need to reference?

Referencing enables you to

reinforce your arguments.

Referring to the work of experts in your subject area illustrates that you are basing your own arguments on established evidence from high-quality sources. Your references can thus lend credibility and authority to your own ideas.

Referencing enables you to
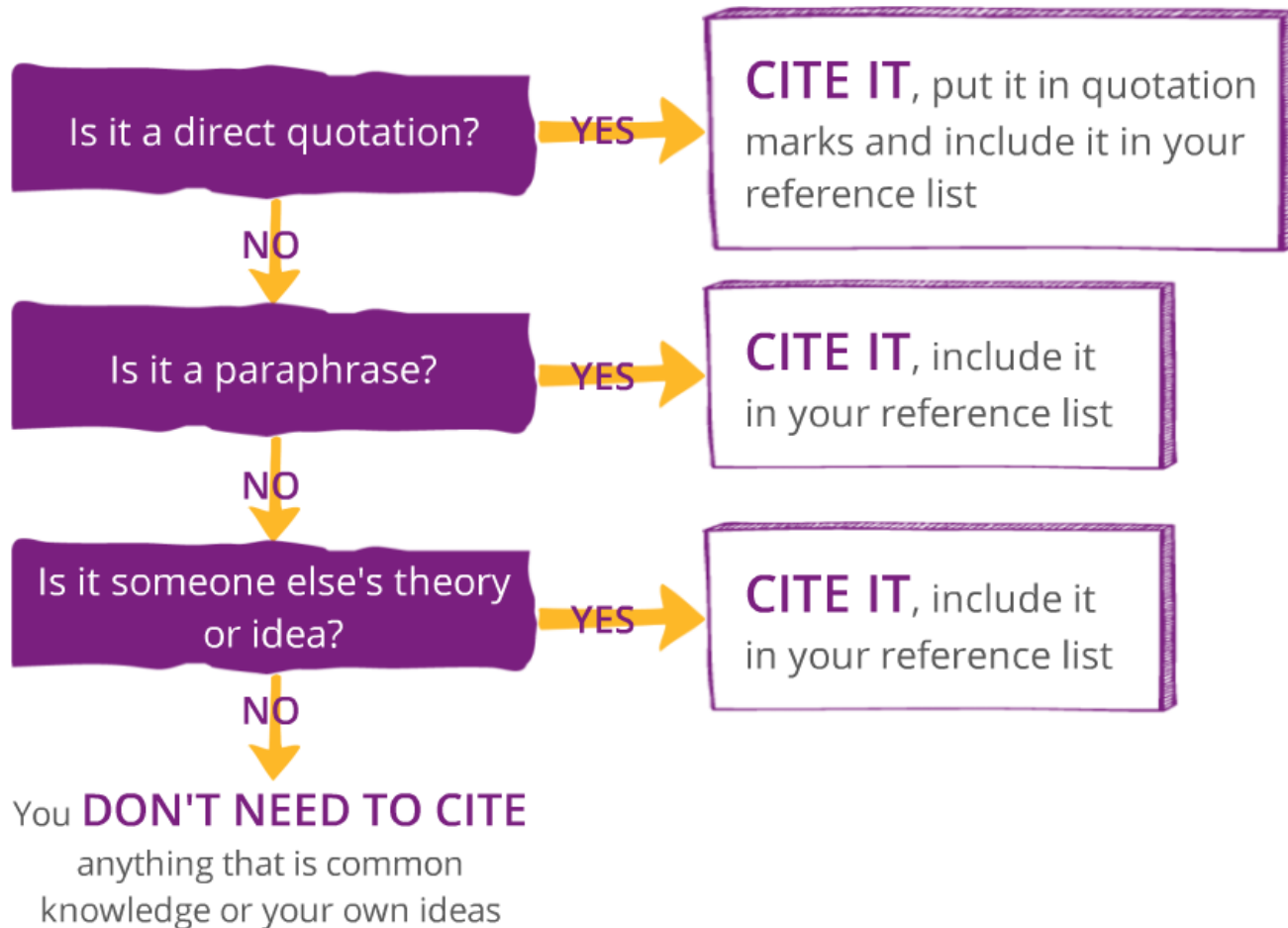
inform your readers of the sources you have used

It is important for others to be able to follow up on your references to find the original sources of your information. Thorough and accurate referencing makes it easy to do this.

Referencing enables you to acknowledge contributions from others.

It is good academic practice to acknowledge the work of others when referring to it in your own work. By providing accurate references for the sources you use, you can place your writing in the context of the work being done on the topic and acknowledge the work done by others. This is key to ensuring others understand your work and in avoiding academic malpractice such as plagiarism.

What do I need to reference?

This flowchart illustrates what you do and do not need to reference.

Is it a direct quotation? → **YES** → **CITE IT**, put it in quotation marks and include it in your reference list

NO ↓

Is it a paraphrase? → **YES** → **CITE IT**, include it in your reference list

NO ↓

Is it someone else's theory or idea? → **YES** → **CITE IT**, include it in your reference list

NO ↓

You **DON'T NEED TO CITE** anything that is common knowledge or your own ideas

What do I need to reference? Examples

Someone else's theory

Reference to someone else's theory or idea must always be cited. In this example, a student is referring to a theory though not directly quoting or paraphrasing the author:

The Eternal Inflation model of the universe (Guth 1979) is one of several cosmological models suggesting existence of a multiverse.

The full source reference for the Guth article in which the theory was first published would also be included in the reference list.

Common knowledge

Something that is common knowledge does not need to be referenced. In this sense, the term common knowledge refers to anything that is an unchanging, verifiable and indisputable piece of information, such as dates or historic facts.

The first component of the International Space Station was launched into orbit in 1998.

This example would not need to be referenced.

How do I read a reference?

References contain a number of different pieces of information about a source. In order to be able to follow-up on a written reference and find the original source, you need to be able to identify what these elements refer to.

The elements that are included in a reference will depend on what type of source the reference is. The examples on the next pages illustrate some elements you'll find in some common source types.

THE ORDER AND FORMAT OF EACH ELEMENT CHANGES BETWEEN DIFFERENT REFERENCING STYLES. THESE EXAMPLES USE THE HARVARD SYSTEM.
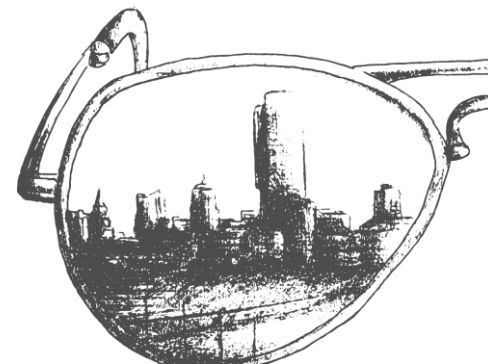
How do I read a reference: examples

Books

Boatright, J. (2006) *Ethics and the conduct of business*. 5th edn. New Jersey: Pearson Prentice Hall.

Date
The year that the book was published.

Title
The title will appear including any subtitles it may have. In the Harvard style, the title is italiced.

Place of publication
Book references include both the city and name of the publisher. Very few other sources include this information, so any reference which does include it is highly likely to be a book.

Author
This is normally listed as the first element of a reference.
In an edited book, the author's name will be followed by **ed.**

Edition
If a book has more than one edition, the edition number will be included. This is a good indication that you're looking at a book reference.
If it's the first edition, this will not appear in the reference.

How do I read a reference: examples

Journal articles

Snowden, D.J. and Boone, M.E. (2007) 'A leader's framework for decision making',

Harvard Business Review, 85(11), pp. 68-76.

Author
This is normally listed as the first element of a reference.

Date
The year that the article was published.

Article title
The full title of the article, including any subtitles.

Journal title
In the Harvard style, the journal title is italiced. An e-journal would have [Online] after the journal title.

Volume and issue number
Academic journals are published frequently, and they are organised by volumes and issues. The first number is the volume number; the issue number appears in brackets after the volume.

Page numbers
These are the page numbers of the article within the particular volume and issue of the journal. For a single page, this would read p. 68 rather than pp. 68 - 76.

How do I read a reference: examples

Website

Wakefield, J. (2013) *World wakes up to digital divide.*

Available at: http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/technology/8568681.stm (Accessed 19th April 2913).

Date
The year that the article or site was published or last updated.

Available at
A website reference will always include the URL at which you can find the site. It may be either a direct link to the article or document, or a link to the website's home page.

Date accessed
The data that the site was accessed

Author
This is normally listed as the first element of a reference. For websites, the author is often difficult to identify; in this case the author may be listed as the name of the organisation (eg BBC).

Article or website title
Use the name of the webpage or document wherever possible.

How do I read a reference: examples

Ebook

Baker, M. and Hart, S. (2008) *The Marketing Book.* 6th end. Elsevier Ltd. [Online]

Available at: http://www.sciencedirect.com

Date
The year that the ebook was published.

Edition
If an ebook has more than one edition, the edition number will be included. This is a good indication that you're looking at a book reference. If it's the first edition, this will not appear in the reference.

E-book
Ebook references will include the name of the publisher or provider, followed by [Online].

Author
This is normally listed as the first element of a reference. If there's more than one author, they'll be listed in the order that they appear on the book cover.

Title
The title will appear in full exactly how it appears on the cover of the book, including any subtitles.
In the Harvard style, the title is italicised

Available at
An ebook reference will always include the URL at which you can find the book. It may be either a direct link to the ebook if it is openly available online, or a link to the ebook publisher.

Summary: making referencing easier

During your time at university, you'll use a large number of books, journal articles, reports, websites and other sources to carry out research for your assignments.

Using reference management software such as EndNote online can help you to keep track of all of these sources, making it easier to reference your work. EndNote can help you to:

1 *GET BETTER MARKS*

2 *SAVE TIME*

3 *AVOID PLAGIARISM*

RELATED TOPIC

Learn more about EndNote in

[Making referencing easier: introducing EndNote online](#).

You've now reached the end of this resource.