Referencing & Citing

Referencing is letting the reader know where you got the information from. The text which does this is called a 'reference'. 'Citing' is another, more formal, term for referencing. Under this terminology, a reference is called a 'citation'. A citation is the same thing as a reference. Universities prefer to talk of 'citations' rather than 'references'.

Referencing is one of the most emotionally difficult parts of learning to write for university, but unavoidable. It is fiddly, pedantic, demands concentration, can be hard to learn, yet it is absolutely vital you master citing. Every person marking your work has been through the same pain, and mastered the skill. They will be sympathetic to your pain, but won't relax their demand that you cite correctly, even in your first written work.

When to cite

Unless told otherwise, cite everything which is not obvious or universally agreed and which you did not come up with yourself. You do not have to provide a citation that Dublin is the capital of Ireland. However, if you want to claim it is the most important city in Ireland, you would have to provide a citation. This is because it is a debatable claim. It is not so much that others may feel their city is more important, but that 'important' is a word which can have many meanings. The first response an academic will have to the claim that Dublin is the most important city in Ireland is to ask "important in what way?" Are you talking about population size, economic impact, cultural influence, the beauty of the city, historical factors, architecture, pollution created, recycling centres, traffic levels, sports performance, or something else? To claim Dublin is the most important city in Ireland you would have to cite a paper or book which defines importance and provides evidence that Dublin meets that criteria of importance better than any other Irish city. The purpose for citing them is so you do not have to make that argument and present that evidence. If the reader is puzzled by what you say, or wants to know more, or wants to see a justification, they can use the citation to find the source you referenced and assess it for themselves.

Citations help your arguments. Effectively, you are saying "I accept what this person says, and I'm moving on from there. If you don't like it, your argument is with them, not me." For example, if you want to say that capitalism is evil and discuss alternatives, you'll have to first explain how and why capitalism is evil. On the other hand, if you say that you accept Marx's arguments for the evil of capitalism and are now going to discuss alternatives, anyone who doesn't believe capitalism is evil has to argue with Marx, not you.

Here are situations in which you must cite:

1. Using obscure or newly discovered facts.
2. Using someone's opinions.
3. Direct quotations.
4. Paraphrasing someone else.
5. Summarising someone's argument.

Academic papers frequently average one citation for every hundred words. The more advanced your university education, the more citations you should aim for.

Quotations

Don't provide too many direct quotations. Many academic journals set a limit of two. You will not get any marks for including quotations – you didn't write it so you can't get credit for someone else's work. Quotations take space you could have used for your own writing, which you could get credit for. If you put too many quotations into your work, you give the impression you are just filling it up because you couldn't think of anything to say. When you do use a quotation, keep it as short as possible.

Turnitin is the university system which checks your written work for copying and scores it for originality. The more quotations you include, the worse your originality score.

There are only two valid reasons for including a direct quotation. Firstly, use a quotation if you want to discuss it and need to refer to the words used *and* it is short. If the quote is going to exceed one page, simply cite the version you are using so others can see it for themselves, or (better) shorten the quoted material to only what is essential. Secondly, use a quotation if it says something so perfectly you could not possibly do better (which is rarely the case).

It is always preferable to paraphrase a quotation with your own wording. Not only does this maintain originality, it demonstrates your understanding of the original quotation, which improves your marks.

If the quote is less than one line, include it in the paragraph. If the quote is longer than one line, place it in its own paragraph. You can skip portions of a text with '…'

EG: "To be or not….is the question." (Shakespeare, p.234)

A quote must always provide the page number from which it is taken. If the quote spans more than one page, you must indicate the starting and ending page number. Each citation style has its own format for citing quotations, so ensure you follow the appropriate guidelines.

Sometimes you need to add some text to make a quote comprehensible. Such text is contained within square brackets.

EG: "It was said they [the leaders] didn't care for these people." (Straw, 2004, p. 112)

You can place critical portions of a quote in italics in order to draw the reader's attention to them, but you must indicate these are your italics with "my italics", and did not occur in the original.

EG: "It was said *by the opposition* that the government was weak." (Straw, 2004, p. 213) (my italics)

Alternatives to direct quotes

It is considered preferable to paraphrase or summarise than to quote. Paraphrasing involves putting the quote into your own words. Summarizing involves putting the main idea into your own words, focusing on the truly important aspects. Not only does this avoid copyright issues, it demonstrates you understand the material. Summarising is preferable to paraphrasing because it demonstrates a deeper level of comprehension on your part than is necessary for paraphrasing.

You must cite any paraphrased or summarised material, but you do not have to provide page numbers.

Correct Citation Practice

It is essential that you cite everything which is not your own work. Any idea, quote, concept or fact which is obtained from another person must be cited.

If in doubt, cite.

The more citations your work contains, the better. Academic papers average one citation for every 100 words. You cannot have too many citations.

It is acceptable to cite multiple sources for the same item.

EG:

Many people in rural areas experience a sense of isolation (Thomas, 2004; Jones, 2006; Hawthorn & Smith, 1999; Jacobs, 2015)

Citing multiple sources shows you can cross-reference between sources and have done good research. It also suggests there is wide support for your point and makes it harder to disagree with.

Failure to cite is called "plagiarism." It is a form of theft. It is the worst sin you can commit in academia. Intentional plagiarism can get you expelled from university, have your degree withdrawn, and ruin your life.

No one will give you the benefit of the doubt over plagiarism. If you don't cite something which you should have, it will be assumed you were trying to trick people into thinking it was your own work.

Citation styles

There are two parts to a citation – the "inline reference" and the bibliographic information. The inline reference goes into your sentence at the end of the fact you are citing (it is "in the line"). It is never the full information, merely enough information that the full details can be found in the bibliographic information. The bibliographic information is usually placed in a bibliography at the end of your document, but a few citation styles place it in footnotes of the page where it was used.

There are over 300 different citation styles. These differ in terms of how they do the inline references and bibliographic information. They will vary in terms of the order of the author's name (eg: "Bob Jones" vs "Jones, Bob"), what goes in the inline reference, the punctuation used, the order in which items of information are provided and the punctuation used. **Every single element, including the smallest comma, is absolutely**

vital. A single mistake can render a citation unusable. Every space, comma, full stop and every other formatting element is equally important. For example, the difference between Chicago-style and APA-style inline citations is that APA puts a comma after the author's name, but Chicago does not. This tiny difference is considered very important. The people marking your work will notice even the smallest error and your marks will suffer.

The following provides examples of the same citation in different styles. If you cannot see the differences, look again. You need to develop your citation skills to the level where the differences are clear. These are the major citation styles, and you should be familiar with their differences, down to the last space and comma.

Examples of Citation Styles - Books

CHICAGO:

INLINE: (Ollman 2001)

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Ollman, Bertell. 2001. *Alienation: Marx's Concept of Man in Capitalist Society*. 2nd ed. Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press.

APA:

INLINE: (Ollman, 2001)

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Ollman, B. (2001). *Alienation: Marx's Concept of Man in Capitalist Society* (2nd ed.). Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press.

HARVARD:

INLINE: (Ollman, 2001)

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Ollman, B., 2001. Alienation: Marx's Concept of Man in Capitalist Society, 2nd ed. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge; New York.

MLA:

INLINE: (Ollman)

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Ollman, Bertell. Alienation: Marx's Concept of Man in Capitalist Society. 2nd ed., Cambridge University Press, 2001.

Examples of Citation Styles – Journal Papers

CHICAGO:

INLINE: (Dainow 2013)

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Dainow, Brandt. 2013. 'What Can a Medieval Friar Teach Us about the Internet: Deriving Criteria of Justice for Cyberlaw from Thomist Natural Law Theory'. *Philosophy and Technology* 26 (4): 459–76.

APA:

INLINE: (Dainow, 2013)

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Dainow, B. (2013). What can a medieval friar teach us about the Internet: Deriving Criteria of Justice for Cyberlaw from Thomist Natural Law Theory. *Philosophy and Technology, 26*(4), 459–476.

HARVARD:

INLINE: (Dainow, 2013)

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Dainow, B., 2013. What can a medieval friar teach us about the Internet: Deriving Criteria of Justice for Cyberlaw from Thomist Natural Law Theory. Philos. Technol. 26, 459–476.

MLA:

INLINE: (Dainow)

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Dainow, Brandt. 'What Can a Medieval Friar Teach Us about the Internet: Deriving Criteria of Justice for Cyberlaw from Thomist Natural Law Theory'. Philosophy and Technology, vol. 26, no. 4, 2013, pp. 459–76.

Examples of Citation Styles – Quotations

CHICAGO:

INLINE: (Allmer 2012, 130)

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Allmer, Thomas. 2012. 'Critical Internet Surveillance Studies and Economic Surveillance'. In *Internet and Surveillance: The Challenges of Web 2.0 and Social Media*, edited by Christian Fuchs, Marisol Sandoval, Anders Albrechtslund, and Boersma Kees, 124–43. Routledge Studies in Science, Technology and Society. New York: Routledge.

APA:

INLINE: (Allmer, 2012, p. 130)

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Allmer, T. (2012). Critical internet surveillance studies and economic surveillance. In C. Fuchs, M. Sandoval, A. Albrechtslund, & B. Kees (Eds.), *Internet and Surveillance: the challenges of Web 2.0 and social media* (pp. 124–143). New York: Routledge.

HARVARD:

INLINE: (Allmer, 2012, p. 130)

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Allmer, T., 2012. Critical internet surveillance studies and economic surveillance, in: Fuchs, C., Sandoval, M., Albrechtslund, A., Kees, B. (Eds.), Internet and Surveillance: The Challenges of Web 2.0 and Social Media, Routledge Studies in Science, Technology and Society. Routledge, New York, pp. 124–143.

MLA:

INLINE: (Allmer 130)

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Allmer, Thomas. 'Critical Internet Surveillance Studies and Economic Surveillance'. *Internet and Surveillance: The Challenges of Web 2.0 and Social Media*, edited by Christian Fuchs et al., Routledge, 2012, pp. 124–43.

Each department can decide which style to use. Some departments allow each lecturer to select their own preference. Most departments will list the citation style in their handbook. *Do not guess*. If you are not absolutely clear as to which citation style is expected, ask. Be careful. There are many versions of some citation styles, so you need to ensure you use the version the department demands. Some citation styles are updated every year, but a department may stay with the same old version for 10-20 years.

Citation Systems

There is software which can manage your citations for you, ensuring they are always perfect. They are worth having and they are free. If you are working at post-graduate level, a citation management system is essential.

The main citation management systems are Zotero, Endnote, and Mendeley. The library can offer support in how to use each. However, these are relatively complex systems, so you cannot work them out as you go. You will have to devote two or three hours to learning them. On the other hand, checking your citations are correct will take two or three hours every assignment, so the time invested in learning them is worthwhile.

Bibliographies

If your work demands research, it must contain a bibliography. Some disciplines, such as Education and English, have "reflective" essays, in which people discuss their internal thoughts. These do not *need* citations, but a few citations may improve your marks. All other written work will require a bibliography of citations used.

Bibliographies should contain only references you cite in your work. They are not places to list everything you read, only what you use. Essays are not assessed on the effort you put in, only on the results you produce. You have to accept that you will read much material you will never use. That's the nature of research. If you want to show how much effort you've put into your research, cite lots of different sources. Academic papers usually contain one citation every 75 – 100 words, while the bibliography in a book can contain over a thousand references.