

In-Text Citations and References

This document is an excerpt from the Anti-Plagiarism guide and is focused on how to create in-text citations and references and why they must both be used in your assignments.

What is Citation and Why is it Important?

In academic writing, especially at the graduate level, citation is a standard practice that shows what you have read and how it informs your own research. Whenever you cite a source, it shows that you have conducted research on a topic and that you have considered a variety of relevant ideas and viewpoints in your discipline. In-text citations and references help your reader understand who and what you've read and what sort of larger discussions and debates you considered as you developed your own ideas and arguments. Citation also helps your reader (and the grader) differentiate between your ideas and the ideas of the researchers you've read and incorporated into your arguments. When you cite the authors you've read and used in your work, you're also giving them credit for their research, which is how you avoid plagiarism.

Note that **you must cite every source you include in your paper**—even if it's from a blog post or any other site on the internet. This includes free, open-access materials and even content in the public domain.

In order to appropriately give an author credit for their work, there are two key components to citation: in-text citations, which you use in the body of your essay, and a references or works cited page, which is a list of references to all the sources you cited in your essay. Whenever you use the ideas or research from an outside source, **you must include both an in-text citation and a reference for that source in order to avoid plagiarism**. In-text citations are required whether you quote the source directly or paraphrase the source material.

To create citations and references, you need to pick one citation style and be consistent. Citation styles are systems for writing and citing that are designed to be specific to certain disciplines and fields of study. At WQU, our lesson notes and course materials follow the Modern Language Association's (MLA) style guidelines, so we'll provide examples and guidelines for how to create in-text citations and references in MLA style. But please note that you can use any citation style you'd like. Other common citation

styles, for example, include the American Psychological Association (APA) and Chicago style.

How to Create an In-Text Citation:

To create an in-text citation in MLA style, you need two pieces of information: 1.) the author's last name(s) (or the name of the organization), and 2.) the page number where the cited material can be located within the source. If your source doesn't have page numbers, then you can just omit that information from the citation. Put a space between the author and the page number, but do not include any punctuation between them.

Here are a few examples of how to create in-text citations for your sources:

One Author: (Hughes 50)

Two Authors: (Hughes and Throughton 102)

Three or More Authors*: (Hughes et al. 234)

Organization as Author: (U.S. Department of Labor 109)

No Page Number: (U.S. Department of Labor)

***Note:** For sources with three or more authors, you only need to list the first author's last name followed by the phrase "et al." Fun fact: Et al. means "and others" in Latin.

How to Create a Reference:

To create a reference in MLA style, you'll need a lot more information about your source. The reference provides all the information your reader will need about the source in case they'd like to locate and read the source on their own. As such, references typically include much more information than in-text citations do.

Here, we include examples of how to create references for a few common source types: books, journal articles, and YouTube videos. Please note that your reference might vary depending on how many authors you have, whether you're citing a chapter in an edited book, whether you're citing a specific edition of a book, and other factors. In order to create an accurate reference for your source, it's important that you first identify what kind of source you're using. Then, find an example citation to use as a model for your own source information.

Book:

Format:

Last Name, First Name. *Book Title*. Publisher, Year.

Examples:

Sorkin, Andrew Ross. *Too Big to Fail: The Inside Story of How Wall Street and Washington Fought to Save the Financial System—and Themselves*. Penguin Books, 2010.

For ebooks, simply add the URL after the period that follows the year:

Sutton, Richard S., and Andrew G. Barto. *Reinforcement Learning: An Introduction*. MIT Press, 2018. <http://incompleteideas.net/sutton/book/the-book.html>.

Journal Article:

Format:

Last name, First name. "Article Title." *Journal Title*, volume number, issue number, year, page range, URL.

Examples:

Akansu, Ali. "The Flash Crash: A Review." *Journal of Capital Market Studies*, vol. 1, no. 1, 2017, pp. 89–100, <https://www.emerald.com/insight/content/doi/10.1108/JCMS-10-2017-001/full/html>.

Sanger, William, and Thierry Warin. "High Frequency and Unstructured Data in Finance: An Exploratory Study of Twitter." *Journal of Global Research in Computer Science*, vol. 7, no. 4, 2016, pp. 6–16, <https://www.rroij.com/open-access/high-frequency-and-unstructured-data-in-finance-an-exploratory-study-of-twitter-.php?aid=70514>.

Booth, Anthony, and Boudewijn de Bruin. "Stakes Sensitivity and Credit Rating: A New Challenge for Regulators." *Journal of Business Ethics*, vol. 169, 2021, pp. 169–179, <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007>.

Hattingh, Marié, et al. "The Use of Critical Thinking to Identify Fake News: A Systematic Literature Review." *Responsible Design, Implementation and Use of Information and Communication Technology*, 2020, pp. 235–246, <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7134234/>.

***Note:** For open-access journals, oftentimes, there may be no volume number, issue number, or page numbers. In this case, simply omit this info from your reference.

YouTube Video:

Format:

Username. "Video Title." *YouTube*, Upload date, URL.

Examples:

Ben Lambert. "Characteristic Functions Introduction." *YouTube*, 18 June 2013,
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mYhca1p26n4>.

Harvard University. "Lecture 31: Markov Chains | Statistics 110." *YouTube*, 29 April 2013,
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8AJPs3gvNIY>.

How to Cite Source Code in MLA:

<https://style.mla.org/citing-source-code/>

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