

Incorporating Source Material

Part 1: Referencing & Citation

Referencing & Citation (R&C) is defining feature of research/academic writing. Basically it refers to the means by which research writers indicate the sources of information they use to explain, support, or defend the central ideas of their compositions.

The Purpose of Referencing & Citation

Referencing and citation performs three main functions:

1. To avoid plagiarism. Plagiarism is the intentional use of another person's work (often referred to as "intellectual property") without acknowledging them as the original author. Attitudes towards the use of intellectual property vary from culture to culture, but in most Western countries, plagiarism and the protection of intellectual property rights is a serious concern among universities and professional organizations. Students who commit plagiarism on an assignment are often punished with a low or failed ("F") grade. Students who continue to plagiarize may be expelled from university. At higher/ professional levels of academics, plagiarism may result in loss of academic title or legal suits.

2. To add credibility to the writing (and the writer). By showing that the main arguments of a paper are based on research (not personal opinions or assumptions), the writer gives more credibility to the material. In other words, the work is given greater value in the eyes of other researchers or professors.

3. To provide other academic researchers with useful sources of information. The whole point of academic writing is to share information with other academic researchers. Although this is less significant at undergraduate (Bachelor's) level studies, it becomes more important at Master's and PhD levels.

Main Components

Referencing and citation is comprised of two main features:

- **The "in-text" citations**, which appear in the text of the essay itself, indicate that the cited information (quoted or paraphrased) was taken from an outside source;
- **The "reference" section**, which appears separately from the main text, i.e. at the bottom of pages (footnotes) or at the end of the composition (end notes; works-cited; or references), provides details about the sources used. Depending on the referencing style used, these details may include:
 - Author or Authors (for all sources),
 - Year/date of publication (for all sources) ,
 - Title of the material (for all sources)
 - Journal issue and volume numbers (for academic journal articles),
 - Place of publication (for books, depending on citation style),
 - Publisher, Edition, (for books, depending on citation style)
 - Page numbers (for academic journal articles and chapters from books)
 - URL address (for sources found online)
 - Date the material was accessed (for sources found online, depending on citation style)

Rules Regarding In-text Citations (When to Cite Sources)

Students are sometimes confused as to when they have to cite sources in their essay. As a general rule, citations must always be given in the following situations:

- When a statement is based on knowledge gained through research (in other words, if the statement *could not have been made* before the research was done, the writer must indicate the source of the new knowledge)
- When statement contains specific data, facts, or information taken from research material (NOTE: in situations where a writer might already know certain specific data, facts, or information related to a topic, they should find the original source to prove their validity)
- When a statement contains a quote taken directly from a source
- When a statement contains a summary or paraphrase of information found in a source

You **do not** need to cite:

- Common knowledge, i.e. information most people would know
- General statements about the topic or issue
- Commonly known historical facts or dates

NOTE: If you are not sure whether a citation is necessary for a certain piece of information, either a.) check with your professor, or b.) include a citation anyway.

Referencing & Citation “Styles”

There are many styles of referencing and citation; though, generally speaking, they can be categorized into two main format styles:

- **“Author-date” styles** (where sources are indicated in the text using the *last name of the author* and the *date of publication*);
- **“Numeric” styles** (where sources are indicated in the text using *numbers* either in brackets, e.g. [1] or (1), or using “superscript” numbers, e.g.¹).

NOTE: When we refer to referencing and citation styles such as MLA, APA, IEEE, etc., we are actually referring to broader *format styles* that govern all components of a research paper, including title pages; rules for headings and sub-headings; use of charts and graphs; captioning; etc. For the purpose of this Quick Guide, only the referencing and citation stylistic requirements are dealt with.

Different academic and professional fields use different referencing and citation formats. Social sciences, for instance generally use APA style, Humanities often prefers MLA or Chicago style, and fields such as mathematics, engineering, and medicine generally use numeric styles such as IEEE or AMA. The following sections provide a brief description of some of the more common styles:

Common Numeric Citation Styles

The following are several numeric (number) citation styles commonly used by university students. While the in-text formats of these styles are similar (in some cases virtually identical), requirements regarding reference list entries will vary. Check with a guideline for details

IEEE (Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers)

- Used primarily in fields of electrical and electronics engineering, computers, and IT
- In-text citations appear as numbers in square brackets e.g. [1] and are repeated throughout the text as needed. The same number is always used for the same source i.e. the first source cited will always be [1]
- In the reference list, sources are listed numerically according to the number they were given in the text.
- For more information see **the IWC Quick Guide to IEEE Style**

Oxford Style

- Used in various disciplines (esp. Humanities)
- In-text citations are numbered sequentially throughout the text as needed, often as superscript numbers e.g. ¹. Unlike AMA and IEEE styles, in Oxford style, the number only represents the citation, not the source. A source may appear as ^{1, 2, 3}, etc. depending on when it is used and how many times.
- In the footnotes or endnotes, details are listed numerically for each individual in-text citation.
- Full source information appears in a separate bibliography, listed alphabetically according to the first letter of the author's last name.
- For more information see **the IWC Quick Guide to Oxford Style**

Common Author-Date Citation Styles

The following are several numeric citation styles commonly used by university students. While the in-text formats of these author-date styles are virtually identical, requirements regarding reference list entries will vary. Check with a guideline for details.

APA (American Psychological Association)

- Generally used in Social Sciences
- In-text citations are indicated with the author's last name and the date of source publication in parentheses e.g. (Smith, 1997)
- In the reference list, sources are listed alphabetically, according the first letter of the author's last name
- For more information see **the IWC Quick Guide to APA Style**

Harvard Style

- Generally used in the humanities, it is very similar in appearance to APA style
- In-text citations are indicated with the author's last name and the date of source publication in parentheses e.g. (Smith, 1997)
- In the reference list, sources are listed alphabetically, according the first letter of the author's last name

Other Common Citation Styles

Chicago Style

The Chicago Manual of Style (CMS) provides two documentation style options:

- A Notes-Bibliography System which is used in literature, history, and the arts. The format for this style is similar to Oxford Style
- An Author-Date System which is often used in the social sciences. The format for this style is quite similar to APA Style

MLA (Modern Language Association)

- Commonly used in the humanities, especially in language and literature studies
- MLA uses an Author-Page format: in-text citations are indicated with the author's last name and the page from which the source information was taken in parentheses e.g. (Smith, 275)
- In the works cited list, sources are listed alphabetically, according the first letter of the author's last name or the first letter of the publisher's name
- For more information see **the IWC Quick Guide to MLA Style**

Referencing & Citation Tips & Strategies

Determine Your Specific R&C Requirements: The referencing and citation style we use generally depends on our academic major or field of study; however, certain programs may have specific R&C style requirements; and sometimes professors have a preferred R&C style. Always check the style requirements before starting your research project. When in doubt, check with your professor.

Locate (and Study) a Style Guide: Finding a style guide is quite easy: an internet search on specific referencing and citation styles will locate numerous websites and PDFs with information and examples of in-text citation and referencing list format requirements.

Create the Reference List as You Research: Whenever you find a source of useful information, collect the reference details (author's name, title, year of publication, etc. depending on your style requirements) on a separate document. If you want, you can go ahead and format your reference list according to the style specifications. By doing so, the list will be completed when or before you finish your research paper.

Using Online Citation Generators

Many students prefer using online citation generators (soft-ware programs) that automatically format citations and reference lists. These programs are convenience and fairly easy to use, and there are a number of free options available.

TIP: Smart Study (smart.study/blog/) provides a list of online citation generators (type “25 best free online citation generators” in the webpage search bar).

WARNING: while online citation generators do the task of formatting citations and references and may save you some time, keep the following in mind:

1. In order to use these generators, you will still need to provide the reference source details (type of material, title of work, author's name, publication date, etc.)
2. The reference lists these generators create often contain format errors which a professor might penalize you for. You should always proofread the final version of your paper and check all in-text citations and reference list entries for mistakes. Having a style guide will help you in that regard.

In-text Citation Variations

In academic writing, writers often present their in-text citations in different ways. For instance, the author of the source can be mentioned in the text of a sentence.

Example (using APA Citation): [Johnson \(2008\)](#) argues that there are three main reasons why students drop out of university, namely poor academic performance, financial problems, or illness.

Example (using Oxford Citation): [Johnson](#) argues that there are three main reasons why students drop out of university, namely poor academic performance, financial problems, or illness.¹

Alternatively the author's name might be provided at the end of the sentence (in parentheses) or, depending on the citation style, not mentioned at all.

Example (using APA style): There are three main reasons why students drop out of university: poor academic performance, financial problems, or illness ([Johnson, 2008](#))

Example (using Oxford style): There are three main reasons why students drop out of university: poor academic performance, financial problems, or illness.¹

When quoting or paraphrasing a specific detail, remember to include the page number either a) separately, at the end of the quote/sentence, or b) with the citation number or reference details depending on the style being used.

Examples (using APA style)

Option a: [Weigle \(2002\)](#) asserts that it is virtually impossible to define writing ability since “the uses to which writing is put by different people in different situations are so varied that no single definition can cover all situations” (p. 4).

Option b: It is virtually impossible to define writing ability since “the uses to which writing is put by different people in different situations are so varied that no single definition can cover all situations” ([Weigle, 2002, p. 4](#)).

Examples using IEEE style

[Weigle](#) asserts that it is virtually impossible to define writing ability since “the uses to which writing is put by different people in different situations are so varied that no single definition can cover all situations” [1, p.4].

Alternatively the author's name can be omitted from the reference, i.e.:

It is virtually impossible to define writing ability since “the uses to which writing is put by different people in different situations are so varied that no single definition can cover all situations” [1, p.4].

Stylistic Notes

In-text Citation Indicators & Signal Phrases

In academic-style essays, writers often use “indicators” (i.e. specific words and phrases, also referred to as “signal phrases”) to let readers know when they are referring to the work of another author or an outside source of information.

These indicators often include a mention of the author's name or a specific source of information. For example:

As [Smith](#) points out....*(the writer indicates that he or she is going to refer to information taken from Smith – the author of the material)*

According to [a recent survey](#)... *(the writer is going to refer to information taken from a survey)*

In [the latest UN report](#)... *(the writer is going to refer to information taken from a recent UN report)*

These phrases tell us that the information that follows comes from the sources mentioned.

NOTE: Always show the relation between the information being cited and the point you are trying to make – don't insert random quotes or information into your text without showing how it connects to your main point.

Reporting Verbs & Phrases

In addition to indicators, writers often use specific reporting verbs that describe the purpose or opinion or point-of-view of the authors they refer to (see Figure 4.5). For example:

In her article, Smith **advocates**...*(meaning that Smith promotes or supports something)*
 The report **criticizes** the belief that... *(the report shows why the belief is wrong or flawed)*

The following table provides some common reporting verbs and what they indicate. NOTE: before using any new words in your writing, make sure you completely understand their meaning.

Reporting verbs considered neutral . They simply indicate something an author has said about a subject.	Reporting verbs that indicate the purpose of the author or source being cited.	Reporting verbs that indicate the opinion/position of the author or source being cited.
Comments	Analyze	Argues
Demonstrates (or shows)	Compares	Advocates
Discusses	Outlines	Believes
Explores	Evaluates	Criticizes
Gives (or Provides)	Explains	Defends
Includes	Illustrates	Disputes
Notes	Investigates	Suggests
Observes	Looks at	
Reports		
Points out that		
States		

Figure 4.1: Common Reporting Verbs

Part 2: Incorporating Information from Sources

Writers use different techniques to incorporate (add) resource material into their writing. This section covers the most commonly used methods of adding information found

- Summarizing
- Paraphrasing
- Quoting

Summarizing

Writers sometimes *summarize* the main point (or points) of longer texts to help support their own ideas.

- Summarizing is used to reduce the actual size/word-count of a text.
- The technique involves removing non-essential language and details from the original text to highlight the main point or central idea.
- This technique is useful when you want to focus on the main point of a text, and not the details. Using this approach, an entire article can be summarized in a few sentences.

Tips & Strategies for Summarizing a Text

In order to summarize a longer text you must completely understand it and be able to identify the key points needed to summarize it.

- **Step 1:** To help locate key supporting information in a text, scan “subheadings” or section titles (common in academic articles) which identify focus areas of the text; as well as the first sentences of paragraphs (which often introduce the main point of the paragraph) and last sentences (which sometimes summarize key points).
- **Step 2:** Once you locate the information you want to use, study the text closely to make sure you can separate the essential information from the non-essential information.
- **Step 3:** Write or highlight the essential points. This will become the basis for your summary.
- **Step 4:** Add the summary to the appropriate section of your essay, changing the format and writing style to match your composition. Remember to add a citation at the end of the summary indicating the source of the information (this is an essential part of academic writing)

Paraphrasing

Another option is *paraphrasing*, information found in outside sources.

- When we paraphrase, we change the words of the text, but not the idea or main point. Paraphrasing can be used for several purposes.
 - Writers sometimes use paraphrasing to “simplify” complicated or highly technical texts to help readers understand them.
 - Paraphrasing is also used to change the “style” of a text or spoken information to match the writer’s own style (e.g. from informal spoken language to formal, academic language; or from highly technical and complicated to a simplified style that non-experts can understand).
- Paraphrasing and summarizing often occur together (reducing the length of a text often requires changing the way it is written).

The most important aspect of paraphrasing is that you have to completely change the words and sentences of the text to “make them your own”, but without changing the original meaning. For example, one paragraph in the Kim (2009) article explains “dual market theory”:

Tips & Strategies for Paraphrasing Information

- **Step 1:** As with summarizing, in order to paraphrase a text you must completely understand it and be able to identify the key information. Again, you may have to study the text (or the section you have selected) very closely to make sure you completely understand its essential meaning.
- **Step 2:** Once you have identified the key information, you must begin rewording and rephrasing it in order to make it your own. This can involve:
 - **Replacing words with synonyms** (words that have the same meaning) wherever possible.
 - **Changing the sequence of words** or phrases in sentences (for example the placement of relative clauses in cause-effect statements, e.g. *the game was cancelled due to bad weather* vs. *Because of the bad weather, the game was cancelled.*)

- **Rearranging the order of sentences** to create a different writing pattern
- **Step 3:** Add the paraphrased text to the appropriate section of your essay, changing the format and writing style to match your composition. Remember to add a citation at the end of the summary indicating the source of the information.

Quoting

Another way of incorporating source material into an essay is by using *direct quotes*.

- When we use direct quotes, we use the same words as the original source.
- We indicate a quote by using quotation marks i.e. “...” for short quotes; or by using added indentation for long quotes.

Quotes are typically used when:

- We want to make a reference to a specific theory, law, regulation, principle, etc.
- We want to emphasize the exact words of the original text (i.e. when the original statement is controversial, unique, or powerful)
- We want to focus on certain specific points or details of the original text (e.g. when we are analyzing the work of another writer)
- When the original text is the most appropriate way of expressing a particular point or idea

NOTE: Although quoting seems to be the easiest way to add source information to an essay, quotes should not be used frequently in academic writing since the purpose of the writing is to demonstrate *your* understanding of the topic and issue based on your research. Some sources suggest that only 20% of an academic essay should be quoted material. This means that in a 1500 word essay, no more than 300 words can be taken directly from sources.

Short Quotes

Short quotes are quotes that contain less than 40 words of original text. Short quotes are represented using “double quotation marks” (although in some countries ‘single quotation marks’ are used).

Example: The following paragraph explains how South Korea’s economic and social situation has caused an increase in immigration. The underlined statement will be used as a direct quote.

Another theory of international migration is called dual labour market theory, which contends that international migration occurs due to the chronic demand for immigrant labour that is intrinsic to the economic structure of industrialized societies. The persistent need for foreign labourers stems from the fact that the better educated, wealthier and more status-conscious individuals in the economically advanced nations shun certain jobs that are relatively low paying and less prestigious.

In an essay the quote might appear like this:

South Korea's own economic success has led to increased immigration. The country's rapid development into an advanced industrialized country has brought an increased demand for foreign laborers who are willing to take on low-paying jobs. As Kim (2009) explains, "The persistent need for foreign labourers stems from the fact that the better educated, wealthier and more status-conscious individuals in the economically advanced nations [such as South Korea] shun certain jobs that are relatively low paying and less prestigious" (p. 73).

Notice how the quote is used to *explain* the point made before it, i.e. that South Korea's economic success has brought more immigrants (which, in terms of the essay's main point, would eventually impact Korean society).

Long Quotes

Long quotes (sometimes referred to as "block quotes" are quotes that are more than 40 words in length. Long quotes do not require quotation marks. In most formats, long quotes are represented using additional indentation, making it appear visually separate from the main text of an essay (i.e. like a block of text). Using the same example as above, a larger section of the paragraph, including the writer's explanation of "dual labor market theory", could be quotes. In an essay, the entire quote would appear like this:

One theory of migration that might help explain the changes immigration has brought to modern South Korean society is "dual labor market theory".

[This theory] contends that international migration occurs due to the chronic demand for immigrant labour that is intrinsic to the economic structure of industrialized societies. The persistent need for foreign labourers stems from the fact that the better educated, wealthier and more status-conscious individuals in the economically advanced nations shun certain jobs that are relatively low paying and less prestigious (Kim, 2009, p. 73).

In other words, an increased standard of living in South Korea in the past decades has meant a shortage of local workers who are willing to perform low-paying tasks, creating a labor market for foreign workers.

As you can see, the long quote is visually separate from the main text, and although it does not use quotation marks it is easily identifiable. NOTE: Some format styles (such as IEEE) require that the text in a long quote appear in a visibly smaller font size as well. Check with a style-guide to make sure of the requirements.

Tips & Strategies for Using Quotes

Some students use a lot of quotes because it seems to reduce the amount of writing they have to do. Unfortunately students may be penalized for overusing quotes without justification or without providing the appropriate analysis of the information. Keep the following recommendations in mind when incorporating source information into your essay:

- **Be very selective when using quotes.** Do not use quotes that contain irrelevant or obvious information. As a good rule to follow, paraphrase whenever possible.
- **Only use quotes that**
 - a) strengthen your essay and the points you are trying to make;
 - b) express unique ideas or concepts that cannot be paraphrased; or
 - c) are needed emphasize the exact opinion or statements made by another author or expert.
- **The length (and number) of long quotes:** There are no specific rules for the maximum length of a long quote. Several sources indicate that the total amount of quoted text used in an essay should not be more than 20% of the total word count (so if an essay is 1000 words long, only 200 words can be direct quotes). Many professors discourage students from using lengthy quotes simply because it uses up space in a text that should focus on the student's research and understanding of the topic rather than highlight the work of other writers. Furthermore, paraphrasing can often be an equally effective method of expressing the important points of a source without
- **Always include page numbers with quotes.** Along with the citation (author's name or number depending on the citation style you use) you also have to provide the page in the original source from which the quote is taken. As you can see from the example on page 9 the quote is from page 73 of an article. NOTE: Page numbers must also be provided when a summary or paraphrase contains *specific information* taken from the source.
- **Modifying quotes:** Sometimes you may need to add words or phrases to the quote in order to help clarify the information. When adding words or changing word forms, use square brackets [] to indicate that the added words or changes are yours (refer to the example on page 9)
- **Reducing the length of quotes:** You can shorten the length of a long quote by removing unnecessary sentences and replacing them with ellipses (*three dots*. i.e. ...) NOTE: Only use this option when the sentences can be removed without affecting the meaning and/or clarity of the original text.

Things to Avoid

Redundant/repetitive statements

When incorporating source information into their essays, students sometimes make the mistake of including unneeded statements and explanations. For example, an essay might include a statement such as the following:

There are several reasons why students leave university. Some leave because of poor grades, other leave because of financial problems, and some leave due to personal problems such as illness. According to Johnson (2008) there are three main reasons why students drop out of university, namely poor academic performance, financial problems, or illness.

In this example the second and third sentences give the same information. It would be more effective (and better writing) if the writer just introduced the main point and supported it with a reference. For example:

There are numerous reasons why students leave university, but according to Johnson (2008) there are three main reasons, namely poor academic performance, financial problems, or illness.

By doing this the writer is able to move the essay forward by introducing a key point and strengthening the argument by citing a credible source. This creates a more concise style of writing that is easier to follow.

“Dropping” a Quote

Similarly students sometimes randomly insert quotes into their essay without introducing the quote or showing how the quote relates to the point they are trying to make. For example:

“Korea was actually a labour-sending country from the early 1960s to the late 1980s” (Kim , 2009, p.74). In the past, the number of Korean workers who went abroad to find work was higher than the number of immigrant workers who came to Korea to find jobs.

Here the quote suddenly appears for no apparent reason. A better way to include the quote would be like this:

In the past, the number of Korean workers who went abroad to find work was higher than the number of immigrant workers who came to Korea to find jobs. In fact, as Kim (2009) points out: “Korea was actually a labour-sending country from the early 1960s to the late 1980s” (p.74).

The revised version shows the link between the quote and the point the author is making. It also makes the transition into the quote smoother.

Overuse of a Single Source

Sometimes writers may find a source (article, book, etc.) that is closely related to the focus of their essay, or which covers many of the components they want to write about. As a result, the writer may “overuse” the source, referring to it more than to other sources to support their main points.

Remember that one of the purposes of research writing is to demonstrate your research and your research abilities, and to show that you have read or studied various sources of information and that you are not just relying on one source to defend or support your thesis.

To do this, make sure to incorporate various sources into your essay, even if the sources provide the same or similar information on the subject or issue you are writing about.