Referencing and Avoiding Plagiarism

Introduction

This guide covers the following areas:

- Why you need to reference
- The basic principles of the Harvard system of referencing
- What is considered plagiarism

What is referencing?

Attributing the source of an idea or information, regardless of how you obtained it (Pears and Shields, 2013, p. 1). Notice the information in brackets at the end of the previous sentence. This is a citation to show a source was inspiration for this text.

Why do it?

- You give credit to those whose ideas or materials have informed your work.
- It shows you researched widely and your arguments are based on evidence.
- You are sharing these resources with your colleagues in the academic community you are part of.

Therefore, by looking at the reference list at the end of this guide you will be able to find the original sources that helped to shape my ideas.

What happens if I don't reference?

- You will probably fail your assignment.
- You need to support your argument with evidence. If you do not provide evidence, you will lose marks.
- If you do research and fail to reference it, you may be pulled up for plagiarism. This could result in you failing and having to resubmit.

Rather than having to go through such a stressful experience, read on, make good notes and get it right when you are doing an assignment.

How do I reference?

There are a variety of different systems, but the fundamental principle remains the same – to acknowledge the sources of information and ideas which you have used in your work.

The majority of courses at City University use the Harvard system of referencing. **The Harvard style** is an author-date system. There are two parts: in-text citations and a full reference in an alphabetical list at the end of your assignment.

There are three exceptions –

- **Law**, uses **OSCOLA**. More details are available here: https://www.law.ox.ac.uk/research-subject-groups/publications/oscola);
- **Psychology**, uses the **APA** system - http://www.apastyle.org/index.aspx)
- **English**, uses **MLA** - https://style.mla.org/

Check with your tutors which system you will be using on your course.

The following examples use the **Harvard style** of citing and referencing. For examples of OSCOLA, APA and MLA check the sites mentioned above. Alternatively, log on to Cite Them Right Online (http://0-www.citethemrightonline.com.wam.city.ac.uk/Home) and select the relevant referencing style.

Good referencing starts with effective note-making

Get into the habit of taking down the reference details of any source that you are using in your research. Keep a careful note of what page the information can be found on. Furthermore, use "quote marks" to show when you are using the exact words of the original author.

This may seem a lot of work, but it can save a lot of time later in the essay writing process; especially if it prevents you from accidentally plagiarising and then having to resubmit.

What information do I need?

When you are taking notes, you should take down the following details:

- **name** of the author(s)/organisation
- **full title**
- **year** published
- **edition**, if relevant
- location and name of the **publisher**
- for electronic materials, the **URL for the webpage** or **DOI (Digital Object Identifier)** and the **date it was accessed**.

How do I set out the citations and references in my assignment?

The **citation** in your text should include:

Surname (or organisation name) + year

e.g. 'Said (2003) argues…'
or 'According to NICE (2004) guidelines…'
or 'Critical thinking can be a challenge… (Savage et al., 2006).'

At the end of your assignment there should be an alphabetical reference list of sources. Here are examples for the above citations:

NICE (2004) *Type 1 diabetes: Diagnosis and management of type 1 diabetes in children, young people and adults, NICE Guidelines* [CG15]. Available at: http://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/cg15/chapter/1-recommendations#diagnosis-and-initial-management (Accessed: 14 February 2015).

Said, E. (2003) *Orientalism*. London: Penguin.

Savage, A., Mayer, P., Masoud, S., Rhonda,L. and Davis, J. (2006) *Effective Academic Writing*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Do I need to put the page number?

If you use the exact words of the source, you must show you are 'quoting' by using quote marks. In addition, in the citation, you need to include the page number.

For example: Consequently, such technology has the potential to support what is currently considered "good pedagogy" (de Freitas and Conole, 2010, p. 19).

If you paraphrase a specific idea, from a particular page, it is good practice to provide the page number as well. However, when paraphrasing the overall idea of a source, you only need to cite - author and year of publication, not the page number.

Secondary referencing

Sometimes when you are doing research you will come across a section of text that refers to another author or source. You may want to use this in your own assignment to support your argument. If you do this, you are doing secondary referencing.

For example: Traxler (2009, cited in van't Hooft, 2013) illustrates that mobile learning does relate to existing pedagogies.

Where can I get more information?

For full details of how to reference most sources that you will use in your research visit Cite Them Right Online - www.citethemrightonline.com

What is plagiarism?

As mentioned earlier, plagiarism is, "The practice of taking someone else's work or ideas and passing them off as one's own" (Oxford Dictionaries, 2016). The following would be considered plagiarism:

- turning in someone else's work as your own
- copying words or ideas from someone else without giving credit
- failing to put a quotation in quotation marks
- giving incorrect information about the source of a quotation
- changing words but copying the sentence structure of a source without giving credit
- copying so many words or ideas from a source that it makes up the majority of your work, whether you give credit or not (plagiarism.org, 2014).

What is self-plagiarism?

If you use sections of text that you have written for one assignment in another assignment, this is self-plagiarism. Each assignment that you hand in must be new work. You cannot submit the same or partly the same work for more than one assignment, even if the assignments are for different courses, different years of study or even different degrees (University of Edinburgh, 2016).

More advice from the Academic Skills Team

For further study skills advice, please enrol on our Moodle page:
https://moodle.city.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=38922

To make an appointment for one-to-one study skills support, please complete this form:
https://city.tfaforms.net/4723090 or email skills@city.ac.uk

References

Pears, R. and Shields, G. (2013) *Cite Them Right: The essential referencing guide.* 9th edn. Basingstoke: Palgrave.

Plagiarism.org (2014) *What is plagiarism?* Available at: http://www.plagiarism.org/plagiarism-101/what-is-plagiarism/. (Accessed: 15 August 2016)

Oxford Dictionaries (2016) *Plagiarism*. Available at: http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/plagiarism. (Accessed: 15 August 2016).

University of Edinburgh (2016) *Self-plagiarism and collusion*. Available at: http://www.ed.ac.uk/institute-academic-development/undergraduate/good-practice/collusion. (Accessed: 15 August 2016).