

# Plagiarism & referencing

Plagiarism is using the ideas, words or findings of others without acknowledging them as your source of information or inspiration. It is a form of cheating and is treated very seriously in Higher Education. In order to avoid plagiarism you need to use a referencing system to acknowledge other people's ideas etc. Referencing like this may be different to what you have been used to doing but if you do not reference properly, you can be accused of plagiarism, called before the cheating board and if found guilty, in extreme cases, be withdrawn from the course. In less extreme cases you may be given a mark of zero for the plagiarised items you have produced.

## How to avoid plagiarism

Always note down exactly the source of information when you are making notes. The title, author, page number, publisher and date, and place of publication should be clearly written at the top of your page of notes.

If you are to claim that a piece of work is your own, then you must acknowledge the source of any ideas that are not your own. You must also show the source of any direct quotations – these are word for word quotations placed within quotation marks " ". You must also acknowledge the source of indirect quotations – that is material that you are quoting but which has been changed into your own words, paraphrased, or summarised.

You must be careful to record the sources of all your information when you take notes. If your work is not adequately referenced, you may be accused of plagiarism and have your work disqualified.

## Referencing:

### Why reference?

- To verify the source of the ideas and theories in your assignments
- To demonstrate that you have researched the topic
- To enable other interested readers (and yourself) to find and use your original sources
- To show that you have read a range of sources, and to indicate whether you have used the original work (**the primary reference**) or whether you are just referring to a citation in someone else's work (**secondary referencing**)
- Marks given for an assignment partly reflect your understanding of the topic – by using someone else's words and ideas, it is difficult for your tutor to judge your understanding and to award your work an appropriate mark

### What should I reference?

Anything you use that has been produced by someone else must be referenced. This includes not just books and journal articles but also radio and television programmes, official documents, information found on the Internet, letters and newspapers. As new forms of communications develop, so does the list of items to be referenced. Anything from these sources may be used in your work, but they must be correctly referenced.

### How do I reference?

To make it easy for people to check references a number of referencing systems have been developed, the two used at Worcester University (except in the Psychology department) are: the Harvard system and the numeric system. **If you are not sure which referencing system your department uses, check with your tutors or see your subject handbook.** The most important thing to remember about referencing your work is to be clear, accurate and consistent.

## Further information

This Study Advice Sheet has been produced by Student Services at UW.

We support student learning across the University through the publication of materials such as these.

Other study advice sheets that you may find useful include:

**Essay writing**

**Learning at university**

**Learning journals**

**Making oral presentations**

**Minimising stress**

**Organising yourself**

**Reading efficiently**

**Revision and exam skills**

**Study at a distance**

**Taking notes**

**Using feedback to improve your work**

**What does the question mean?**

**Working in groups**

**Writing reports**

All study advice sheets are available to view and download on the following website:

[www.worcester.ac.uk/studyskills](http://www.worcester.ac.uk/studyskills)

or you can follow the links from your SOLE page.

You may also find it useful to check out the '**Moving On**' pack, accessible from the study skills website.

'**Moving On**' is a study skills package specifically designed to help you prepare for Higher Education & to become a successful student.

Contact: [studyskills@worc.ac.uk](mailto:studyskills@worc.ac.uk)

## Referencing systems – an overview

In the **Harvard system** you include the author's surname, year of publication, and page number, using brackets, within the body of your work and immediately following the quote or paraphrase. At the end of your essay you make a reference list of the sources you have used. **For more detailed guidance see the online Harvard Referencing Guide available on the study skills website ([www.worcester.ac.uk/studyskills](http://www.worcester.ac.uk/studyskills)) or your tutor.**

In the **numeric system** you use a number after each quote or paraphrase, and then give the details of where to find it either at the bottom of each page (footnoting), or in a reference list at the end of your essay (endnoting).

You then repeat the same items on a bibliography. Your reference list will only refer to the sources that you have actually cited. Your bibliography may contain information about other sources of information that you have used as background, but have not drawn directly from. **For more detailed guidance see the online Numerical Referencing Guide available on the study skills website ([www.worcester.ac.uk/studyskills](http://www.worcester.ac.uk/studyskills)) or your tutor.**

**NB: Check with your tutors if you are not sure which referencing system your department uses**

### Glossary of terms:

**Bibliography:** found at the end of an essay, report etc that alphabetically lists the references cited in the work and other sources that you have used as background information

**Citation/reference:** an entry that gives precise details of the original source of the information used

**Paraphrase:** putting someone else's ideas into your own words

**Quotation:** directly copying someone else's words

**Reference list:** a list of references used in a piece of work

### Further sources of help & information:

- Your subject tutors
- The online referencing guides at: [www.worcester.ac.uk/studyskills](http://www.worcester.ac.uk/studyskills)
- Your personal tutor
- See pages 58 – 62 of the Moving On book (available from the study skills website)