

The why and how of referencing (Using OU Harvard)

Session Transcript

TRAINER: This session is now being recorded and we do this for quality purposes. So let's see how we get on. So what's referencing all about? Well, it's about signalling when other people's work has played a role in your assignment.

So by the end of this session we're just going to go over what we hope to get out of this. You should know why referencing is important, know what to reference when you're writing your assignments, and know how to construct references. So let's tackle the first one of those. Why is referencing important?

Well, referencing shows that you've read around the subject, that you've done a bit of research and you've read up on what's been published already. And your academic argument, so if you're discussing points and making points in your writing, will be stronger if it's supported by evidence from other people's research. So when you're looking at your TMAs, it shows that you read around and you understand the area that you're writing about.

Other people will be able to find and use the same sources that have informed your work and that allows them to check the validity and authenticity of work so they can check your sources. And also if they're just interested, they can follow up on them. And identifying your sources helps you avoid plagiarism by attributing the contribution of others to your work. And the official Open University definition of plagiarism is using the work of other people to gain some form of benefit without formally acknowledging that the work came from somebody else.

So basically, if you reference each thing-- and I hope these are clear. This information comes from the Developing Good Academic Practice website that the university has. So, one of the questions that gets asked a lot, especially when you're getting started is, when do I need to reference? If the thoughts that you're writing about are entirely your own, or you refer to something which is common knowledge, you don't need to reference it. But otherwise, you need to reference whenever you use somebody else's ideas or words.

Now common knowledge is about facts and dates, events, and other information widely known to the general public, or as it says here, someone studying or working in a particular subject. Now, common knowledge builds with time. So if you're not sure whether something is common knowledge, you could ask your tutor or if in doubt, reference it anyway.

Let's have a look. I want to have a look at something now. I'm going open a PDF to show you. So this is an article. I'll make that a little bit bigger so that everybody can see.

This is an article. And it might be something that you've chosen to use in your writing. Now, I appreciate that there are people here from lots of different subjects. But the ideas behind this discussion are the same. So if you wanted to find this again, or tell people about it, what sort of information might you use? Could you put something in the chatbox?



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So, what parts of this-- this is a journal article, so what might be-- yes, so the first one obviously is the author, who wrote it. In this case, you can see that it's written by someone called Warren Cornwall. Yep, title, author, fab. OK, date.

So what can we tell? There's something about 2014. If I have a look around I can see published date-- yeah, publication year, yeah. Date of publication, now that's a good one. I see that coming up from Sally there.

So most of you understand that you want the title of the article, you might want to write who it's written by. Now looking at this, the other things that we can tell, if you look at the bottom of this first page it's in a publication called Science. Yeah, somebody else talking about the website reference and the publisher. Yeah, you might need to include the publisher.

And Brian is ahead of the game there. We'll talk about the date you access in a little bit. But you can see at the bottom of this page, and you'll find it in books or in articles, a date for a lot of things-- the date when it was published, which was the 18th of August, 2017. Yeah, so am I, Greg. So a lot of you have got an idea already of the kinds of things that you might need to talk about or add into your references.

OK, so we've decided that we need the title, we need the author, the year of publication, maybe some information about the journal that this is published in. Yep, you've all read your assignment book list. Well, that's fantastic! Let's have a look at of the questions that comes up quite a lot. I'm going to hide this one now.

So, one of the questions that people come up with quite a lot is, I have the link. So I have the URL-- you know, the link, the WWW bit at the top. If I've got that, surely I could share that and that's enough. Well, it might be but it might not be. So one of the problems with web links are that the web pages that things are on can experience technical problems. So if someone went to look for it and they were having problems getting into it, they might not be able to see what you're saying.

Web pages can disappear. I don't know how many times I've found major websites for things that I've been looking for have changed-- big organisations. Government website are really bad for that. And they might-- things come and go, and pages can move, and web pages can change. So it might be that when you have a look at it it said one thing, but later on it's been used for something else or it's changed.

So what can I do? Or, in your case, what can you do if you're writing your TMA and you've got a web page or something that's online, about any of this? One thing you can do is add an access date to references for web pages and other online resources. And what that tells anybody who's reading what you've written is, when you had a look at it on that date it was the article, or the website, or the web page that you've used was there and this content came from that. And if anything's changed further down the road, I think a lot of people accept that things on the web change a lot.



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Does anyone have any questions about that? I can see that Jude and Greg are frantically typing. Well, what we'll do is we'll go into a couple of bits about how to reference the kinds of things that we talked about with the article that you might include. And we'll look at some examples. OK, could you give me a green tick if you're happy to move on? If you're familiar with doing that, it's the little icon at the top with the set status.

I see raised hands. I see that Greg and Jude are trying to ask a question. If you're happy for me to move on I'll do that. Otherwise, what I'll do is I'll give Greg and Jude a second just to catch up. Fabulous. But people read-- if you click on the arrow next the little man with the raised hands, you get some other options on it, one of which is Agree, which is the green tick. I know that this interface might not be intuitive to some people.

OK, we've got some green ticks. Some of the questions that are coming up I'm going to answer next. So let's move on. And I'll clear those ticks now. Thank you for using those.

OK, so we're going to have a look at the OU Harvard guide. And that is a guide to referencing. And it's made available by the library and it's on the library website. And it's one of our most heavily used resources. And it gives you some examples of referencing and some guidance when you're referencing something that you haven't seen or used before.

So it's a really useful thing. So what we're going to do is have a quick look at the guide and then we're going to go through a couple of examples. Yeah, we're going-- I can see Jude is answering questions frantically. So let me set up a pod so that you can share my screen. And I'm going to make that bigger. And I'm just going to do that now, share my screen and share with you the library website.

Hopefully I'm just going to minimise that little box in the corner-- you can see the library website. And I'm going to show you where to find the OU Harvard guide to referencing. So, one of the things you might notice, and it might not always be in there, but under this picture of this lovely lady here it says, "have you seen?" And there's some new bits and pieces of popular things. And one of those is, where do I find the OU Harvard guide to citing references

There's often a link on the front page. But if you don't find it there there's the help and support on the library website. And you'll see that we have a whole section here on referencing. And there is a link straight through to it. It's also linked to from the referencing and plagiarism page.

And this is what the guide looks like. If you want to, available from that website we've just gone, there is actually a PDF version that you can download and keep. But everything is here. So when you're stuck or starting with referencing, just know that if your module is using OU Harvard, which a lot of them are, there is a whole guide here and it actually has examples.



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We're going to go through what a reference looks like-- there's two parts of it-- in just a second. But for example, if we look at section 5, which is about books, both chapter and e-books so perhaps you're using an e-book online, I click on it, that's section 5.7. Being a bit slow, so bear with me. There are examples. And there's these things called in-text citations and full references.

And I'm going to go over those in a moment. But there are examples of how you should create your references. There are sections on journal articles and even section 7, which is about OU module materials and section 10 which is about things like websites. You can see there's a lot there.

One thing I should stress is, you absolutely don't need to memorise all of this. You don't and probably won't use every part of this. It's something to dip in and out of when you need a bit of help, not something that you need to know from cover to cover or worry about. It's a guide. It's help.

So let's go into some detail, I think, about what a reference is made of and see if that helps with some of the questions. I'm going to stop sharing my screen now and move that out of the way. OK, so what is a reference made up of? Well, there are two parts to referencing and I'm going to go over both of these in a bit more detail now.

The in-text citation acts like a flag to your reader that in this part of your writing you're discussing someone else's work. You will see these in your module materials. You probably already have. The full details of your resources aren't included here. They go into the full reference which goes at the end of your work.

And we'll talk about that in a minute. And here are some examples of how this might look. And here is how the in-text citation for our Science article that we just had a look at, would look. So we knew it was by someone, Cornwall-- I think it was a Walter Cornwall. So you put the surname in there and a comma and the year of publication.

I think you can do it either way, John. I can see you're asking about citations. But you have to put them in the right context. If you just quoted something you might put it just after it. But you might say that Cornwall 2017 wrote blah, blah, blah. But as long as it's very clear, it's sort of a signpost to where you are mentioning or discussing or even quoting somebody else's work. That's the key point.

OK. I think in-text citations are, but I think rep-- it depends. There's usually a policy from your faculty. But the full references aren't. That's what's normal but I would double check.

So, yes. So, the next part of a reference, I can see someone asking. So this bit goes into the body of your work. This is flags up, hey, I'm talking about somebody's ideas here. Then the next part is the full reference. So a full reference is where you put all the details of the



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resource you're quoting or talking about. And this goes at the end of your work in your bibliography or reference list and it matches up with your in-text citation.

So, you put the signpost in and then someone goes to the end of your work and looks for something by Cornwall, because that was the chap who wrote the Science article. And they'll then be able to find the full details. So, this is where you give people enough details to be able to track down something again. And it includes the details which would make it possible, as I said, for reader to understand what you're referring to and find the resource. And they can look a bit different, dependent on whether you're referencing a journal article, or a book, or a website, or something else entirely.

So there's just a couple of examples. So, you can see this one was something written by the Open University Library. It was written in 2012. Where to put the brackets and things like this? The OU Harvard guide goes over in detail so you can just copy it from there. Library services-- so that's the name. In this case it's just the library website.

It's online, just to make that clear. And we signal that with the little square brackets. And we say, oh, it's available here, so you're giving the address, the URL. But because we know websites can change we said, oh, look we've access this-- I mean, this one was a long time ago in 2012. But if I had written this a few years ago that might be the case and somebody might come across it this year and go, oh, it's changed! But yes, it has changed because it's six years down the road.

So if we have a look at what the full reference for our articles that we looked at earlier might look like, if we use the guidance from the OU Harvard guide to referencing it says that we should put the author, so that's surname comma initial, the year of publication, which you all mentioned, title of the article, which lots of you mentioned. A few people mentioned the title of the journal. So that we know that this article was written by this Cornwall person. And it was published in 2017.

We know what the title of the article is. And then we know that it was published in the Science journal, so we put the title of the journal. And then we put the volume number of the journal. And that's just a way of organising the journals because you can imagine when you've published a journal for a long time, something as big as Science, they have many volumes. So they just break up what they publish into volumes.

So we get that detail from the article itself. And what this is saying is volume 357, number 6352, which is often an issue number, so another subsection of the journal. And the page, 635. And that it was online, and this is where it was available from and this is when I had a look at it.

I hope that makes sense. I can see a lot of questions are happening in the log. I'm going to move on. OK, secondary referencing-- I'm going to mention secondary referencing because



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this is something that comes up, especially from things that you've read in your module material. So what is it and how do I do it?

So perhaps you've been reading something, perhaps it was something on your module website, and they quote from, say, an e-book that you haven't read but you really like that quote and it's really relevant to what you're writing about for your assignment. Then what you might do is use that quotation, but make it clear that you've only actually read the module materials and not that entire thing. I can see there are some questions.

OK, someone's asking about a difference between references and bibliography. So, a reference list might be a list of everything that you have directly quoted from or used in your work and a bibliography might include things that you've also read for background reading. Well, the idea-- somebody asking there about secondary referencing, what if it's from a documentary or a film? It's still the same thing. Essentially the thing you need to reference is the thing that you have either watched or read, but you indicate in your referencing hey, this is from something else that I didn't actually read.

So here's an example. In-text citation-- so this is your signpost, remember. Say, hey, I'm referencing someone's work here! Bloggs-- so something written by someone called Bloggs-- in 2004 cited in Smith 2007 loves chocolate. Now what that tells me is, I only actually read Smith, 2007 but I like something that he said about Bloggs liking chocolate. But I didn't go back and read Bloggs 2004. I just read the Smith thing.

So this is saying, hey, I really-- this important fact about Bloggs loving chocolate I want to include in my assignment. But I actually only read about the fact that Bloggs likes chocolate in this Smith thing. So here what you also notice is that you don't do a full reference for Bloggs, because actually the thing that you have used or viewed or read is Smith. So you literally just reference Smith. Otherwise you get yourself in a right muddle.

Does that make sense? Is everybody OK? Can you give me a green tick if you're happy for me to move on? We'll do a little bit of a quiz before we finish the session. I can see there are a lot of questions going into chat I'm sure Jude and Greg are typing as fast as they can to help you.

I'm really feeling a bit better. I can see lots of ticks. What I'm going to do, we're going to test some of what we thought about tonight in the last few minutes of the session and give you a go to answer some questions. So I'm going to clear those now. Jane, thank you! But if it's as clear as mud I'm not sure we've got there.

But hopefully we will. So let's test out some things. Right, question to you lot. I'm going to open a pod for these and then open a poll. So, where would this go?

So what have we got here? I'm going to clear all the answers and reopen it. OK, so what's the Bloggs, 2017? We've seen that earlier in the session. Go on, we've got 100 people in



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here and only 56 of you are-- oh, no, you're going crazy. I think everybody-- don't worry, Jane!

It's OK. Lots of people are in the same position. That's fine. Everything I've talked about tonight, Ingrid, is in the OU Harvard Guide, so don't worry-- secondary referencing, how to do in-text citations, that kind of thing. OK, I'm going to end this poll and broadcast the results.

But I think once a few people jumped on that bandwagon you all decided-- you're all right, of course, that-- let me get that out of the way-- that this is an example of an in-text citation, so that little signpost that you're using someone's work or talking about their ideas. And it would go into the body of your writing. For example, that you stated that Bloggs, 2017. More guidance, people are asking about this, about in-text citations as well as examples can be found in section 2 of the OU Harvard guide to referencing.

Right, next question. We've only got a couple of minutes left, three or four minutes left. So what's missing from this reference? Let me give you-- I'll try not to hide it. Let me open it. OK! What do you think?

So we've got Miller, E. and Pole, A., 2010, Diagnosis blog: checking up on health blogs in the blogosphere. There's a lot of blog. So what's missing from that reference do you think? Answer those answers-- the author, year of publication, volume, or title of the journal? Bit of a split.

I'm sorry that you feel lost, Lauren. What we're doing at this point is, we're looking at this, an example of a full reference. And we're seeing if we can work out which part of it is missing. OK, I'm going to end that now. And we've got a bit of a split vote this time. But 75 of you chose D, and that's actually right, the title of the journal.

So if I show you, title of the journal is the correct answer. The journal title is missing and the full reference should look like this. So what we've got here is, we've got the two authors, the year of publication. Then again, it's the same sort of thing. You're always talking about the same elements.

Title of the article, and then the journal that the article is published in, and then details about that and when it was accessed. You can find more guidance on how to reference e-journal articles in section 6.2 the OU Harvard guide. OK, we've got time for one or two more questions and then I'll let you go.

This is a good one I hope. I hope this will make sense. So let me find the poll for you. OK, what do you think? Why would you include an accessed on date? And this question, for example, is about referencing a web page. A, I wouldn't, B, because my tutor needs to know I looked at the web page recently, C, because the web page I looked at might change after I read it, or D, so I know when I looked at the web page.



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And you've all jumped on that. I can see that very quickly. OK, I'm going to end that one. We've got one answer for D, and I can see why that would make sense. But actually you're right, the correct answer is C, because the web page I looked at might change after I read it. That's just a good thing to be aware if you're using an online resource, put the accessed on date.

OK, I know some of you struggled with secondary referencing. Let's do this one, and then we're going to-- I'll show you where you can get some help and support. Let me open that. OK, so what is secondary referencing?

Is it referencing you do in school, referencing something you want to quote which you haven't read but is quoted in something else you have, C, what goes into my reference list at the end, or D, when you refer to the same resource more than once? I think there's no pulling the wool over your eyes. I can see-- I'm going to end the poll now because we're coming to the end of the session-- that a lot of you have picked up on this.

So, some of you are saying what goes into my reference list at the end and I can understand that. But no, here we're talking about referencing something you want to quote which you haven't read but is quoted in something else you have. And again, there's some information about this in the OU Harvard guide. Now, it is 8:00 o'clock and I don't want to keep you much later so we're going to skip over this one and just talk about where you might go for help after this session.

So, lots of you already said you've read your assignment guides, your assessment guides, your module guides. You'll often find help or comments about referencing there. We have, as you saw earlier, a referencing and plagiarism page on the library website. And linked from that is the OU Harvard guide, again, that we've talked about a lot tonight. And also, there's a link to a frequently asked question about what to do if something isn't in the OU Harvard guide.

At level one I suspect that that really won't be a problem. At perhaps level three and postgraduate, you might have more unusual things. But you never know. There is a university Developing Good Academic Practice website which has more information. And if you're ever stuck, the best thing you could do is just come and ask for some of the library help there. And the contact details for that are on the page of every library website.

OK, I know we're a couple of minutes over but we had a lot of questions tonight. Thank you for staying along to the end. So at the end of this session, hopefully you know a little bit more about why referencing is important, know what to reference when you're writing your assignments, and begin to start to know how to construct references. I can see there's been a lot of questions and we might have to go through them. I'm sorry if we haven't been able to answer everything. You can always contact the library helpdesk if you want to follow up on anything we've talked about tonight.



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If you'd like a chance to win a 20 pound Amazon voucher, we'd love to hear about how you found the session and any feedback you'd like to give us tonight. So I'm going to pop that in the chat box as well, but you should be able to click on the slide, I'm going to put a link there, to give us any feedback that you'd like to. And you'll be put into a draw with a chance of winning a 20 pound voucher.

So thank you very much for coming along tonight. If you want to download the handout, I have actually got it here. But you can also find it on the page where you came in.

Blimey, we've had 106 people! Well, thank you everyone for coming along tonight. I am going to stop the recording now. I'll be around for a few minutes if anyone wants to ask anything, but the session has come to an end. So feel free to leave if you need to. Thank you, everyone.



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