How to Cite and Reference?

You have read that you need to cite and reference on numerous occasions, but what do 'citing' and 'referencing' refer to?

'Citing' and 'referencing' are how you indicate that the information in your essay is not original to you. In every document you submit (essay or lab report), no matter what information you include from other sources, you must both cite and reference the sources.

- 'Citing' is indicating the original source within the document, in the form of: in-text citations, footnotes, or endnotes.
- 'Referencing' is indicating the original source at the end of the document (not to be confused with 'endnotes'). 'Referencing' refers to your reference list, the list of sources used in your document.

All citations and references will be formatted according to a specific 'Referencing Style' (e.g. Harvard, Chicago, MLA, APA, etc.)

You must consult the school handbook for your individual modules for information regarding what specific form of citing and referencing is required. All schools have different requirements, so do not assume that your English essay will follow the same referencing format as your Biology practical report. Always check the handbook.

Creating a Reference List

We begin with 'referencing' since it is more straightforward than 'citing'.

As mentioned previously, 'referencing' is the creation of a list at the end of your essay of all the sources cited in your essay. A 'reference list' is not to be confused with a 'bibliography', which is a list of every source utilised, whether cited in the essay or not. When referencing, you should not include sources that you looked at in your research but did not use in your final essay. (If you are unsure whether you should include a reference list or a bibliography in your essay, see the School Handbook or ask your lecturer or tutor).

The format and style of your citations and reference list can vary depending on the assignment and discipline. However normally sources in your reference list should be:

- only listed once
- in order according to the authors' last names or order of appearance
- formatted with 'hanging indents'
- formatted according to a specific referencing style

Referencing Information

As part of your note-taking methods, always make sure to write the reference information of the source before returning it to the library or closing the tab (internet).

The basic reference information for all sources includes:
Citing and Referencing

- Author(s)
- Title
- Publisher
- Place of Publication
- Date/Year of Publication

but for certain sources may include more information, such as: chapter title, editor(s), translator(s), edition, volume, series, access date, and more. You must consult the required Referencing Guide to know exactly what information should be included in your reference list.

Citing within Your Essay

Whereas 'referencing' refers to the list of sources used at the end of the essay, 'citing' refers to your indication of sources used within the essay. 'Citations' give the reader the information required in order for them to return to the original source of your information if they wish.

How you format the citations in your paper will be determined by the 'Referencing Style Guide' required by your module/school and as listed in the handbook. Citations will typically take one of three forms: in-text; footnotes; or endnotes.

- In-text (or 'parenthetical') citations will be placed within parentheses at the end of a sentence within the main body of your essay. ‘A sentence might look like this, with the original source information in parenthesis at the end of the sentence’ (original source information).
- Footnotes will be contained at the bottom of each page, linked to the information it represents by a superscript number code. ‘A sentence might look like this, with the superscript number linking the information to the original source listed third at the bottom of the page’.3
- Endnotes are similar to footnotes in that they link to the information by a number code, but, rather than being clumped at the bottom of a page, are grouped at the end of the essay. ‘A sentence might look like this, with the superscript number linking the information to the original source listed third at the end of the essay’.3 (Endnotes should not be confused with a bibliography.)

Most schools within the University of St Andrews will require either in-text citations or footnotes to be used in students' essays.

Citing in Presentations

Plagiarism can occur not only in written coursework, but in any form of communication of ideas. This includes presentations, whether verbal or written (e.g. posters) or a combination of the two (e.g. PowerPoint presentations). Plagiarism can also occur in any student-created digital production (e.g. video, film production).

As with any written coursework, all presentations must have clearly documented citations and references. The place at which proper documentation occurs in each presentation will be dependent on the type of presentation. As with any written coursework, the required format of citations and references are determined by the 'Referencing Style Guide' required by the module/school and as listed in the handbook.
Referencing Style Guides

The primary Referencing Styles used at the University of St Andrews are: Harvard; MLA; APA; Chicago; and Vancouver. The style required by your module/school will be indicated in the handbook. Always check there for citing and referencing information.

However, choosing the 'wrong' referencing system will not lead to allegations of plagiarism but failing to reference will.

The Library provide a useful web page with more information on different referencing styles.

It is important to have all your sources accurately and appropriately cited and referenced according to the Style required by your school. You may receive a lower mark on your work if your citations and bibliography are not formatted correctly. Note that, for each of the styles listed, the 'citations' within the essay are formatted differently than the 'references' in the bibliography.