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PREFACE

The Otago Study Guides are intended as primers or self-help tutorials that assist students in developing the various skills required to learn at University. The use of a referencing style is such a skill. Before you decide to use the APA referencing style in your writing, check with your course book, tutor or course co-ordinator. There are a number of other referencing systems in common use (e.g., Harvard, Chicago, MLA). Styles tend to be specific to particular disciplines so you should use the one associated with the subject you are studying.

As with all the Otago Study Guides we have tried to make this Guide interactive and provide a model of the skills that are involved. The activities in the Guide are not time consuming. If you set aside about two hours and work through the various sections, you will save yourself hours of effort later when you are feeling stressed about completing work on time. We hope you will find some pleasure in mastering the style.

Carol Bond
Carol Hunter
This Guide focuses on the APA style of referencing. APA stands for the American Psychological Association. The Association updates its publication manual regularly and these notes draw mostly on the fifth edition (APA, 2001). APA is a very common style of referencing, most often used in the sciences, behavioural sciences and some social sciences.

An academic writing style is about more than just referencing. It is a way of writing and it has conventions that govern things like levels of headings, the presentation of figures, tables, statistical data, and footnotes or endnotes. This Guide focuses only on referencing but in our writing we have adopted some of the formatting and conventions of the APA style.

In some courses you will be expected to use the APA style for referencing only. In others, you will be required to use more APA conventions, and if you are writing a Masters or PhD thesis in a topic that normally adopts the style you should follow all the conventions. In this case, consult the APA Publication Manual (2001) or the updated pocket guide version of the Manual (2005) (held in the University Library and the Student Learning Centre) because they provide much more detail of the style. Note that, whatever your level of study, you will benefit from the sections in the Manual that look at ways of expressing ideas, strategies to improve writing style, grammar, punctuation, and the reduction of bias in language.
WHat Is a referenCIng style and WHy Is It used?

A referencing style is a set of conventions used in more formal academic writing. In this kind of writing you are required to indicate how you have used others’ ideas. If you fail to acknowledge your sources you stand in danger of being accused of plagiarism: this can attract heavy penalties. So it is important that you understand why you should reference your sources and that you know the rules of a particular style. A referencing style provides you with the means by which you can:

• acknowledge your use of other peoples’ ideas;
• show the original source of the ideas, theories and concepts to which you refer;
• give your reader the means to locate your sources if they wish to follow them up;
• demonstrate that your opinions and statements are based on authoritative sources rather than your personal opinion;
• show your familiarity with the literature on the topic

WHAT SHOULD YOU REFERENCE?

You need to reference all sources of information, including theories, concepts, and ideas that you draw on in your writing. There are two exceptions.

i) Information that is considered common knowledge, in that it cannot be attributed to a particular individual or individuals. For example, take the following statement:

\[
\text{Sydney hosted the Olympic Games in 2000.}
\]

The fact that Sydney hosted the 2000 Games is common knowledge and so it does not require a reference. Can you list some examples of common knowledge?

Now look at the next statement:

\[
\text{Binge drinking is increasing among New Zealand teenagers.}
\]

Unlike the Olympic Games example, this statement can be contested so the statement must be supported with evidence from a recognised authority. Do any of the examples of common knowledge that you listed actually belong to this second group?

ii) The second exception applies to ideas and arguments that you develop. If after reading your course books and doing other research you develop an alternative argument and assert your own position you need not provide a reference.
Using the APA Referencing Style

Conventions of In-Text Referencing

The APA referencing style uses an author/date convention in the writing itself (called in-text referencing) and a list of the sources at the end of a piece of writing (called References). In-text references are brief. The references list provides the detail that allows the sources to be found again.

Box 1 provides an illustration of in-text referencing. Read it, paying particular attention to the small details such as the use of punctuation and spaces, how the references are cited within and outside of the brackets, and how multiple authors are named. As you read, try and identify the rules that have been used. Write down as many as you can.

Box 1: An Illustration of the APA Style of Referencing

Since John Dewey (1933) argued that learning to think and reason were fundamental goals of education, critical thinking, in its various forms, has been a recurrent concern for educators. Now, overwhelming evidence suggests that it “is one of the most highly esteemed goals” in all sectors of education (Candy, 1991, p. 328).

For instance, a goal aimed at increasing the proportion of college graduates who could think critically was included in the Goals 2000: Educate America Act of 1990 (McBride, Xiang, & Wittenburg, 2002) and critical thinking is understood as a “defining concept of the Western University” (Barnett, 1997, p. 2). It is a “commonplace assertion” that universities develop a critical attitude in their students (Barnett, 1992, p. 193), and employers claim to seek graduates with critical abilities (Harvey & Green, 1994).

So does higher education live up to its own rhetoric? Barnett (1997) argues that it does not, and so, if asked might many university teachers. According to McBride et al. (2002), in the USA concerns about students’ skills and abilities in critical thinking at all levels “permeate” educational literature (p. 29). Halpern (1997) reports a similar picture. Yet in a study of Australian university students (Bond, 2000) less than half of the sample of final year undergraduates appeared to experience learning in ways that included characteristics of critical thinking. Brookfield (1987) suggests that there is no clear evidence that critical abilities learned in schools and colleges are transferred to contexts of adult life. Furthermore, problems that require critical thinking in the real world tend not to correspond with those of the majority of programs that teach critical thinking (Sternberg, 1985, cited in Brookfield, 1987). So why is critical thinking so difficult to deal with? (Phillips & Bond, 2004, pp. 277-278)

How many different rules did you identify? You did well if you found eight or nine. Now use Box 1 to complete the following quiz which focuses on some of the main conventions of the APA referencing style.
QUIZ

1. Ignoring sentences with quotations for the moment, what were the different ways that a simple author/date rule was incorporated into sentences in the passage? Write them out.

2. Using the text, can you summarise the main characteristics of a simple author/date convention?

3. What conventions are used for multiple authors? Find some examples.

4. What rules are used when direct quotations are included in the text?

5. When and why do you think it is useful to use quotations?

6. What do you think the ‘cited in’ convention means?

We use the answers to the Quiz (pp. 5 - 11) to look at the main rules governing the APA referencing style. Note: in the following pages we use three spaced ellipsis points (...) to indicate that text has been omitted from the original quotation or source.

Q. 1

What were the different ways that a simple author/date rule was incorporated into sentences in the passage?

The simple author/date rule was used seven times and in five different ways. Did you find the following?

- Since John Dewey (1933) argued...
- ...Act of 1990 (McBride, Xiang, & Wittenburg, 2002)...
- ...with critical abilities (Harvey & Green, 1994)
- Barnett (1997) argues that...
- According to McBride et al. (2002)...
- Halpern (1997) reports...
- ...study of Australian university students (Bond, 2000)...

Note: If your source has no year of publication, substitute (n.d.) meaning no date, in the text.
Q. 2

**Summarise the main characteristics of a simple Author/Date convention**

Using the author/date rule, if an author’s name is used in the text it is normally followed by the year of publication.

**Example: Barnett (1997) argues...**

If you include the author’s name in the bracket, separate it from the year of publication by a comma.

**Example: Yet in a study of Australian university students (Bond, 2000)...**

**Note:** Only use the year of publication for each source once **within** a paragraph unless there is a risk of confusion. For example, in Box 1, if the authors had chosen to refer to Halpern (1997) a second time in the **same paragraph**, they could have written:

**Halpern also identified...**

However, Barnett is treated differently because the authors cite two of his works and the sources could get mixed up. In this case include the year of publication for each reference.

These conventions apply to each paragraph. When starting a new paragraph the rules are reapplied.

Q. 3

**What conventions are used for multiple authors?**

When a source has more than one author, several rules apply. Box 1 provides examples with two and three authors.

**Sources with two authors**

If the source has two authors, the names of both authors are included each time the work is cited.

**Example: (Harvey & Green, 1994).**

**Note:** Did you notice the use of the ampersand (&) in this bracket? An ampersand is always used inside a bracket. However, if this material had been included in the text the **and** would have been written in full.
Example: Harvey and Green (1994) found that employers seek graduates with critical abilities.

Sources with three - five authors

Did you also notice the change from (McBride, Xiang, & Wittenburg, 2002) to McBride et al. (2002)?

This convention applies to works of between three and five authors. The first reference is always written in full whether in a sentence or in a bracket. If you use the same source again, shorten the reference to the first author followed by et al. (the shortened form of et alia from Latin, meaning and others).

Example: First reference: Smith, Martin, and Buckley (2001) found that...
Subsequent reference: However, Smith et al. (2001) argued that...
Or:
However their position was invalid (Smith et al., 2001).

Sources with six authors or more

For six authors or more et al. is used for every reference.

Example: Bowden, Dall’Alba, Martin, Masters, Laurillard, and Marton (1992) always becomes: Bowden et al. (1992).

Q.4 What rules are used with direct quotations?

A quotation is the exact reproduction of text, word for word, from another source. You should be aware of two important rules:

Rule 1: If you use a quotation in your writing you must signal that you have done so. If you fail to do so, you risk being accused of dishonest practice or plagiarism.

Rule 2: In most cases you should reproduce the text exactly, including all the punctuation (see p. 11 for some exceptions).

In the APA style a distinction is made in the treatment of short and long quotations.
REFERENCING A SHORT QUOTATION

A short quotation is “fewer than 40 words” (APA, 2001, p. 117). The phrase, “fewer than 40 words”, is a direct quotation from the APA. Note how it is treated. The phrase is inserted in double inverted commas. It is followed by brackets that include the author’s name, comma, the year of publication, comma, and the page reference. These rules allow the reader to identify the original quotation easily.

Box 1 provides three examples of the conventions that govern the inclusion of page references in the text:

**Example 1**

The page reference is included within the bracket with the year of publication.

...critical thinking is understood as a “defining concept of the Western University” (Barnett, 1997, p. 2).

**Example 2**

A page reference may be separated from the author/date when the quoted words are located at some distance. The convention p. is used when cited material is located on a single page in the original source.

According to McBride et al. (2002), in the USA concerns about students’ skills and abilities in critical thinking at all levels “permeate” educational literature (p. 29).

**Example 3**

The passage cited in Box 1 crosses two pages in the original source and so p. is replaced by pp.

The text in Box 1 is quoted from Phillips and Bond, 2004, pp. 277-278.
THE TREATMENT OF A LONG QUOTATION

A long quotation (40 words or more) is usually displayed as a freestanding block of text. Such treatment indicates that the text is a quotation and so you can omit the inverted commas. For example:

Start such a *block quotation* on a new line, and indent the block about 1/2 in. (1.3 cm, or five spaces) from the left margin (in the same position as a new paragraph). If there are additional paragraphs within the quotation, indent the first line of each an additional 1/2 in. *(APA, 2001, p. 117).*

If you are asked to double-space your writing (e.g., in a dissertation or a thesis) you should also double-space block quotations.

Note that it is only the treatment of the text that differs. The quotation is referenced in the same way as a short quotation-author/date/page reference.

THE USE OF ITALICS IN A QUOTATION

Note how, in the passage above, the authors have emphasised the *idea* of a block quotation by using italics. If instead, *we* had added the italics in order to emphasise the point, you would see the convention [*italics added*] following the italicised text. For example:

As a learning activity, essay-writing makes particularly exacting demands of the student. The student must not only apprehend and make sense of a topic, but go further and communicate what he or she knows within the framework of a formal ordered statement. Essay writing thus involves *putting learning on display* [*italics added*] *(Hounsell, in Marton, Hounsell & Entwistle, 1997, p. 106).*
CHANGING A QUOTATION

On page 8, we emphasised that if you use a direct quotation, you should reproduce it exactly in your text; however there are some exceptions. You can change the first letter of the first word of a quotation from upper to lowercase or vice versa, to fit the sentence in which you have inserted it (APA, 2001, p. 119). For example:


You can omit material from quoted text but you must indicate the omission by using three spaced ellipsis points ... if it falls within a sentence, and four points .... if the omission falls across two sentences (see below).

You can add material to the quotation in order to make it more meaningful to your reader by including it in [square brackets]. For example:

If any incorrect spelling, punctuation, or grammar in the source might confuse readers, insert the word sic, italicised and bracketed, immediately after the error in the quotation.... Always check ... [your text] against the source to ensure that there are no discrepancies (APA, 2001, p. 118).

Note that we removed text from the end of the first sentence and the middle of the second. We substituted new text to make the original text more meaningful for you.

DEALING WITH ERRORS IN THE SOURCE TEXT

If a quotation includes an error, draw attention to it by using [sic] (from Latin meaning so or thus). You can also use [sic] if your source includes inappropriate language. For instance, older texts often contain sexist language. The following passage could be interpreted to imply that all social psychologists are male. Inserting [sic] indicates that if we were writing it, we would frame the sentence differently. For example:

The social psychologist has thus to turn to other disciplines as he [sic] attempts to analyse the social cultural environment and its relation to human action (Gahagan, 1975, p. 10).
Q. 5 When and why is it useful to use quotations?

Quotations are useful when you wish to:

- express a thought or concept succinctly
- illustrate a point you want to make
- convey the flavour of a work or,
- analyse... the quotation in depth

(Source: Marshall & Rowland, 1993, p. 197)

However, you should use quotations sparingly (Cottrell, 2003). Using too many indicates to the reader that you have no original ideas or that you have not understood the material!

Q. 6 What do you think the ‘cited in’ convention means? -primary and secondary sources

The convention cited in was used at the end of the text in Box 1 to indicate that the authors used a secondary source:

Furthermore, problems that require critical thinking in the real world tend not to correspond with those of the majority of programs that teach critical thinking (Sternberg, 1985, cited in Brookfield, 1987).

Here the authors refer to Sternberg’s argument but they are using Brookfield as the source. So Sternberg is a primary source and Brookfield is a secondary source. The authors of the text in Box 1 are relying on Brookfield’s interpretation of Sternberg rather than reading Sternberg for themselves. So using a secondary source is not always a safe practice and if possible, you should try to use primary sources. However, for many reasons this will be impractical. The primary source may be beyond your present level of study. It may be written in a language that you cannot read, or it may be inaccessible or even out of print. In these cases you should use the convention we have used above to refer to the secondary source.

Note: only Brookfield is listed in the References list at the end of the writing. To list Sternberg when the text has not been read is dishonest practice as it would be misrepresenting the work that was done.
Another set of conventions governs the ordering of references in the text. Read the quotation in Box 2 and list all the new conventions you can see.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box 2</th>
<th>Ordering References in the Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students who, in reading a text, used a deep approach were the students who were most likely to be able to describe what the text was about. Results of this sort have been replicated and extended in many studies since (e.g., Biggs, 1979; Crawford et al., 1994, 1998; Entwistle, 1998; Meyer et al. 1990; Prosser et al., 1996; Prosser &amp; Miller, 1989; Tang, 1998; Trigwell &amp; Prosser, 1991a, 1991b; Trigwell &amp; Sleet, 1990; van Rossum &amp; Schenk, 1984).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Source: Prosser &amp; Trigwell, 1999, p. 15).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Did you notice that:

1. the references in the bracket are listed **alphabetically** by first author;
2. each publication is separated by a **semi-colon**;
3. **e.g.,** is used to indicate that the list is not exhaustive but includes appropriate examples;
4. the **alphabetical order rule** also governs the listing of publications with the same first author, e.g., Trigwell & **Prosser** (1991) are listed before Trigwell & **Sleet** (1990). In this situation the first letter of the second author’s surname governs the ordering;
5. if two publications by the same author also have the same year of publication, the references are identified by the use of **a** and **b**, e.g., (Trigwell & Prosser, 1991a, 1991b).
REFERENCES LISTS AND BIBLIOGRAPHIES

On page 4 we referred to two main ways that sources were cited in a piece of writing: *in-text* references, and a *References* list. In this section we look at preparing the References list that is located at the end of your text.

Note the word *Bibliography* is often used instead of *References*. You should distinguish between the two. A list of references refers to the sources that you used to write your text and support your arguments. “In contrast, a bibliography cites works for background or for further reading and may include descriptive notes...” (APA, 2001, p. 215). If you are asked to prepare a bibliography as an assignment, clarify exactly what is required. Usually a bibliography includes a set of full references, and a short paragraph for each reference that outlines why the reference was included, its relevance to the topic, or a very brief summary of its content.
ASSEMBLING A REFERENCES LIST

Box 3 includes a complete reference list for the passage used in Box 1 (p. 3). Read the list and try and identify as many of the rules that have been used as you can.

### Box 3: An Example of a References List

**References**


(Source: Phillips & Bond, 2004, p. 294)

Now use your observations of Box 3 and the previous sections of the Guide to answer the following questions.
QUICK

1. Where is a references list located?
2. How is a references list headed?
3. What level of heading is used for a references list?
4. What should a references list include?
5. What should a references list omit?
6. How is a references list formatted (e.g., margins, spacing, numbering, dot points etc.)?
7. How are references ordered in the list (e.g., chronologically or alphabetically)?
8. How are multiple references by the same author listed?
9. What distinguishes a reference to a journal article from that of a book?
10. What are the main parts or items included in a reference to a book?
11. How are the different parts of a reference ordered?
12. How are the authors of a particular work listed?
13. If two publications by the same author for the same year are cited in the text, how are they listed in the references?
14. How are references distinguished for an author of a single-authored publication, and as the first author of different groups of multiple-authored publications?
15. How do you decide on the year of publication of a source?
16. Why is the Bond reference treated as it is?
Answers to Quiz

Q.1. Where is a references list located?
It is located immediately at the end of the text on a new page.

Q.2. How is a references list headed?
It is headed ‘References’.

Q.3. What level of heading is used for a references list?
Use the first level of heading of your main text. For example, in this publication, the first level heading is centred and bolded.

Q.4. What should a references list include?
The list would normally include all the sources that you cited in the text so that your reader can find them again.

Q.5. What should a references list omit?
It should omit sources that you read and decided not to use, and sources that you have cited only as personal communication (see p. 21).

Q.6. How is a references list formatted?
The first line of each reference should be aligned with the left hand margin. All subsequent lines should be indented by 0.5 to 1 cm according to the formatting in your document. See Box 3 for examples.

Note: The APA style does not use numbering or bullet points in the references list.

Q.7. How are references ordered in the list?
References are listed alphabetically by the surname of first author. If the source lacks an author, list by name of organization. If no organization is named, then list by title of publication (see p. 20).

Q.8. How are multiple references by the same author listed?
By year of publication, for example, in Box 3, Barnett (1992) is listed before Barnett (1997). See also Box 4 below.
Q.9. What distinguishes a reference to a journal article from that of a book?
Journals always include a volume and number, for example:
In this example, the journal is *Higher Education Research & Development*, Volume 24.
The term **volume** usually represents a full year of publication, so this is the 24th year
of publication for this journal. The **issue number** 4 (in brackets) means that it is the
fourth journal of Volume 24 to be published in 2005.
In references to journal articles the **name** of the journal is highlighted in italics. In
contrast, in a simple reference to a book, the **title of the book** is highlighted by italics
and the reference will always include the location and name of the publisher in that
order (see Box 3).

Q.10. What are the main parts or items included in a reference to a book?
The main parts are: author’s surname, and initials as recorded in the publication, for
each author; year of publication in brackets; title of publication; location of publisher
and name of publisher (see Box 3). When more than one place of publication is
given, list only one.

Q.11. How are the different parts of a reference ordered?
See the answer to Q.10. above.

Q.12. How are the authors of a particular work listed?
See Box 3. All authors of a particular work up to and including six authors are listed
as shown. Use the et al. convention for the seventh and subsequent authors. Do not
change the order of authors as they appear on the publication.
Q.13. If two publications by the same author for the same year are cited in the text, how are they listed in the references list?

Multiple publications in the same year, by an author or authors are distinguished by the use of a and b (see Box 4).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box 4</th>
<th>Ordering References for Single and Multiple Authors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Q.14. How are references distinguished for an author of a single authored publication, and as the first author of different groups of multiple authored publications?

When an author appears as a sole author and again as the first of multiple authors, list the single-author entry first (see Box 4). List multiple authored publications with the same first author and different subsequent authors alphabetically by the second authors (see Box 4).

Q.15. How do you decide on the year of publication of a source?

It can usually be identified by the copyright mark © on one of the first pages.

Q.16. Why is the Bond reference treated as it is?

A thesis or dissertation is an unpublished work.
REFERENCING AND LISTING OTHER PRINT SOURCES

EDITED BOOK

In-text reference: As for other two authored sources.

References list entry:

BOOK CHAPTER

In-text reference: Laurillard (1997)

References list entry:

Here, the title of the book in which the chapter is located is italicised rather than the title of the chapter. The book is a revised edition (see 2nd ed.). APA uses abbreviations: Editor (Ed.); Editors (Eds.); edition (ed.)
GOVERNMENT REPORT

If your source lacks a named author (e.g., Government agency or institution, newspaper etc.), include enough information to allow readers to link the in-text reference to the item in your references list. For example:

First in-text reference: “In Australia, approximately one third of all students entering university fail to graduate, and approximately half of those who withdraw, do so in their first year” (Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs [DETYA], 2000).

Include the agency abbreviation (e.g., DETYA) in your first reference, then use it in subsequent references.

Second in-text reference: The DETYA (2000) statistics suggest...

References list entry:


NEWSPAPER/MAGAZINE ARTICLE

In-text reference: If the article includes the author’s name, use the conventions for an authored source. For example:

Meikle (2006) commented that doubt has been cast on the validity of New Zealand’s hosting of the Rugby World Cup.

References list entry: Use the author/date/title rule with the addition of the day of publication. Italicise source.


If there is no author, the APA (2001) recommends that you “cite the first few words of the reference list entry (usually the title)” (p. 210). So using the example above, the in-text reference would read:

Doubt has been cast on the validity of New Zealand’s hosting of the Rugby World Cup (“More mud thrown,” 2006).
References list entry: The reference is included alphabetically under M for ‘More’ in the references list.


PERSONAL COMMUNICATION

If your source is an email, letter, telephone conversation, or a conversation with your tutor, refer to it in-text as a personal communication. For example:

The report strongly influenced subsequent events (B. Smith, personal communication, May 4, 2004).

Personal communications are only cited in-text. They are not included in your references list because others will not be able to access the information.

REFERENCING A LECTURE OR COURSE READINGS

As a general rule, do not refer to a lecture as a source of information. However, if your lecturer agrees use the ‘personal communication’ convention (see above), for example, for a lecture given by B. Smith:

In this instance, a small sample was recommended (B. Smith, personal communication, July 7, 2005).

When referring to a publication included in a collection of course readings, your in-text reference should follow the conventions described in earlier sections.
REFERENCING INTERNET SOURCES

ELECTRONIC VERSIONS OF PUBLISHED JOURNALS

Library resources include on-line databases that allow you to access and download a published journal article. The following example was downloaded from the Academic Search Premier (via Ebsco) database on the Library website:


Note that it is referenced as for a published article with the addition of [Electronic version] inserted after the title of the article and before the full stop.

OTHER INTERNET SOURCES

Other internet sources are more difficult to reference than hard copies of books and articles because there is so much variability. However, The APA Manual (2001) provides two main guidelines:

1. Direct readers as closely as possible to the information being cited—whenever possible, reference specific documents rather than home or menu pages.
2. Provide addresses [URLs] that work (p. 269).

A reference to a source published only on the internet should include: the title/main heading or a description; date of publication or the date you retrieved it; the internet address (i.e., the URL); and the author(s) of the document (APA, 2001).
DOCUMENT FROM A PRIVATE ORGANISATION WEBSITE

The following fact sheet on childhood obesity was retrieved from the North American The Obesity Society web site.

_In text reference:_ The Obesity Society (2001)...

References list entry:


The same conventions as those used for hard copy sources are applied to electronic sources. For example: n.d. (no date); if the source has no author, use the title or heading (see p. 20); and, use page numbers if they are available. If page numbers are unavailable, use paragraph numbers or cite the heading of the section.

_Note:_ If the URL is missing, or out of date then the material is inaccessible and so your writing loses credibility.
FURTHER RESOURCES

Other examples are available on the Otago Study Guides Web site at: http://www.otago.ac.nz/slc

For further information on the APA referencing style see the APA Manual (2001) or the pocket guide (APA, 2005).

Information on different referencing styles including the citing of electronic sources is available at on the University’s library web site at:

http://www.library.otago.ac.nz/resources/virtref.html#cite

or visit:

http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/research/r_apa.html
REFERENCES


