



Learning for Professional Practice

Using research papers: Citations, referencing and plagiarism

As we look to expand our skills, learn new techniques and expand medical illustration as an area of knowledge we need to use research papers, i.e. references, to support our work. This Learning and CPD worksheet looks at citing, referencing and plagiarism as well as how check your references and think about using reference management software.

Referencing and citations

Whenever we quote or refer to someone else's work we need to add the citation in the text and include a reference at the end of the work e.g. report, essay, research paper, literature review and presentations. Two papers in the journal started to cover aspects of this topic "Research for medical illustrators: searching for references" in 2001ⁱ and more recently a Learning and CPD worksheet looking at "Google scholar and e-journals"ⁱⁱ.

In simple terms a citation, like the numbers used above, goes into the text and the references go at the end of the work in numerical or alphabetical order. The difficulty comes more often from formatting the citations and references also where you are using a source like a web page how best to cite and reference this. It seems as if almost everyone has there own version of the Harvard referencing system, which can be confusing. So it is best to check which citation and referencing system is preferred at your own institution or organization, see Table 1.

Citation and referencing systems

1. Harvard also known as the author-date system. This is commonly used in Universities and on courses e.g. University of Westminsterⁱⁱⁱ, Cardiff University^{iv} and University of Derby^v
2. Vancouver also known as the author-number system is often used in medical journals, references are numbered consecutively in order of appearance in the text. This includes this journal.
3. Chicago style from the Chicago Manual of Style^{vi}.
4. Specialist subject have their own style e.g. APA Style American Psychologists Association and Legal citation.

Task 1 – Familiarize yourself with the citation and reference system you should be using.

There are a number of tools available on the internet and for use on the desktop or mobile devices that help you correctly reference. Have a look at the different tools available that are listed in Table 2 or the list of Citation Management Tools on the Digital Research Tools wiki^{vii}.

Reference generator tools

Harvard Reference Generator (<http://www.neilstoolbox.com/bibliography-creator/>) you add the details needed and the tool builds the reference.

CiteMe on Facebook <http://apps.facebook.com/citemeapp/>

Zotero <http://www.zotero.org/> that provides a tool for your web browser.

Table 2 – Reference Generator tools

Avoiding plagiarism

With the easy availability of material on the internet there has been a growing awareness of the danger of plagiarism. So what is plagiarism? Simply Plagiarism is to copy, repeat, fake, borrow or steal someone's work and derives from the Latin word for 'to kidnap'. If we use someone's work from a research paper, copy what someone else has written and pass it off as our own that is plagiarism.

There are three types of plagiarism:

Collusion - This is where you are working with one or more other people when you should be working alone

Copying - When using someone else work without giving reference to it.

Paraphrasing - This is reading someone else's work and then writing it out in your own words.

So when writing for coursework or a journal it is important to correctly reference and cite as these actions show that you are recognizing where you have taken ideas from and where a reader can go to look at the original work. It is better to quote an author rather than try and write what they have said in your own words providing you correctly cite and reference the work including for a quote the page number.

For advice and resources about plagiarism go to <http://www.plagiarismadvice.org/>

Checking tools

You can check your work to make sure you aren't plagiarizing by using one of the checking tools on the internet. These are designed to compare your writing with all of the other examples of writing on the internet and not only check that you have cited correctly but will show anywhere you have just cut and pasted things into your work. Many Universities use automated checking systems for essays as part of the submission process e.g. using turnitin^{viii} along with Grade Mark that enables supervisors to mark your work online. There is a version of this online for you to use if your organization doesn't subscribe to turnitin called Writecheck^{ix} and iThenticate^x which requires subscription payments or PC users can access a programme called Viper^{xi}. A full list of what are termed plagiarism detection tools is available from the Plagiarism Advice website at <http://www.plagiarismadvice.org/resources/plagiarism-detection>

Task 2 – Using a recent piece of writing run it through a checking tool and see if it comes up to scratch.

Reference managers

When you are working on a project involving a large number of references or you realize you are accumulating a large number of references but the pdfs appear to be everywhere in different folders and projects on your computer it can be worth looking at using a reference manager whether one that links into your wordprocessor like RefWorks^{xii} or Endnote^{xiii}, ones that link in with the internet and references digital object identifiers to find all your papers details for referencing like Papers for Mac and PC^{xiv} or a web browser based tools like Zotero^{xv} or Mendeley^{xvi} which are free. For a full list and comparison of reference management software go to http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Comparison_of_reference_management_software.

Some of these reference managers for example Papers and Mendeley can also link in with iPhone and iPad apps so you can have your reference collection with you wherever you go as well as on your desktop. The key features which are especially helpful are where these can track the pdf file on the internet through the Digital Object Identifier and find all the details about your reference and that from a collection of papers you can export the references in whichever format you require saving time but also ensuring your references are accurate as you write.

Task 3 – Have a look at the different reference managers and look at how they could help you manage all the research papers you are using.

ⁱ Bryson, D. (2001) Research for medical illustrators: searching for references. *Journal of Audiovisual Media in Medicine* 24 (2): 64-9.

ⁱⁱ Bryson, D. (2010) Google scholar and e-journals. *Journal of Visual Communication in Medicine* 2010; 33 (3): 122–125.

ⁱⁱⁱ <http://www.westminster.ac.uk/study/current-students/support-and-facilities/library-it-services/referencing>

^{iv} <http://www.cardiff.ac.uk/insrv/educationandtraining/guides/citingreferences/>

^v <http://www.derby.ac.uk/library/study-skills/citing-and-referencing>

^{vi} University of Chicago. (2010) *The Chicago manual of style*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

^{vii}

<https://digitalresearchtools.pbworks.com/w/page/17801648/Citation%20Management%20Tools>

^{viii} <http://turnitin.com/>

^{ix} <https://www.writecheck.com/>

^x <http://www.ithenticate.com/>

^{xi} Viper <http://www.scanmyessay.com/>

^{xii} <http://www.refworks.com/>

^{xiii} <http://www.endnote.com/>

^{xiv} <http://www.mekentosj.com/papers/>

^{xv} <http://www.zotero.org/>

^{xvi} <http://www.mendeley.com/>