Referencing in the MHRA Style

For all academic assignments it is vital that you acknowledge the sources of information you have used for your research. This will help you protect yourself against charges of plagiarism and also demonstrate that you understand the importance of professional academic work.

You must acknowledge your sources whenever you paraphrase or summarise another person’s ideas, or when you quote another person’s work, or use tables, graphs, images, etc. which you have found from another source, whether printed or online. This guide explains how this is done in the MHRA (Modern Humanities Research Association) Style.

Introducing the MHRA style

Whenever you refer to another’s words or ideas in your work, insert a footnote number in your text. When referring to the publication for the first time, give full bibliographic details in the footnote. Subsequent references can then be provided in an abbreviated form.

Example

References should be given for ‘all direct or indirect quotations, and in acknowledgement of someone’s opinions, or of a source of factual information which is not general knowledge’.1 Li and Crane point out that the main objective of citing references is to give sufficient information to allow sources to be located.2 Additionally, ‘another important principle is to make reference to that information in the source in hand. As a rule, it is not necessary to provide supplementary information that has to be located elsewhere’.3 General overviews of the process of citing references are given by Bosworth and Craig and in Walliman.4

3 Ibid., p. 3.
4 David P. Bosworth, Citing Your References: A Guide for Authors of Journal Articles and Students Writing Theses or Dissertations (Thirsk, N Yorks: Underhill Press, 1992); P. Craig, ‘How to Cite’, Documentation Studies, 10 (2003), 114-122; Walliman, pp. 300-313.

Inserting footnotes

Wherever possible, place numbers at the end of the sentence, after the full stop. Be consistent in your approach and use continuous numbering throughout the text, starting at number one. For theses, restart the numbering at the beginning of each chapter. When you refer to several sources close together in the same paragraph, use one footnote number and enter a reference for each source, separated by a semi-colon.

To insert footnotes in Microsoft Word, position the cursor in the text where you wish the number to be placed. On the menu bar, select Insert – Reference – Footnote. In the dialogue box which opens, click on Insert to add a footnote.
Directly quoting from your sources

You should aim to paraphrase information provided by an author in your own words rather than quote large amounts of their work verbatim as this helps to demonstrate to the reader your understanding of the information. It may be necessary to quote directly from the text when you:

- cannot present the information more succinctly or in any other way
- need to present a particular portion of an author’s text in your work to analyse it.

If the quotation is short (fewer than 40 words of prose or 2 complete lines of verse), enclose the writer’s words in single quotation marks within your sentence and insert a footnote number:

Mackintosh’s Glasgow School of Art ‘heralded the birth of a new style in 20th century European Architecture’.¹

Longer quotations should be separated from the body of your text and indented from the left-hand margin. There is no need to include quotation marks:

Bernard outlines his design ethos:

Mackintosh’s firm belief that construction should be decorated and not decoration constructed, in other words that the salient and most requisite features should be selected for ornamentation, he applied with great rhythm and inventiveness, especially in those projects, such as the Glasgow School of Art and Scotland Street School, where budgets were severely limited. ²

This theme is taken further by Macleod.³

If you omit some words from the middle of the quotation, you need to indicate this by typing three dots in square brackets, e.g. ‘The state has an essential role […] in the legal definition of property rights’.⁴

If you are omitting lines of verse, write […] on a separate line.

Referencing sources for the first time

When referencing a source for the first time in your piece of work, provide full bibliographic details in the footnote:

- Write the author’s name(s) as it appears on the text: put the author’s forename(s) or initials first, followed by their surname. If there are more than three authors, write the first author’s name followed by ‘and others’.
- Italicise the titles of books and journals.
- Capitalise the first letter of all principal words throughout the title and after the colon, if there is a subtitle.
- Include the specific page number(s) referenced at the end by writing p. or pp. followed by the page number(s).
- Write references for online publications using the format for printed publications as far as possible, adding the <internet address of the document> and the [accessed date].
- Indent the second and subsequent line of each reference.
Book

Journal article

Chapter in an edited book

Newspaper article

PhD Thesis

Electronic journal article

Web page

Sound recording

Images, figures and tables
Fig. 1. List of housing performance indicators for multi-family residential buildings.¹

For further help or information contact your nearest library. See [www.cardiff.ac.uk/insrv/libraries/locations](http://www.cardiff.ac.uk/insrv/libraries/locations)
Further references to the same source

If you reference the same source more than once in a particular piece of work, abbreviate the second and subsequent references by providing only the author and page numbers. Use the abbreviation **ibid.** (meaning in the same place) to refer to a reference immediately above:

2. Ibid., p. 133.

Bibliography

At the end of your work, list each of the sources you have referenced, and any other works you have read in relation to the subject, in a bibliography. Write the list in alphabetical order by the first author’s surname, placing their surname before their forename(s) or initial(s). There is no need to include the specific page reference in a bibliography, but page ranges for edited book chapters and journal articles are required. You should also exclude the full stop at the end of the reference:

Craig, P., ‘How to Cite’, *Documentation Studies*, 10 (2003), 114-122

Publication dates and editions

To find out when a book was published, look at the back of the title page. This page will contain details of the publisher and the publication date. If there is more than one date, use the latest publication date, not the latest reprint date. This is often located next to the © symbol.

If no publication date is given in the book but it can be ascertained, put the year in square brackets e.g. [1989]. If no year can be determined write [n.d.], meaning no date.

The back of the title page will also tell you the edition of the book. If the book you are acknowledging is not the first edition, state this in the full reference in your footnote and bibliography e.g:


Further help and advice on avoiding plagiarism

For further guidance on the MHRA style, refer to the *MHRA Style Guide: A Handbook for Authors, Editors, and Writers of Theses*. For guidance on plagiarism, visit the Academic Integrity web site at [www.cf.ac.uk/regis/sfs/academic/](http://www.cf.ac.uk/regis/sfs/academic/). A short online tutorial on Avoiding Plagiarism is available at [http://ilrb.cf.ac.uk/plagiarism/tutorial/](http://ilrb.cf.ac.uk/plagiarism/tutorial/).