A brief guide to the Harvard System

The University of Greenwich, as with all universities, requires that students give credit to the authors of the evidence they use to support the arguments within their essays and other assignments. Many schools within the University require that students use the Harvard system of referencing (citation). This is a guide to that system giving some useful examples to which you can refer when referencing yourself.

Function

- A bibliographical reference **should** contain sufficient information for you or someone else to trace the information sources you have used.
- It indicates that you have considered the appropriate authorities and evidence in connection with your work.
- It acknowledges and gives credit to the work of others contributing to your work.

N.B. You ought to follow the convention of referencing dictated by your school or tutor. This is normally the Harvard system, but may not necessarily so. Check!

The components of the Harvard system

The Harvard system has two main components. Firstly, there is the in-text reference. For each item of evidence that you use from an external source (a book, a journal article etc.) there is an entry that includes the author’s family name and the year of publication of the source that the information comes from. Note that for a quotation, there will also be the number of the page that the quotation came from (see the section on quoting below).

The in-text reference (author, year) works in conjunction with the second element of the Harvard system, which is known as a Reference List (sometimes inaccurately referred to as a Bibliography). This is an alphabetical list (by the author’s last name and then the year of publication) which includes the full bibliographical details of the book which would enable the reader to find that source if they so wished. The in-text reference to the author’s last name and the year of publication can be looked up in this list and the full details found. As you can see then, the system requires both the elements of an in-text reference and a reference list to work.

Examples of how to do both elements are shown below.

N.B. Bibliographies are sometimes used in the Harvard system. However, the term properly refers to an extended list which refers to ALL the books you consulted rather than just those you referred to in your assignment.

Citations in the text (in-text reference)

- All material taken from another writer’s work should be acknowledged, whether the work is directly quoted, paraphrased or summarised.
- Not referencing = Plagiarism
- Plagiarism = a fancy word for **stealing**
Citations in the text should give the author’s name with the year of publication, then all references should be listed in alphabetical order at the end of the paper/dissertation as laid out below.

**For a single author**

In a study by Murthoo (1999) treatment compliance was examined…..

In a study (Murthoo, 1999) treatment compliance was examined ….  

When an author has published more than one cited document in the same year these are differentiated by adding lower case letters after the year within the brackets.

Brown (2000a) argued that public health issues were ignored in many cases where the removal of blue asbestos was involved.

**Two authors:**

In the book by Gould and Bennett (2001) practitioners seen to be employing reflective methods were more successful in achieving high success rates.

**More than three authors:**

Singer *et al* (1996) contend that ….  

**N.B.** All the authors, no matter how many, should be given in the reference list. This is so that all the authors of the document can receive credit for their work.

**Multiple sources referred to:**

If more than one citation is referred to within a sentence, list them all in the following form, by date and then alphabetically:

There are indications that childhood poverty is a strong predictor of later morbidity (Wybourn and Hudson, 2002; Acheson, 1998; Lewis 1998).

**Secondary referencing**

Where one author is referring to the work of another and the primary source is not available.

You should cite the primary source and the source you have read eg Vygotsky and Piaget, 2002, cited in Wybourn, 2003.

- Secondary referencing should be avoided where possible. Find the original if you can.

**Online sources:**

When referencing a web page in your text it should be the Author and Year that you put in brackets and not the web page address or URL. Sometimes the author may be the organisation that publishes the web page, for example the Department of Health:
According to the Department of Health (2006) the quality of access to health care is one of their fundamental responsibilities.

Paraphrasing

To paraphrase means to write someone else’s words in your own. This is an alternative way to refer to someone else’s work without quoting them directly. The larger examples above are all paraphrased. It is important to paraphrase much more than to quote, because it shows that in translating the original information into your own words, you have understood it. However, you must be sure not to change the meaning of the original writing. A paraphrased sentence or piece of information still requires referencing, though only the author and the year (not a page number as for a quotations); again, look at the examples above.

Harvard method of quoting in the text:

You should use quotation marks and acknowledge the author’s name, year of publication and page number of the quote in brackets. You should use quotations sparingly (see the section on Paraphrasing above).

Short quotations (up to 2 lines) can be included in the body of the text:

Wybourn (1999:19) states that “being an undergraduate can be a pain”.

Longer quotations should be indented in a separate paragraph:

Smaje (1995:17) when commenting on transcultural care states that: “Whereas multiculturalism tends to emphasise the existence of different cultural traditions in contemporary Britain and promotes tolerance and understanding, anti-racism places a more political emphasis on the forces that structure and determine access to power in society”

If part of the quotation is omitted then this can be indicated using three dots (ellipsis):

Smaje (1995:17) states “…the existence of different cultural traditions in contemporary Britain and promotes tolerance and understanding…”

The Reference List – the Harvard method of listing references at the end of the text

- List in alphabetical order by author’s name and then by date (earliest first),
- If more than one item has been published during a specific year by letter (1995a, 1995b etc.),
- Take information from the title page of a publication and not from the front cover.
- Include the elements and punctuation given in the examples below.
- Author’s forenames can be included if given on the title page but this is not necessary.
- The title of the publication should either be in italics or underlined.
A book by a single author:

A book by two authors:

A book by a corporate author (eg a government department or other organisation):

An edited book:

A chapter in a book

An article in a journal:

An article in a newspaper:

If no author name is given then the publisher should be used instead.

An online source:

A television programme:

A video:

CD ROMS:

Government publications
- White Papers contain statements of Government policy
- Green Papers put forward proposals for consideration and public discussion.
- They are cited in the same way.
A White paper
Cm.3390. London: Stationery Office

A Green paper
Cm 3854. London: Stationery Office.

An Act of Parliament

Further reading


A comprehensive guide to Harvard referencing including examples of in-text and reference list entries for each source.