Acknowledging Sources in Written Work

Why Reference?

When you produce a written, academic assessment, you will be expected to draw on an array of other sources, including critical writing, first-hand accounts of productions, playscripts, and more. Citing and referencing source material is an essential aspect of academic writing. Plagiarism (not acknowledging someone else’s work and using it as if it were your own) is a serious form of academic misconduct and must be avoided at all costs. A failure to acknowledge other people’s work can lead to the Department and/or the University taking serious measures that may affect your university career. It is therefore crucial that you clearly distinguish between your words and the words and ideas of others. Doing so not only avoids plagiarism, but it helps those reading your work follow your argument, and demonstrates that you are supporting your ideas with authoritative sources.

While you will come across a number of referencing systems in your reading, the Department of Theatre, Film and Television recommends that you use one particular system consistently throughout all your written work: the Modern Humanities Research Association (MHRA) referencing system. This section of the handbook is designed to provide you with a relatively comprehensive guide to referencing using this system. The MHRA’s guide can be downloaded here (http://www.mhra.org.uk/Publications/Books/StyleGuide/StyleGuideV3_2.pdf); information about avoiding academic misconduct can be found on the University Academic Integrity webpages at http://www.york.ac.uk/integrity/.

Although new types of sources and ways of disseminating information are constantly arising, these next few pages cover most of the types of sources you may need to cite. If any question arises which is not covered here, feel free to consult your tutors about the appropriate convention.

How do I reference?

Referencing material is relatively simple. Every time that you refer to a source, you insert a footnote. Inserting a footnote in Microsoft Word is achieved by going to the ‘References’ tab and selecting the ‘Insert Footnote’ button. You do not need to include a bibliography at the end of your essay. (However, some assessment, like the Dissertation in Year Three, does require you to compile one, but this is an exception and not the rule. You will be told clearly in the assessment brief when a bibliography is required.)

References can be either direct (that is, a quotation) or indirect (you are referring to an idea, argument, fact etc. without quoting it). For direct references, simply present the bibliographical information in the footnote (see section B for details). For indirect references, preface the bibliographical information in the footnote with the word ‘See’.

There may also be times when you find a useful quotation from someone, quoted in a source. Here the person quoted is different from the person writing the source itself. This is how this should be referenced:
In the essay:
As Ralph Fiennes noted, when discussing *Richard III*: ‘It’s quite rare that you actually are close to a political crisis, political uncertainty’. ¹

In the footnote:

(A) Handling Quotations

Quotations are word-for-word text included in your work and they must always be copied with exact accuracy. This includes, for instance, precise transcription of the smallest details of both punctuation and typography (the use of italics, say, or capitalisation, etc.). **Do not italicize quotations unless they appear in italics in the original.**

Quotations should **always** be carefully identified as quotations. **If your chosen quotation is relatively short** (i.e., no more than two lines in length), use a brief phrase within your paragraph or sentence to introduce the quotation before including it inside single quotation marks ‘ ’. **For longer quotations**, you should indent the quotation in full, so that it appears as an indented paragraph of its own, and no quotation marks are needed around the text. A footnote should follow both forms of quotation.

*Quoting from plays*

Quoting from a single character’s speech involves simply putting the line in single quotation marks. When quoting dialogue, you should include the characters’ names in small capitals (something accessible through Microsoft Word’s ‘Home’ tab, then select ‘Font’ on the bottom of the second box from the left), for example:

**ANNA:** I don’t kiss strange men.
**DAN:** Neither do I. (This would then be followed by a footnote)

**When quoting from a play with line numbers**, such as a play by Shakespeare, include the line number in the footnote (in the form: p. x, l. y).

*Quotations within Quotations*

Sometimes, you will find that a source includes a quotation of its own. Here use single quotation marks to enclose the quotation as a whole and double quotation marks to indicate the quotation with the quotation, for example:

As Summers put it, ‘there is nothing that is “unduly lenient” about the critical response to Rattigan’s mature work’.
Footnotes always appear after punctuation, for example:

Johnson expresses her disgust as the ‘complete breakdown of moral values’.¹

There is little to distinguish between the two arguments (as Simmons states on several occasions),¹ but it might be worth considering a different approach to this quandary.

The content of a footnote varies according to the type of source that has informed the footnote. Below, you will find a series of models, together with real examples. Simply insert the information into the models and you will have successfully referenced your sources.

Books

Author name, Title, including subtitle if one exists (Place of publication: publisher: year), page number or page numbers quoted.


There is extra information that can be included about editions, volumes and translators, and this can be found in the MHRA Style Handbook (see below).

Journal Articles

Author name, ‘Title of article in full’, Title of journal, volume number: part number (year), page range of the article (page or pages quoted).

e.g.: Laura Bradley, ‘A Different Political Forum: East German Theatre and the Construction of the Berlin Wall’, Journal of European Studies, 36: 2 (2006), 139-56 (pp. 141-2).

Chapters in Books

(These are usually books that contain a number of essays by different contributors, compiled by an editor or editors.)

Author name, ‘Title of essay in full’, in Title of book, ed. by Editors’ names or name (Place of publication: publisher, year), page range of the essay (page or pages quoted).

Articles in Newspapers or Magazines

Author name, ‘Title of article’, Newspaper or magazine name, date of publication, page number where available (this may be omitted when reading articles online, for example).


Websites

These kinds of reference apply to exclusively web-based content. If you are referencing journal articles or books that are also available on the web, footnote as above, as if they were article or books in hard copy.

Author name, when known, ‘Title of page’, URL [accessed date]


Theatre Productions

Name of production, by Author name, Venue, City of the venue, date of premiere OR year of premiere if date is not known. Dir. by Director’s name.

e.g.: The Plough and the Stars, by Sean O’Casey, Lyttleton Theatre, London, 27 July 2016. Dir. by Howard Davies and Jeremy Herrin.

DVDs

These items are more difficult to reference because they often don’t have date or place of publication. Here it is usual to include the information available.

Title of DVD, DVD company, year of publication.

e.g.: Black Watch, John Williams Productions, 2008.

Films

Title of film, director (distributor, year of release).

e.g.: The Grapes of Wrath, dir, by John Ford (20th Century Fox, 1940).

Television
‘Title of specific programme’ [if there is one], title of series, channel, date [and if relevant, time] of transmission.

e.g.: ‘Green Shoots from the Arab Spring’, Analysis, BBC Radio 4, 12 November 2012. Newsnight, BBC2, 2 November 2012, 10.30pm.

Social media


Short posts on Twitter or Facebook: “tweet or Facebook post.” #hashtag(s) [if present in original post]’ (@handle, date).

e.g. “Congratulations to Deep Blue Sea audience member @SadiqKhan on #100days as Mayor of London.” #LondonisOpen’ (@National Theatre, 16 August 2016).

If in doubt, refer to the MHRA Style Guide, which is free to download at http://www.mhra.org.uk/Publications/Books/StyleGuide/StyleGuideV3_2.pdf. The most relevant pages in the current edition are to be found under the eleventh chapter: ‘References’.

Missing Information

Sometimes you will not be able to identify an author or other information required above. While you should be rigorous, it may not always to possible to bibliograph everything. You may use ‘Anon.’ for a missing author or contributor; ‘n.d.’ for a missing date; and ‘n.p.’ for no page numbers.

Page Numbers

When referring to a single page, use ‘p.’ followed by a single number. When referring to several pages, use ‘pp.’ followed by either a range of numbers (e.g. pp. 5-9) of by a series of numbers (e.g. pp. 7, 12 and 23), depending on context.

Repeated references

If you refer to the same work on more than one occasion, you have three options, depending on context.
1. If the same work is cited directly after the original reference, you can use the Latin abbreviation ‘ibid.’. This means ‘in the same place’, and you footnotes might look like this:

   2 Ibid., p. 528.

2. It is more likely, however, that you will refer to the same source at different points of your essay. Here you are free to abbreviate the original reference to something intelligible to the reader, as in the following example:


   Then after some other references:


3. On some occasions, you may make frequent references to the same source, as when quoting from the same play throughout an essay. Here you can signal in the first footnote that you will be including an ‘in-text’ references for all subsequent mentions. This can work thus:


   A subsequent example in the essay may look like this:

   The play opens with a note of disturbance when Joan says ‘I can’t sleep’ (FA 3).

   There is no longer need for a footnote in this case.