Being digital

Referencing module texts

1: Introduction

When you're writing an assignment, or any other written work which will be seen by others, you are expected to acknowledge the sources you've used.

Using a referencing style will help you to present this information in a format that anyone reading your work will recognise and understand.

This activity will help you to understand the basics of referencing module texts. There are a number of referencing styles, which may differ slightly, so be sure to find out which one you should be using. You will normally find this information in your study guide. Your tutor will also be able to advise you, if you're unsure.

This activity forms part of a set that covers referencing. If you haven't already done so, you may benefit from completing the Introduction to referencing activity before starting this one.

Learning outcomes

By the end of this activity, you should be able to:

- reference module texts within your writing

- create a full reference for a reference list, that presents the correct module text information in the right format.

2: Citing 'in-text'

When you refer to, or quote, someone else's work within the content of your own written work, you must provide some information on the source. This is called an **'in-text citation'**.

An in-text citation isn't a full reference. You are only required to provide enough detail to direct people to the full details in the reference list.

The basic information you need for an in-text citation is:

- the name(s) of the author(s)

- the Block

- the year the text was published.

If you are quoting directly from a module text, you will also need to include the page number on which the quote appears.

The way you word your sentence will determine where your in-text citation should be placed, and the format you should use. Look carefully through the examples on the next page.

Additional information

In this activity we have included a referencing framework for in-text citations that includes information on the module **Block**. Some institutions, courses or modules may use referencing styles that do not require this information, so check your referencing guidelines or ask your tutor.

3: Citing a book 'in-text'

The seven case studies below provide some examples of where to include the citations within your written work, and how to format them.

In each case, full details must be provided in your reference list.

Case 1: Citing a module text with no stated author(s)

Your module texts may not have any stated authors. They may have been published under the name of the institution or organisation. Use this in place of the author(s).

Example 1:

Similar findings (The Open University, Block 2, 2013) support the original claim.

Example 2:

Further work by The Open University (Block 2, 2013) supports this claim.

Case 2: Citing a module text by one author

Example 1:

Further work (Jones, Block 2, 2013) supports this claim.

Example 2:

Further work by Jones (Block 2, 2013) supports this claim.

Case 3: Citing a module text by two authors

Example 1:

Further work (Winter and Green, Block 3, 2013) outlines a number of approaches.

Example 2:

The examples provided by Winter and Green (Block 3, 2010) support this model.

Case 4: Citing a module text by three or more authors

*To reference a module text written by three or more authors, you only need to list the first author, followed by **et al.**, which means 'and others'.*

Example 1:

Further research (Latham et al., Block 1, 2013) supports this claim.

Example 2:

The work of Latham et al. (Block 1, 2013) supports this claim.

Case 5: Citing a quote within a sentence

*When including a direct quote within a sentence you have written, you should include the **publication date**, **block number** and **page number** in brackets, either in the lead-in to the quote, or at the end of the sentence.*

If a module text does not have an author, use the name of the university or institution in place of the author.

Example1:

The Open University (2013, Block 2, p. 23) indicates that 'several landmark studies have been made in this area'.

Example 2:

The Open University indicates that 'several landmark studies have been made in this area' (2013, Block 2, p. 23).

Case 6: Citing before a blockquote

If you mention the author's name before a blockquote, put the publication date, block number and page number in brackets directly after the author's name.

If a module text does not have an author, use the name of the university or institution in place of the author.

Example

The Open University (2013, Block 2, p. 26) provides some advice on interviewing people for case studies:

> You should ensure that your questions are focused, so do not cover more than one issue in one question. Keep your questions open to encourage a more detailed response. Don't ask questions that can be answered by a 'Yes' or 'No', as this will result in you having to ask another question.

Case 7: Citing after a blockquote

If you include a blockquote, without mentioning the author within the sentence before, put the author's name (or institution), publication date, block number and page number in brackets on a new line.

If a module text does not have an author, use the name of the university or institution as the author.

Example:

> You should ensure that your questions are focused, so do not cover more than one issue in one question. Keep your questions open to encourage a more detailed response. Don't ask questions that can be answered by a 'Yes' or 'No', as this will result in you having to ask another question.
>
> (The Open University, 2010, Block 2, p. 26)

4: Full reference

For every 'in-text citation' you have included within your assignment or written work, there should be a detailed reference in your **reference list**.

The key pieces of information you need to include for a module text are:

- the author's surname and initials, or the name of the institution

- the year the text was published

- module code, block number and block title

- place of publication

- the publisher.

The step-by-step guide below will take you through the order and format you need to use to present this information in a reference list.

The example will build with each step. The relevant addition for each step appears in bold for clarity. There are four steps.

Step 1: Start with the author's surname and initials. If a module text does not have an author, use the name of the university or institution in place of the author.

Example:

The Open University

Step 2: Add the year the text was published, in brackets.

Example continues:

The Open University **(2013)**

Step 3: Add the module code (colon), block number and block title in italics. Follow with a comma:

Example continues:

The Open University (2013) *YO31: Block 2 Speaking Out*

Step 4: Add the place the text was published, followed by a comma, and then the name of the publisher. End with a full stop.

Example continues:

The Open University (2013) *Y031: Block 2 Speaking Out*, **Milton Keynes, The Open University.**

5: Online module materials

Referencing modules that are provided online requires slightly different information.

In-text

If you are providing an in-text reference to an online module text, you will need to provide the **year of module start**, instead of the **year of publication**. For example:

Author (year of module start), or (Author, year of module start)

Full reference

Your full reference requires **year of module start** and **online details**. You will need to provide the following information:

- **Author and initials (or the name of the institution)**, followed by the **Year of module start** (in brackets)

- **Section number and title** (within single quotation marks, followed by a comma)

- **The module code, block number and title** (in italics).

- Write **[Online]** after this to indicate you are referencing online material (followed by a full stop). Then write **Available at**, and follow this with the URL of the web page. Within brackets, write **Accessed**, and then the date you last accessed the web page.

Example

The Open University (2013) '1.2.2 Language, Protest and Power', *Y031 Block 2 Speaking Out* [Online]. Available at https://learn2.open.ac.uk/mod/oucontent/view.php?id=192081&section= 2.2 (Accessed 3 February 2013).

6: Multiple references, same author

When you are citing in-text, you may find that you are making multiple references to the same author. For instance, **(Open University, 2013)**.

You may have several entries in the full reference for the Open University, so it will be difficult for your readers to link your in-text reference to the correct full reference. This is especially difficult for online materials, where you have no page numbers.

There are different ways of overcoming this. The standard method in the OU Harvard Guide is to use a form of alphabetic notation (a, b, c etc.). For example:

(The Open University, 2012**a**)

The Open University (2012**a**) K311 Learning Guide 1 [Online]. Available at http://learn2.open.ac.uk/mod/oucontent/view.php?id=26403&section=8 (Accessed 14 November 2012).

However, because this can be quite complicated, students on **Open University Access courses**, for example, are advised to insert the number of the relevant section, where they would normally insert a page number for printed materials. For example:

(The Open University, 2013, **Block 2, 1.2.2**)

The key thing to remember is that you need to make it easy for your reader to identify the material you have referenced.

7: Quiz

Have a go at this quiz to test your understanding of how to reference module texts, both as in-text citations and within a reference list. There are three questions.

Question 1 of 3

The following options show three in-text citations for a module text. Assume that block details are required and choose the citation which is written correctly.

    a) The Open University (2013) found that texting has 'impaired the way we communicate verbally' in social situations.

    b) The Open University (2013, p. 26) found that texting has 'impaired the way we communicate verbally' in social situations.

    c) The Open University (2013, Block 2, p. 26) found that texting has 'impaired the way we communicate verbally' in social situations.

Question 2 of 3

The following options show three in-text citations for a work with three authors. Which one is correct?

    a) Jones et al. (2012, Block 3) identified three main strategies for the effective management of this type of situation.

    b) Jones, Allcott and Price (2012, Block 3) identified three main strategies for the effective management of this type of situation.

    c) Jones et al. identified three main strategies for the effective management of this type of situation.

Question 3 of 3

The following options show three formats for referencing online module material. Choose the option that shows the right information in the right order.

a) Author/Organisation, 'Section number and title', *Module code, block number and title* [Online]. Available at and URL of the website (Year of module start) (Accessed and the date you last accessed the site).

b) Author/Organisation, (Year of module start) 'Section number and title', *Module code, block number and title* [Online]. Available at and URL of the website (Accessed and the date you last accessed the site).

c) Author/Organisation, (Year of module start) 'Section number and title', *Module code, block number and title*. Available at and URL of the website (Accessed and the date you last accessed the site).

8: Summary

The following frameworks provide information on the order and format of full references for module texts. You can use these as quick references.

Texts

Author/Institution (Date of publication) 'Unit name and title', *Module code, block number and block name*, Place of publication, Publisher.

Online module materials

Author/Organisation, (Year of module start) Section number and title', *Module code, block number and title* [Online]. Available at and URL of the website (Accessed and the date you last accessed the site).

There are a number of different referencing styles. Your university or institution will provide you with details of which one you should be using, along with the relevant guidelines for that style. If you are unsure, you will find the information in your study guide, or you could ask your tutor.

References

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Appendix 1: Quiz answers and feedback

The answers to the exercise are detailed below.

Question 1

The correct in-text citation is:

c) The Open University (2013, Block 2, p. 26) found that texting has 'impaired the way we communicate verbally' in social situations.

This is correct because the publication date, block number and page number have been included in brackets in the lead-in to the quote. You could also have chosen to include this information at the end of the sentence.

In some circumstances, you may not be required to include block details

Question 2

The correct way to cite a module text with three authors is:

a) Jones et al., (2012) identified three main strategies for the effective management of this type of situation.

This is the correct answer because, if there are three authors, you would only include the name of the first author, followed by **et al.**, and then the date and block number in brackets.

Question 3

The correct format to use when referencing a module text is:

b) Author/Organisation, (Year of module start) 'Section number and title', Module code, block number and title [Online]. Available at and URL of the website (Accessed and the date you last accessed the site).

This provides the right details, in the correct order.