School of Applied Sciences
Guidelines for Referencing Practice and the Use of Turnitin® UK
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CITATIONS AND REFERENCING: THE PRINCIPLES

Whenever you produce an academic assignment, you are required to acknowledge your sources of information (ie. the work of others) by citing references in the text and creating a list of references at the end of your work.

The steps involved are:

1. To place in your text, a citation which indicates your source of information in a format which is short but sufficiently detailed to link accurately to the reference list.
2. The reference list at the end of the work which gives the full details of your source, so that the reader would be able to find that same source.

The system used in the School of Applied Sciences is the Harvard system. Citations consist of the name(s) of authors of the piece of work being cited, along with the date of publication. References are then listed in alphabetical order by the author(s) surname.

Below is an example of a citation:

‘Lyon (2016) indicates that access to information is not being dispersed to all Internet users, and that the power is concentrated in the hands of experts and corporations.’

This could also be written:

‘Recent work on access to information indicates that it is not being dispersed to all Internet users, and that the power is concentrated in the hands of experts and corporations (Lyon, 2016).’

The example reference appears at the end of the essay, in this case it is a (fictional) textbook:


(Author, initial, date. Book title. Place of publication. Publisher’s name)

In the list of references, this item would then appear after ‘K’ but before ‘M’.
A bibliography differs from a reference list in that it lists sources of information which have not been cited. So, you may have read many interesting articles, but did not directly cite them, but you can still list them in your bibliography. However, we do not usually expect you to produce a bibliography.

The sources of information you use will vary widely, from textbooks, journals, newspapers and others. Any source must be cited and referenced, but exactly how you do this may vary.

As you read more widely, you will realise that there are many different styles of citation and referencing. There is no one single style which is appropriate to every student in the school. Instead, what your module leader will do is give you detailed guidelines about how to cite and reference your sources.

PLEASE NOTE: It is the responsibility of your module leader to provide you with guidance about referencing for an assessment, it is your responsibility to be aware of what these requirements are.

USING CITATION SOFTWARE
There are several software packages (eg. Mendeley, Endnote) which will allow you to embed citations and to build up a reference list as you write your document. The library will run training sessions throughout the year to demonstrate this software. You should note, however, that not all referencing styles are compatible with these software packages, so do make sure you use software which is suitable for your chosen/required referencing style.

AVOIDING PLAGIARISM

- What is plagiarism?

If you are asked to submit an individual piece of coursework (i.e. not a group project) it is considered essential that the work you submit is your own, and written in your own words. Working with other people is to be encouraged but, when asked for, an assessment must be written by you alone. There is a clear difference between helping someone, which is a good thing to do, and allowing them to copy your work. If a lecturer thinks that plagiarism (copying other people’s work) has taken place, this will be treated very seriously. Copying text essentially verbatim (word for word) from web pages, .pdf files, electronic journals, textbooks etc and then making a few minor changes is plagiarism. You must write your coursework in your own words. An excuse such as: “I couldn’t think of a better way to write it, so I just copied it (and changed it a little)” is not acceptable.
• **Why is plagiarism a serious offence?**

Academic staff need to see that you can express ideas and critically review work without resorting to copying the words of others. If you do that it is difficult to determine whether you understand the work. It is also a form of cheating – the implication is that you are pretending that the work is your own when it is not.

• **How would I avoid plagiarism by using my own notes?**

The simplest way of avoiding plagiarism is to take notes when working on an assignment and then to use these to produce the final work – that is, DO NOT cut and paste directly from sources into your assignment even if you intend to go back and change it later on.

• **When can I use quotations?**

The use of quotations is more common in some subject areas than others. You will receive guidance from your module and programme leaders about what is acceptable. Direct quotations are normally used in academic work only when it is important to relate the actual words used rather than the meaning of those words. In scientific subjects this means that direct quotations are rare. In more text-based subjects, direct quotations are more common.

• **Do I always need to put in a citation when I paraphrase other people’s work?**

Yes

• **Will I be accused of plagiarism if I’m reporting something that is common knowledge but don’t provide a citation?**

No – although judging what constitutes common knowledge can sometimes be tricky so if in doubt, give a citation.

• **What is collusion?**

This is working with others on a piece of work that should be your own. Please note that we welcome and encourage students to discuss their work together. But if the final assessment is based on an individual piece of work then this final product should be produced by you alone.

• **How do I make sure that I don’t get accused of copying other students’ work?**

Feel free to discuss work with others, to look at previous examples and to swap drafts – all this helps you to learn and is good academic practice. But when you are writing the work for submission make sure you do it alone.
• **What happens if I am suspected of plagiarism?**

You will be required to attend an interview with the Academic Conduct Officer within the school. If the ACO decides that you have committed plagiarism then the penalties can range from a reduction of marks through to expulsion from the university.

• **Where can I find out more about how the University handles cases of suspected plagiarism?**

Go to the ‘Be wise don't plagiarise’ website (from MyNapier) and feel free to speak to your tutors and to the School Academic Conduct Officer. Your programme leader can tell you who this is.

**USING TURNITIN ® UK**

Turnitin ® UK is powerful software which is now widely used to detect matching text. You will be expected to submit almost all of your coursework to a Turnitin portal on Moodle (for a very few pieces of work this is not possible). Your tutor will then be able to see an originality report which indicates any areas of text which might match with something else on the internet.

You will be shown how to submit work to Turnitin, and what an originality report looks like. In the majority of modules, you will be permitted at least one draft submission so that you can see your own report prior to submission of your final piece of work.

• **What is an acceptable percentage of matching text?**

The overall percentage is an accumulation of all the individual percentage matches, regardless of whether they are inconsequential or substantial matches. So there is not really an acceptable percentage as such, because this value can be arrived at in different ways. For instance, numerous small matches can result in a large overall percentage which is relatively unimportant, but a small overall percentage may be the result of one or two copied paragraphs and this is more significant. Therefore you should examine all the matches and understand why Turnitin has highlighted them.

• **Why does my text match sources that I have not used?**

Turnitin does not identify the exact source of text that you have used. It simply highlights that there is matching text and lists all the sources using that text. There are usually multiple sources because websites replicate information from other websites, or an author of a piece of work will often use quotations from journals and websites and so these will all be listed as matching sources.
• **What if my text matches my classmates work?**

It is very likely that for a class assignment, some of your text will match text from other students submitting the same assignment. This will happen if you are including a departmental cover-sheet, repeating the assignment title, or using a similar reference list. Significant matches will occur in assignments using established phrases or terminology, or where assignments require the inclusion of extracts of text being discussed.

• **What if my reference list / bibliography is matching other sources?**

Your tutors can set up Turnitin so that the reference list may or may not be included in the scan of your document. If the reference list is included, it is highly likely that other authors writing about the same topic will use similar references to support their work, so your references will normally match other sources. In this case the matches will be in different colours. If they are all in the same colour, it usually means that you have copied your references directly from one other source, and this is not acceptable.

• **How can I use quotations without matching other sources?**

If the quotation has been used elsewhere or the original source is on the Turnitin database, then it will show up as a match. This is not a problem, as long as you have presented it as a quote, and cited it correctly. Your tutor can set Turnitin to exclude quotes from text matching, and this will remove the match.

• **How significant are matches that are just a few common words?**

If a sentence contains several words in common with a source, then Turnitin will show the match. Often these are coincidence where a source has used the same common words. Sometimes these include commonly used but important words in your subject, so you don’t need to reference them. Turnitin can be set up to exclude small matches and tutors may set it up to specify how many words can match and still be ignored, up to a limit.

• **What should I do if I have sentences or paragraphs of matching text?**

Depending on the subject matter, the best option is to remove the quote, and write the information in your own words. This is preferable to a quote, because it shows the marker that you understand the point being made. If you want to keep the author’s original words, then ensure that you have presented the matching text as a quote and cited your source. This may still show up as a match (depending on the specific Turnitin settings that are in place) but it is not a problem if it is correctly presented and cited.
WHERE TO FIND MORE INFORMATION
From MyNapier, go to Academic and Study skills to find the link to “Be wise, don’t plagiarise” as well as links to study support available to all students. http://my.napier.ac.uk/Academic-Study-Skills/Pages/Academic-Study-Skills.aspx
Your module leader should be your first point of information for anything relating to modular assessment, referencing guidelines etc.

INFORMATION ABOUT MARKING REFERENCING AND TURNITIN REPORTS, FOR STUDENTS AND STAFF

The ‘ground rules’ below explain the approach to marking citations and references within assessed work and seek to reassure students on how minor errors will be treated. Please always refer to the guidelines applicable to the specific module for detailed advice on requirements, and do speak to the module leader if you are unclear about what you need to do.

Unless specifically stated in the module assessment brief, you would not expect marks to be deducted for:

1. Using quotations. However, if you use too many quotations, the marker may not have the evidence they need to determine that you have sufficiently understood the topic and marks may be deducted as a result.

2. Writing about what is 'common knowledge' without including citations. As a general rule, a fact can be said to be 'common knowledge' when:
   • it is widely accessible, e.g. the population of Scotland, which you would be able to find easily from numerous sources;
   • it is likely to be known by a lot of people;
   • it can be found in a general reference resource, such as a dictionary or encyclopedia.

3. Using minor variations in punctuation and formatting in your citations and references.

4. Occasional instances of poor spelling and grammar. However, please check the assessment brief for details of assessment requirements as correct spelling and use of grammar is vital in some subjects. Your module leader can advise. Note: support in relation to academic writing is available from http://my.napier.ac.uk/Academic-Study-Skills/Pages/Academic-Study-Skills.aspx

5. Turnitin matches in the reference/bibliography list (if your tutor has set this up to be included in the report), unless all come from the same source.