



7 Citing and referencing to avoid plagiarism

In your written work, you'll need to show that you have read about, understood and analysed key ideas. To do this, you'll have to integrate those ideas into your text by quoting, summarising or paraphrasing. This technique is called 'citation.' You'll also need to give details of these published sources within your text and in a listing at the end of the text. This is called 'referencing.'

Why are citing, referencing and avoidance of plagiarism important to you?

For BTEC study: you'll have to follow the academic conventions of citing and referencing correctly. At later stages in your education, you may have to follow these conventions again. This is an opportunity to learn how to do it all properly.

By citing and referencing sources correctly, you'll show that you can:

- explain your ideas honestly by giving credit to the authors whose work you have used
- evaluate material and recognise different views on a topic as presented by others.

You'll also be able to sign a declaration that your assignment is your own work.

For work: in the workplace, you'll continue to follow these techniques when you use different resource materials to support ideas in your professional writing. For example, this could include reports, discussion documents and any other kind of writing that relies on the work of others.

What is citation?

A citation is an acknowledgement that the source of content has not originated from you. Citation requires you to select the material you want to mention and why you want to mention it. You can do this by:

- **quoting** – using exact words from the original text (page number after quote)
- **summarising** – outlining the key points from the original article using your own words
- **paraphrasing** – providing a general explanation of the theme or idea in your own words.

You'll also need to use appropriate language to introduce any citations in your text. The following situations and examples show when and how you might cite the work of others.

Why you might cite work of others	Examples of how to introduce an idea in your work using reporting words
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to support your own point or discussion 	X stated that... X observed that...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to give a contrast to your specific points or discussion 	X questioned the view that... X offered an alternative view that...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to give a new development in the topic area 	X claimed that... X surmised that...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to give a philosophical or theoretical platform for your work 	X suggested that... X believed that ...

What is referencing?

Referencing is a technique that involves two stages:

- giving 'short' publication details of sources you want to cite in your text (for example author and date)
- listing the full publication information in a reference list (sometimes called a 'Bibliography' or 'Works cited') at the end of your work.

Many referencing systems exist. The more commonly used include the Chicago, Harvard, Modern Languages (MLA) and Vancouver styles. They use different layout styles for references in the text and in the reference list at the end of the document. Your tutor will guide you on the recommended style and order for your course. Typical reference information you will need about your source material is listed below.

Who wrote it	The format used for different sources	About the publication
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Author(s): Surname and initials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For books: full title 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Date of publication Place of publication Publisher <p>These details are usually found on the reverse of the title page in a printed book.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For journal articles: article title 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The journal title, volume, issue and relevant page numbers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Author(s) of online material (if given) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For online resources: article title 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For online resources: URL and date accessed



A typical layout: Harvard style

Example of original text from a source on reflective learning	
All learning should develop from personal reflection on experience or observation. Only then can learners develop their understanding and progress to new levels of knowledge and practice.	
Alternative examples of citation and reference within your text	
Milne (2015) identifies reflection by individuals of their experiences as a means of developing their own learning.	
OR	
Reflection on personal experience by learners promotes their development (Milne, 2015).	
Reference list entry (at the end of your text)	
Milne, C., 2015. The power of reflection in learning. York: Elfin Press. [Ordered as: author, date of publication, title, place of publication and publisher]	
Citation of a website source	
Learners can develop their understanding and knowledge by reflecting on their own experiences (Milne, 2009)	
Reference list entry (at the end of your text) – online example	
Milne, C., 2009. Reflection and learning for the individual. Newsletter of the Third Age. Available from www.thirdagenews.co.uk [Accessed 1.4.15].	
TIP	As you do your reading, make it part of your routine to note author(s), date of publication, titles, place of publication and the publisher for each resource. You should also note the volume, issue and page numbers (as relevant, for example for quotations) or the URL for quick retrieval if you need to re-read the particular text. Note: you need to record the full URL and the date on which you accessed it.

What is plagiarism?

Plagiarism, at its most basic, occurs if someone has used the work of another without showing that it is the 'intellectual property' of the original author (their unique ideas).

Important to know

What happens if a learner submits work that is plagiarised?

Firstly, plagiarism is serious; it is dishonesty. Plagiarism can be easily detected because tutors can access text-monitoring software that detects text misuse or unacknowledged material. If this shows up in written assignments, learners will be penalised for plagiarism; this means that their marks can be disallowed and the instance of plagiarism will remain on their academic record.

Secondly, plagiarism is stealing in the same way as illegally downloading music from the internet. In some professions, for example nursing, plagiarism is regarded as a mark of dishonesty and a trainee learner who has plagiarised could be suspended from the course or prevented from working as a nurse by the Nursing and Midwifery Council.

Learners are often unaware of what plagiarism is and so are surprised to find that their work has been labelled as plagiarism.

Plagiarism occurs when:

- more than 10% of a text is a direct quotation from the source(s)
- some words are substituted for words similar in meaning (synonyms)
- sentences or words are reordered
- exact words are copied from text without quotation marks or source information (citation)
- the source is given but the exact words are used without quotation marks
- material from the internet is copied and pasted without acknowledgement or download dates given
- work created together with other learners is submitted without acknowledging their contribution
- identical work authored by the same person is submitted for different assignments
- copying and submitting the work of another learner with or without their permission
- different source ideas are given without clear analysis of content or importance which indicates a lack of deeper thinking about the topic and related content.



Learning activity

Case study on citation and referencing and related plagiarism

In the next activity, you will see examples of text from Logan, a learner. He has selected a number of ideas drawn from his reading to support his essay on how reflecting on experiences helps to improve learning, recognise challenges and determine action points.

His sources are presented in different referencing styles and he needs to modify these to make them uniformly follow the Harvard style required for his course. His last piece of work was criticised as he had used too much quotation and had not shown clearly, why the ideas in the quotes were relevant to his essay.

His tutor told him that he had only just managed to get a pass, but Logan wants to improve enough to achieve a merit for his next piece of work. Following the Harvard style, he will need to make sure that he balances quotation with the use of his own words. Source material should link more appropriately to the theme of his discussion. How can he refine his work?

Activity 7.1. Avoiding plagiarism

An excerpt of Logan's draft text is given below. The sample is weak and, if the full text followed a similar style, it would be heavily penalised as plagiarism, especially as Logan shows very little of his own thinking in his writing.

- 1 Identify any quotations – underline these.
- 2 Work out the percentage of text that is quotation. Remember that if this is more than 10% of the total, this is plagiarism. What figure did you calculate?
- 3 Identify the different 'reporting' words Roger has used to introduce ideas from his reading. These are usually verbs (often called 'doing words'); mark these as 'reporting verbs.'

A. Logan's original excerpt: Reflecting on learning is essential for progress (Milne, 2015). Smith (2010) stated that 'learning is entirely intuitive and independent of reflection' (p.54). This view is not supported by Jones (2000) who believed 'intuitive learning is a contributor to reflection' (p.30), but he also claimed that 'some students find it difficult to analyse their experiences' (p.47). However, Jones does not explain how students can become more analytical. Other writers offer some suggestions. Gray (1788) said that they should 'be given training in analysis when they are as young as five years of age' (p.17). In addition, Green (2005) suggested that analytical training should be given to them when they are as young as in nursery school, 'at the first contact with the education system' (p.27).

- 1 Read the **revised** version of Logan's text on the next page.
- 2 Discuss Logan's original version with a partner and compare it with the revised version. Reflect on the similarities and differences. What has Logan done in the revised version to show his own understanding of the topic?

Here is an example using Logan's material but without plagiarising.

B. Logan's revised excerpt: There are different opinions about how learning takes place. On the one hand, some writers consider that 'learning is entirely intuitive and independent of reflection' (Smith, 2010, p.54). On the other hand, Milne (2015) has claimed that reflecting on learning is essential for progress. For example, some writers suggest that learning how to analyse should begin at preschool level, that is, as soon as children become involved in the educational system at age five or younger (Gray 1778; Green 2005). These ideas appear to be sympathetic to the view that learning is instinctive but requires to be developed by other interventions. In particular, Jones (2000, p.30) asserted that 'intuitive learning is a contributor to reflection.'

Checklist for citing and referencing correctly

- Check with your tutor about the referencing style you have to follow
- Ensure that you know how to use that style for citation in text and for the reference list
- If you consult sources other than your recommended textbooks, then ensure that any material you are reading is up to date.



Reflective activities

Activity 7.2. Referencing

From your own experience write down two examples of source material that have helped you develop your learning and understanding for one unit in your BTEC. You should follow the Harvard style to record these details (see page 3).

- 1 _____
- 2 _____

Activity 7.3. Developing your citation and referencing skills

From the options below, choose the two best approaches you might use to develop your citation and referencing skills and to avoid plagiarism.

Seeking help	Developing yourself independently
<input type="checkbox"/> Consult your BTEC documents for the recommended style	<input type="checkbox"/> Analyse texts you read to find good models of citing sources
<input type="checkbox"/> Seek information on citation and referencing from the library	<input type="checkbox"/> Make a list of the 'reporting words' used by other writers to introduce the work of others
<input type="checkbox"/> Discuss with your BTEC tutor how you can improve your citation and referencing skills	<input type="checkbox"/> Analyse your earlier assignments to check for any plagiarism features these might include

Activity 7.4. Where are you now in relation to understanding citation, referencing and plagiarism?

Shade in the progress table below to record your development in understanding and confidence about citation, referencing and avoiding plagiarism after completing this activity sheet.

Confidence	Low										High
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Before →											
Now →											



Action points

Think about how you can continue developing the skills covered in this activity sheet.

How you can develop your citation and referencing skills to avoid plagiarism

Link
To help you to develop your Skills for Learning and Work, look also at: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Activity Sheet 8 on Understanding the writing process.

