



HUMANITIES

2026 Reference Guide for first year students



Contents

1. The Faculty of Humanities	2
2. Selecting and managing sources	2
3. Referencing	3
4. Quoting versus paraphrasing	4
5. Harvard referencing style (Author-date)	4
6. Chicago referencing style (Footnote)	6
7. MLA referencing style	9
8. APA referencing style	10
9. Departments and their styles (in a nutshell)	12
10. Frequently asked questions	13
11. Reference list and useful links	16

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS:

We would like to thank all departments for their input and UCT librarians, Dianne Steele and Pepler Head for their guidance.



1. The Faculty of Humanities

The Faculty of Humanities at UCT houses around eighteen departments clustered into the Arts, Social Sciences and Performing Arts. The Faculty prides itself on the diversity of its offerings and students can take courses ranging from Politics to Philosophy to Music and Fine Arts. Each course requires a specific set of skills, an ability to apply concepts, to think critically, to deliberate and to be sensitive to textual and contextual cues.

As Humanities students, we are constantly interacting with texts and social phenomena. Often enough, we begin to shape their meanings or the state of affairs by writing about them or responding to what others have said. The French philosopher Sartre once said "existentialism is a humanism", to suggest that we only become fully human when we recognise what we share with others (Sartre & Elkaim - Sartre, 2007). It is similar to the well-known phrase that captures Ubuntu, "umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu" (Bhengu, 1996:6).

Knowledge is socially constructed, formulated after a close and critical reading of others' texts. Thus, texts are inevitably intertextual and carry with them traces of previous ones. As a Humanities student, you would create texts by drawing upon other texts written by scholars in the field. At times, these scholars come from different schools of thought and it is up to you to creatively bring them into conversation or take a stand alongside them. The ideas that emerge may well be your own, but generally speaking, we are inspired by the work of other writers and this needs to be acknowledged.

Using and referencing AI tools: Any information gathered using AI tools is not your own and needs to be referenced. For referencing guidelines, please see page 15 no 8, and for protocols on ethical and responsible use of AI tools please check with your department and lecturers. Note that some departments do not allow the use of AI tools. Also consult [UCT's student guide for using ChatGPT and other AI tools in Education](#).

2. Selecting and managing sources

The selection of sources is an interesting process. You may use different strategies to sift through relevant sources. You can do a quick read first, i.e. read the title, abstract (if provided), introduction and conclusion. Try to extract the key argument made.

If still relevant, you can read the article more closely. Read *athletically*. You can make notes in the margin. Often the first line of the paragraph will give you cues on what the

paragraph is about. You can then read in more detail. If you are reading a piece of research, the findings and discussion section could be more informative than the methodology. Later, you can process the notes further into a summary or mind map sketching how the argument unfolds.

When all the highlighted readings and summaries begin to flood your desk, it is probably time for you to organise them into a table, or any other format that works for you.

Author/article	Key ideas	School/s of thought	Evidence	My position

It is easier to construct your argument once you are able to capture the different perspectives on the issue. The pre-writing phase is as important as the write-up. The more you mull, process and structure information, the easier the write-up becomes.

3. Referencing

It is a matter of good practice and academic integrity to reference other sources and acknowledge their contribution in the making of your text. At times, the sources serve as evidence for your position; at other times, they are starting points into the discussion. The text gains more credibility when supported by the views of giants in the field.

Also, the reference list at the end of the text allows interested readers to take initiative and access those sources. The process of going back to the original sources can be a recursive process leading you into a long quest for knowledge. So, a reference list allows the text to be an entry point into a larger body of knowledge.

In this handbook, four referencing styles are detailed: Harvard, Chicago, MLA and APA referencing styles. Irrespective of the style, the references at the end of the text contain similar pieces of information. For example, a typical book reference will contain the following five elements:

The author, date of publication, title, place of publication and publisher.



These may vary in order or punctuation. In-text references are often briefer than the reference list. For instance, the in-text Harvard reference only displays info about the author's surname, date and page number.

Do take care to reference according to your department's requirements. Quotes or paraphrased ideas that are not referenced would count as plagiarism, a serious offence at the university. The departments often run your essays through the 'Turnitin' software to check for possible signs of plagiarism. You could also use the software beforehand to check how much of your writing has been lifted from other (possibly unacknowledged) sources. Also check your department's guidelines as there may be slight stylistic variations in the referencing.

4. Quoting versus paraphrasing

Within your text, you can either quote or paraphrase other sources. Sources can be quoted verbatim (word for word). These usually serve as evidence for one's claim or position. When the quote exceeds three lines, it needs to be entered on a new line and indented. The quote needs to be explained and made relevant to the idea stated in the paragraph. Alternatively, the quote can be paraphrased. By paraphrasing the quote, not only do you put it in your own words, but you also display your understanding and make the quote your own.

Example of quotation:

Derrida defines the signifier as 'Sly, slippery, and masked, an intriguer and a card, like Hermes, he is neither king nor jack, but [...] one that puts play into play' (2004:97).

Note: For longer quotes, start the quote on a new line and indent it. Indented quotes do not need quotation marks. The formatting rules differ slightly across referencing styles, yet the principle remains the same, i.e. to distinguish another author's words from your own.

Example of paraphrased idea:

For Derrida (2004:97), the signifier's meanings can only be known upon 'play' or use in particular contexts. He compares the signifier to the mythological character, Hermes, who has no pre-determined, fixed role and who assumes different roles in different contexts.

5. Harvard referencing style (Author-date)

The Harvard referencing style is the most widely used style in the Faculty of Humanities.

Departments/sections using Harvard are: African Studies, Afrikaans, AGI, Drama, Education, Film and Media, Fine Arts, French, Gender Studies, GIPCA, Hebrew,

Linguistics, Political Studies, Religious Studies, Social Anthropology and Sociology. The **in-text** reference consists of the author's surname, date and page number. Indicate the page number if you are referring to an idea stated on a particular page:

e.g. (Austin, 1975), or for a more specific reference, (Austin, 1975:12). It is recommended that you add the page number if you are using the 'UCT Author-date' conventions.

In the **reference list**, the reference consists of surname, initials, date, title, place of publication and publisher.

e.g. Austin, J.L. 1975. *How to do things with words*. Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.



Type of source	In-text reference	Reference list
Book – 1-3 authors	(Mair, 1972:15)	Mair, L. P. 1972. <i>An introduction to social anthropology</i> . Oxford: Clarendon Press.
Book – 4 or more authors	(Mesthrie et al., 2000:12)	Mesthrie, R., Swann, J., Deumert, A. & Leap, W. 2000. <i>Introducing sociolinguistics</i> . Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press. (Note: For more than 8 authors, list the first 8 then add et al.)
Book by editor	(Attwell & Attridge, 2012:50)	Attwell, D. & Attridge, D. Eds. 2012. <i>The Cambridge history of South African literature</i> . Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Chapter in a book	(Green, 2012:781)	Green, M. 2012. The experimental line in fiction. In <i>The Cambridge history of South African literature</i> . D. Attwell, & D. Attridge, Eds. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 779-799.
Journal	(Folkart, 2011:218)	Folkart, J. A. 2011. The ethics of Spanish identity and in-difference. <i>Philosophy and Literature</i> . 35(2): 216-232.
Journal from electronic database	(Shannon, 2003:272)	Shannon, J. H. 2003. Sultans of spin: Syrian sacred music on the world stage. <i>American Anthropologist, New Series</i> . 105(2): 266-277. Available: http://www.jstor.org/stable/3567501 [2012, March 10]. (Note: It is common practice to indicate the url for online sources. These days, the DOI number is becoming a more reliable & stable pointer to the source. So add the DOI number if available. See p.15 no. 10 for more on DOI).
Website	(Adams & Pingeot, 2013)	Adams, B. & Pingeot, L. 2013. <i>Whose development, whose UN?</i> Available: http://www.globalpolicy.org/images/pdfs/GPFEurope/Whose_Development_-_Whose_UN.pdf [2013, Dec 2].

6. Chicago referencing style (Footnote)

The Chicago Referencing style is also known as the Footnote style. It is used primarily by historians who need to offer extensive detail about their sources in the text. The footnote system allows you to reference the sources at the bottom of the page without disrupting the reading flow.

Departments/sections using the Chicago style are: Historical Studies, Arabic Language and Literature, Classics, Portuguese and Italian.

Here is an example of an in-text reference:

Castells holds that, '.....'.¹

The footnote number comes after all punctuation marks.

This number is mirrored at the bottom of the text and provides more details about the source. The **footnote** at the bottom of the page consists of the author (first name and surname), title, place of publication, year and page number. For example,

¹Manuel Castells, *The Rise of the Network Society* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1997), 8.

Book title in italics

If you use the same source in an immediately following footnote, you can shorten the reference as follows:

² Ibid. (If the quote is also found on page 8)

Note: The 18th edition of the Chicago Manual of Style discourages *ibid.* It favours the shortening of notes for subsequent notes by the same author. The following pages offer examples of both. Also check with your department.

³ Ibid., 9. (If the quote is found on a different page of the book)

⁴ Antoinette Pole, *Blogging the Political: Politics and Participation in a Networked Society* (New York: Routledge, 2010), 5.

⁵ Castells, *The Rise of the Network Society*, 22. (To refer back to Castells after footnoting a different reading. This is known as the 'shortened version'. Examples of footnotes are given at the bottom of the next page.)

In the **bibliography** at the end of the document, the source is again referenced in detail, with the following: author (surname then first name in full), title, publisher, place of publication, year.

e.g. Castells, Manuel. *The Rise of the Network Society*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1997.

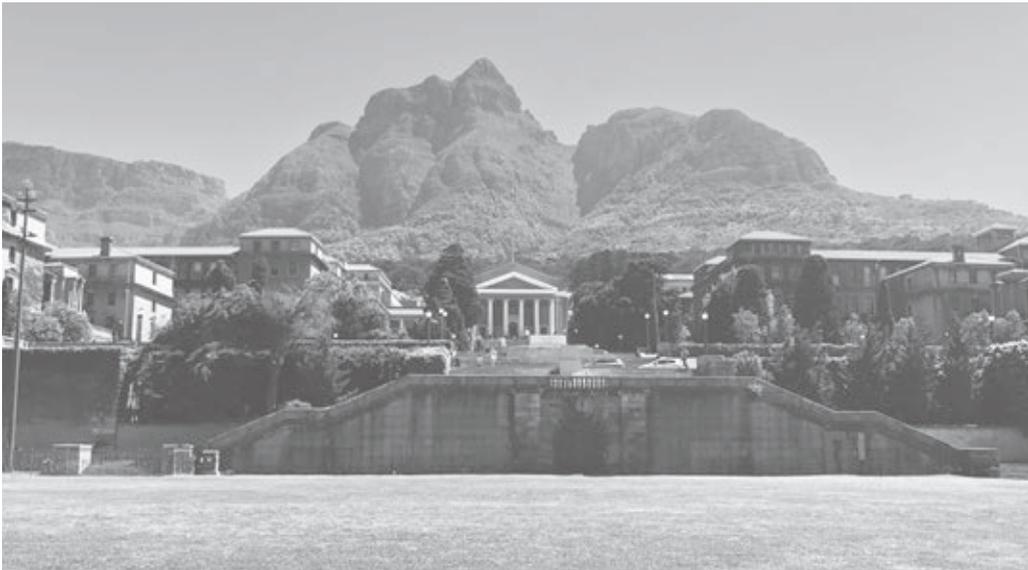
First name comes after surname.

Note:

Some departments allow students to choose between **footnotes** and **endnotes**. The

endnotes are a list of footnotes at the end of the document. Microsoft Word offers the option of converting footnotes into endnotes and vice-versa. The format does not differ. Footnotes or endnotes? It is a question of preference. Would you like your notes to appear at the bottom of the page on which the quote is found? Or would you prefer all the notes to appear together on the last page and free up space in the document? Do check with your specific department if you have any particular preference or query about this.

The advantage with footnotes is that you can use this space to provide further information about a particular concept, event or writer. In other words, it functions well as a mini-appendix or bracketed space where you can give additional context which may not be directly relevant to your argument. You still have to provide a bibliography at the end of the document. The advantage with endnotes is that you do not need to provide an additional bibliography.



¹ Manuel Castells, *The Rise of the Network Society* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1997), 8.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid., 9.

⁴ Antoinette Pole, *Blogging the Political: Politics and Participation in a Networked Society* (New York: Routledge, 2010), 5.

⁵ Castells, *The Rise of the Network Society*, 22.

Type of source	Footnote (first time and subsequent citations)	Bibliography (very similar to footnote)
Book - single author	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. James Jankowski, <i>Egypt: A Short History</i> (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2000), 33. 2. Ibid., 34. (if preceded by the same resource) 3. Jankowski. <i>Egypt: A Short History</i>, 38. (If mentioned before, but not preceded by the same resource) 	Jankowski, James. <i>Egypt: A Short History</i> . Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2000.
Book - 4 or more authors	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ernst Cassirer et al., <i>The Renaissance Philosophy of Man</i> (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1948), 171. 2. Ibid., 172. 3. Cassirer, <i>The Renaissance Philosophy of Man</i>, 173. 	Cassirer, Ernst, Paul Kristeller, and John Randall. <i>The Renaissance Philosophy of Man</i> . Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1948. (Note: Provide first name then surname for subsequent authors)
Book by editor	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. David J. Whittaker, ed., <i>The Terrorism Reader</i> (New York: Routledge, 2007), 15. 2. Ibid., 18. 3. Whittaker, <i>The Terrorism Reader</i>, 18. 	Whittaker, David J. ed. <i>The Terrorism Reader</i> . New York: Routledge, 2007.
Chapter in a book	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Michel Foucault, "Interview with Didier Eribon," in <i>Foucault: Politics, Philosophy, Culture</i>, ed. Lawrence Kritzman (New York: Routledge, 1998), 155. 2. Ibid., 158. 3. Foucault, "Interview with Didier Eribon," 154. 	Foucault, Michel "Interview with Didier Eribon." In <i>Foucault: Politics, Philosophy, Culture</i> , edited by Lawrence Kritzman, 150-160. New York: Routledge, 1998.
Journal	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Richard Rorty, "Postmodernist Bourgeois Liberalism," <i>Journal of Philosophy</i> 80, no. 10 (1983): 588. 2. Ibid., 590. 3. Rorty, "Postmodernist Bourgeois Liberalism," 588. 	Rorty, Richard. "Postmodernist Bourgeois Liberalism." <i>Journal of Philosophy</i> 80, no. 10 (1983): 583-589.
Journal from electronic database	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Peter J. Taylor et al., "A New Mapping of the World for the New Millennium," <i>The Geographical Journal</i> 167, no. 3 (2001): 214, http://www.jstor.org/stable/pdfplus/3060589.pdf?acceptTC=true, accessed January 10, 2014. (The date accessed is optional and depends on your department's requirements. For articles with a DOI number, this can be provided instead of the URL, after the date accessed. See more on p. 15 no. 10) 2. Ibid., 18. 3. Taylor et al., "A New Mapping of the World for the New Millennium," 215. 	Taylor, Peter J., Michael Hoyler, David R.F. Walker, and Mark J. Szegner. "A New Mapping of the World for the New Millennium." <i>The Geographical Journal</i> 167, no.3 (2001): 213-222, http://www.jstor.org/stable/pdfplus/3060589.pdf?acceptTC=true . Accessed January 10, 2014.
Website	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "Daguerreotype Photography,"The Franklin Institute, accessed Oct 22, 2013, http://www.fi.edu/learn/sci-tech/daguerreotype-photography/daguerreotype-photography.php?cts=photography. 2. Ibid. 3. The Franklin Institute, "Daguerreotype Photography." 	The Franklin Institute. "Daguerreotype Photography." Accessed October 22, 2013. http://www.fi.edu/learn/sci-tech/daguerreotype-photography/daguerreotype-photography.php?cts=photography .

7. MLA referencing style

The MLA (Modern Language Association) referencing style is commonly used in the liberal arts to quote from sources.

Departments/sections using the MLA are: African Languages and Literature, Chinese, English and Spanish.

The **in-text** reference consists of the author's surname and page number.

e.g. (Finke 13) → Similar to Harvard, but no year. Emphasis is on the author.

If you use the same source again, then simply provide the page number.

e.g. Furthermore, Finke argues that, '...' (14).

The reference list at the end of the essay is more often referred to as **Works Cited**. This consists of: author (surname then first name in full), title, place of publication, publisher and year. The previous editions of the MLA Handbook required that the 'document format' (e.g. print or web) be specified as well. However in the 8th edition, this requirement has been dropped for most document formats. Still, check with your department about whether or not you are expected to provide the document format in your Works Cited.

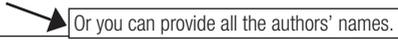
e.g. Finke, Laurie. *Women's Writing in English*. London: Longman, 1999.

→ Book title in italics

For two books by the same author, also include the book title in the in-text reference.

e.g. (Finke, *Women's Writing* 4).



Type of source	In-text reference	Works Cited
Book - single author	(Attridge 13)	Attridge, Derek. <i>Poetic Rhythm: An Introduction</i> . Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1995. (UP stands for University Press)
Book – more than 3 authors	(Gilman et al. 23)	Gilman, Sander, et al. <i>Hysteria beyond Freud</i> . Berkeley: U of California P, 1993.  Or you can provide all the authors' names.
Book by editor	(Aertsen and Bremmer 15)	Aertsen, Henk, and Rolf Bremmer, editors. <i>Companion to Old English Poetry</i> . Amsterdam: VU UP, 1994. (Note: Provide first name, then surname for subsequent authors)
Chapter in a book	(Adejare 19)	Adejare, Oluwole. "Translation: A Distinctive Feature of African Literature in English." <i>The Language of African Literature</i> , edited by Edmund L. Epstein and Robert Kole. New Jersey: Africa World Press, Inc., 1998, pp. 19-40.
Journal	(Mann 837)	Mann, Susan. "Myths of Asian Womanhood." <i>Journal of Asian Studies</i> , vol. 59, no. 1, 2000, pp. 835-862.
Journal from electronic database	(Faris 440)	Faris, Marc. "That Chicago Sound: Playing with (Local) Identity in Underground Rock." <i>Popular Music & Society</i> , vol. 27, no. 4, Dec. 2010, pp. 429-54. Taylor and Francis, https://doi.org/10.1080/0300776042000264658 . (Usually, the webpage URL is provided here. Where available, you can provide the DOI instead. See page 15 no. 10 for more on DOI).
Website	(Williams, "Why Fractals are so Soothing")	Williams, Florence. "Why Fractals Are so Soothing." <i>The Atlantic</i> , 26 Jan. 2017, www.theatlantic.com/science/archive/2017/01/why-fractals-are-so-soothing/514520/ . Accessed 27 Jan. 2017.

8. APA referencing style

Date you accessed the webpage

The American Psychological Association (APA) referencing style is generally used in the Social Sciences. It resembles the Harvard referencing style.

The departments/sections using APA are: Organisational Psychology, Psychology and School of Dance.

The **in-text** reference consists of the author's surname, date (and page number if you are quoting from a particular page). e.g. (Harris, 1999) or (Harris, 1999, p. 10)

In the **reference list**, the reference consists of the author, date, title, place of publication and publisher. e.g. Harris, P. (1999). *The nurture assumption: why children turn out the way they do*. McGraw Hill. (Note: Pay close attention to the commas, bracket the year, and italicise the volume number. Also, according to the 7th edition of the APA Publication Manual, one is no longer required to enter the place of publication in the reference list. Also check with your department).

Book title in italics

HUMANITIES *Reference Guide*

Type of source	In-text reference	Reference list
Book - single author	(Gardner, 2006, p. 13)	Gardner, H. (2006). <i>The development and education of the mind: The collected works of Howard Gardner</i> . Routledge.
Book – 2 authors	(Otto & Longnecker, 2001)	Otto, R. L., & Longnecker, M. (2001). <i>Multiple comparisons, an introduction to statistical methods and data analysis</i> . Duxbury Thomson Learning. (Note the comma between two authors' names in the reference).
Book – 3 or more authors (first time and second time)	1. (Fischman, Solomon, Greenspan, & Gardner, 2004) 2. (Fischman et al., 2004, p. 5) (Note: When citing work by 3 or more authors, list the first name followed by et al.)	Fischman, W., Solomon, B., Greenspan, D., & Gardner, H. (2004). <i>Making good: How young people cope with moral dilemmas at work</i> . Harvard University Press. (Note: For up to 20 authors, list all in the reference list. For more than 20 authors, list the first 19 names, followed by an ellipsis, and the final name. For a full list of rules on how to reference multiple authors, consult the 7th Edition of the APA Publication Manual).
Book by editor	(Schaler, 2006)	Schaler, J. (Ed.). (2006). <i>Gardner under fire</i> . Open Court Publishing.
Chapter in a book	(Seligman, 2002, p. 533)	Seligman, M. E. P. (2002). Positive psychology, positive prevention, and positive therapy. In C. R. Snyder & S. J. Lopez (Eds.), <i>Handbook of Positive Psychology</i> (pp. 528-540). Oxford University Press.
Journal	(Kelly & Clanton, 2004, p. 430)	Kelly, K. E., & Clanton, R. C. (2004). The relationship between sleep-length and grade-point average among college students. <i>College Student Journal</i> , 38(3), 428-430.
Journal from electronic database with a DOI number	(Miller, 2004)	Miller, W. R. (2004). The phenomenon of quantum change. <i>Journal of Clinical Psychology</i> , 60(5), 453-460. https://doi.org/10.1002/jclp.20000 (See p. 15 no. 10 for more on DOI)
Website	(Boix-Mansilla & Gardner, 2003)	Boix-Mansilla, V., & Gardner, H. (2003). <i>Assessing interdisciplinary work at the frontier: An empirical exploration of 'symptoms' of quality</i> . Retrieved from www.Interdisciplines.org

9. Departments and their styles (in a nutshell)

Departments/sections	Reference style
African Languages and Literature	MLA
African Studies	Harvard
Afrikaans	Harvard
AGI	Harvard
Arabic Language and Literature	Chicago
Chinese Language and Literature	MLA
Classics	Chicago
Drama	Harvard
Education	Harvard
English Language and Literature	MLA
Film and Media Studies	Harvard
Fine Art	Harvard
French Language and Literature	Harvard
Gender Studies	Harvard
German Language and Literature	Harvard
GIPCA	Harvard
Historical Studies	Chicago
Italian Studies	Chicago
Linguistics	Harvard
Music	Harvard/Chicago (check with your lecturer)
Philosophy	Any style of your choice
Political Studies	Harvard (Chicago is also acceptable)
Portuguese	APA
Psychology & Organisational Psychology	APA
Religious Studies	Harvard
School of Dance	APA
Social Anthropology	Harvard
Social Development	Harvard
Sociology	Harvard
Spanish	MLA

N.B.!

REMEMBER!

10. Frequently asked questions

1. How do I reference a secondary source (the work of another scholar used by the author whose work I am reading)?

It makes little sense to reference a scholar whose work you have not personally read. In the text, you need to reference both sources, indicating the link between the two. In the reference list, you need to reference the author whose work you are currently reading (primary source).

So here's how you can proceed for the in-text reference and the reference list (examples adapted from UTAS, 2012; JCU, 2012):

Harvard

In-text reference: Whiteley (1979, quoted in Chambers, 1983:25) defines emotion as 'a response to situations of one specific type ...'.

In the reference list: Chambers, P.K. 1983. *Your emotions revealed*. New York: Lacrima and Ductule.

This is the primary source. You may give both sources (optional).

Chicago

Footnote: ⁴Louis Zukofsky, "Sincerity and Objectification," *Poetry* 37 (February 1931): 269, quoted in Bonnie Costello, *Marianne Moore: Imaginary Possessions* (Cambridge: MA: Harvard University Press, 1981), 78.

In the bibliography: reference both sources.

MLA

In-text reference: Gould has accused Capra of following "the oldest of reductionist strategies" (qtd. in Wilber 28).

In the works cited: reference primary source, i.e. Wilber's book.

APA

In-text reference: Seidenberg and McClelland stated in their study "Such models are known to have a number of ..." (as cited in Coltheart, Curtin, Atkins, & Haller, 1993).

In the reference list: reference the primary source i.e. the article written by Coltheart, M., Curtin, B., Atkins, P., & Haller, M.

2. What if the internet source does not have an author?

The rule of thumb then is to begin the reference with the title. Your in-text reference will be as follows: ("Title", date). The detailed reference in the reference list will also begin with the title and date.

3. How do I reference newspaper articles?

The date, month and year, as well as the page number need to be specified e.g.

Harvard

In-text reference: (Moorad, 2012:5)

In the reference list: Moorad, Z. 2012. Pick-n-Pay. BP to roll out small-format stores.

The Times (Johannesburg). 23 April: 5.

For a newspaper article without the author's name, begin with the title, as indicated in no. 2.

4. How do I reference my lecturers?

It is useful to ask your lecturer if he is referring to a particular reading during lectures. Else, you can reference as follows (in Harvard referencing style):

In-text reference: (Rogers, 2012).

In the reference list: Rogers, M. 2012. Symbols and signification. [SAN2000S Lecture notes]. Department of Anthropology, University of Cape Town.

Note: For unpublished material, the title is not italicised.

5. What do 'et al.' and 'ibid.' mean?

'Et al' means 'and others'. You can use either of them when a source has multiple authors.

'Ibid.' means same as above. It saves you the trouble of retyping a reference you have just referred to previously. (It is not encouraged when referencing in Harvard and APA styles).

Note: The 17th Edition of the Chicago Manual of Style favours shortening notes and discourages the use of *ibid.*

6. In the reference to a journal article, what do numbers such as 9(2): 23-35 mean?

Volume number: 9. Issue number: 2. Page numbers: 23-35

7. How do I know which online platforms and websites contain reliable information?

Your safest bet is to search for articles on meta-search engines such as **Google Scholar**, **library webpages** and **online databases** such as JSTOR, EBSCO. Ask a librarian if you have any queries.

If you are searching for an article on Google Scholar, it is useful to check how many times the sources have been cited by others. Like video 'hits' and 'shares', the frequency of citations could be an indicator of the article's reliability. Also, the SFX button allows you to check if the full text is available in some of the library databases.

For online resources on the worldwide web, you need to be more cautious. URLs that end with 'edu' (educational sites), 'gov' (government sites) and 'org' (organisations) tend to be reliable.

Avoid using Wikipedia as a primary source. Wikipedia is useful to get a bird's eye view of key debates on an issue, but may contain incomplete or misleading info because the authors are not necessarily scholars or professors. Also the article's review system may not be as stringent as the peer review system that applies in the case of journal articles.

8. How do I reference AI-generated ideas or texts?

Here is an example according to the UCT Author-date referencing style. This style is similar to the Harvard referencing style.

In-text: (OpenAI, 2025)

Reference list: OpenAI. 2025. ChatGPT response to the prompt: "What are the key features of critical thinking at university?" [Large language model]. Version 3.5. Available: <https://chat.openai.com/> [2025, January 2]. See Appendix A for the transcript.

If the AI platform has a shareable link, then provide the link instead of sharing the Appendix.

For more info, please visit: <https://libguides.lib.uct.ac.za/srch.php?q=referencing>

For other conventions, please visit the following sites:

APA: <https://apastyle.apa.org/blog/how-to-cite-chatgpt>

MLA: <https://style.mla.org/citing-generative-ai/>

Chicago: <https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/qanda/data/faq/topics/Documentation/faq0422.html>

9. Is there any pattern in the way one does the in-text reference and reference list?

Yes, the beginning of the in-text reference generally corresponds to that of the reference list.

10. Are we penalised for misplaced punctuation?

You can be penalised for the lack of consistency in punctuation. If you use commas or colons in one reference, make sure you use the same punctuation for the rest of the references.

11. What is the DOI number?

DOI stands for digital object identifier. When referencing electronic journal articles, the APA style favours the DOI number over the URL. This number is normally located on the first page of the journal near the copyright notice. 'UCT Author-date' also favours DOI for electronic journals, though the URL is acceptable. When referencing in the Chicago footnote style, the DOI number can be provided if available. The MLA style requires that you provide the database name (e.g. JSTOR) as well as the URL (e.g. www.jstor.org/stable/10.2979/reseafirlite.42.2.87) or DOI (e.g. <https://doi.org/10.2979/reseafirlite.42.2.87>) where available. Do check with your department on this. See more examples on pages 10 and 11.

12. How do I reference a MOOC video?

Referencing a Massive Open Online Course is similar to referencing a webpage.

According to the Harvard Referencing Style:

Nomdo, G. & Hunma, A. 2017. Thinking about your essay [video file]. *Writing your world: finding yourself in the academic space*. University of Cape Town. Coursera MOOC, 6 November - 11 December. Available: <https://www.coursera.org/learn/writing-your-world/lecture/GYrY9/thinking-about-your-essay>. [2017, November 6].

To be adapted as per the referencing style required.

11. Reference list and useful links

Bhengu, M.J. 1996. *Ubuntu: the essence of democracy*. Cape Town: Novalis press.

Sartre, J.P & Elkaïm-Sartre, A. 2007. *Existentialism is a humanism*. Connecticut: Yale University Press.

UCT Author-date

De Jager, K. & Steele, D. 2016. *UCT Author-date reference guide*. Available: <https://open.uct.ac.za/server/api/core/bitstreams/b29379b9-833d-443c-ab75-6e623056473d/content> [2025, December 14]. (The UCT Author-date referencing style is similar to the Harvard one).

Chicago

The University of Chicago. 2024. *The Chicago manual of style online*. 18th ed.

Available: http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html [2025, December 14].

MLA

Modern Language Association. 2021. *MLA handbook* 9th ed. New York: The Modern Language Association of America. Available: <https://style.mla.org> [2025, December 14].

APA

American Psychological Association. 2019. *APA style*. 7th ed. Available: <https://apastyle.apa.org> [2025, December 14].

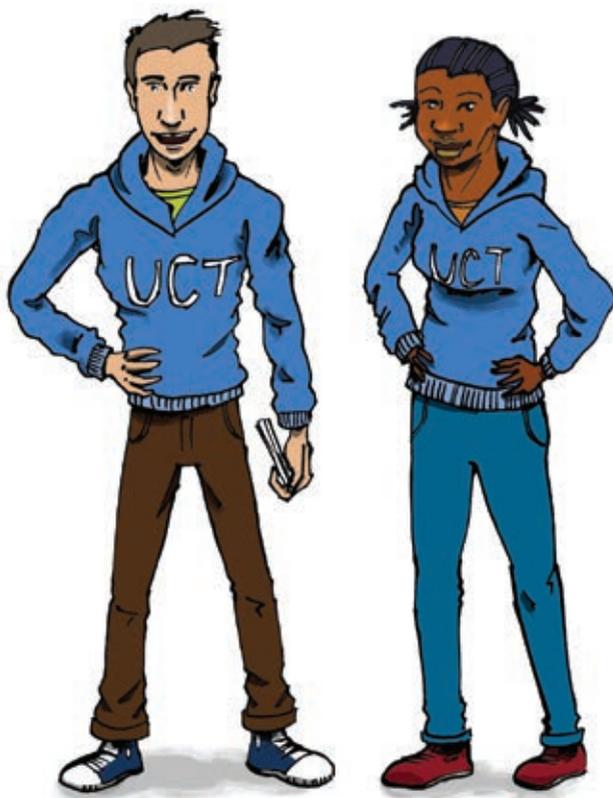
General links

<http://www.lib.uct.ac.za/lib/research/referencing>

https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/resources.html

<https://digitalllearning.apa.org/academic-writer>

To auto-generate a reference list, you can use Refworks or Endnote (<http://www.lib.uct.ac.za/lib/research/referencing>).



Developed by Aditi Hunma
Illustrations by Anthony Hodge



2026 Humanities Reference Guide for First Year Students
is licensed under a
[Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)
[License.](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)