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Cimex - November 2, 2015, 8:08 am

Fundamentals of Harvard Referencing and Academic Writing - Volume 1

First of all, I would like to welcome each and every one of you to this guide to Harvard referencing. As this is my first tutorial, I want to make it as quality as possible, to help you guys the best I can. The goal is to help you gain better grades in your essays, and allow you to prepare for your future.

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Starting your Academic Writing

Before even starting your report, plan it. I have personally discovered that planning does help the flow of writing your report as you're prepared and not stuck at any point. Look at what you have been asked to do, and start by laying out your report (Headings, reference sources etc). Always work with your word count - don't go over-board with planning, only plan as much as you need to. For example, if you have a small 500 word essay, you do not need to spend a huge amount of time planning, as all the planning won't even fit, but do take in mind that a lot of the time, references and headings do not go towards your word count.

Gibbs' Reflective Cycle

When you're required to write a reflective writing assignment, Gibbs' reflective cycle is commonly used. So, what is it you ask? Well, it's a cycle of questions to help you with your thoughts when writing.

[img]http://slavonic.group.shef.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/Gibbs_reflective_cycle.jpg[/img]

Skimming and Scanning

Skimming is one of the tools you can use to read more in less time. Skimming refers to looking only for the general or main ideas, and works best with non-fiction (or factual) material. With skimming, your overall understanding is reduced because you don't read everything. You read only what is important to your purpose. Skimming takes place while reading and allows you to look for details in addition to the main ideas.

Scanning is another useful tool for speeding up your reading. Unlike skimming, when scanning, you look only for a specific fact or piece of information without reading everything. You scan when you look for your favorite show listed in the cable guide, for your friend's phone number in a telephone book, and for the sports scores in the

newspaper. For scanning to be successful, you need to understand how your material is structured as well as comprehend what you read so you can locate the specific information you need. Scanning also allows you to find details and other information in a hurry.

What is Referencing?

Referencing is an absolute must when it comes to Harvard referencing. When you're writing your reports, tutors will often abide by their "you have no opinion anymore" rule. In the past you may have used sentences which include the letter "I". I advice you to remove that word from your brain when you're doing your assignments. Why? Well, unless you're stating an opinion, there is no need for that letter, because when you' reference, you're providing proof of your claims, and credibility to the original author.

What Sources need to be Referenced?

There are probably more sources that you need to reference than you think. Here's a quick list:

- Books
- Journals
- Music Recordings / Scores
- Software Programs
- Designs
- Films/ DVD/Video
- Radio
- Diagrams
- Graphs
- Photographs
- Newspapers
- TV Programs
- Assignments / Dissertations
- Works of Art
- Web Site Material
- Maps
- Personal Contact

Now... you may be worrying... not to bother! You won't be using every single one of those in a singular assignment. It's up to you where you get your information, I am just giving you an insight on where you can find and reference information.

When to Reference

Just incase you were about to worry when to reference, don't be alarmed. Below are a list of times for when you should reference:

- You are paraphrasing another source
- You are directly quoting from another source
- You are referring directly to another source
- Your own writing draws heavily on another source
- You wish to draw attention to a source

Remember, when you are regularly referencing your work, you are showing the effort you have undertaken to research for your report, and the careful consideration you have given to different perspectives.

How to Reference (To be Continued)

You will be a very talented individual if you learn and nail referencing straight away, it all takes time. There are three key fundamentals that you will be expected to provide that fall into the category known as "citations in your writing".

In-text Citations: In-text citations give brief details of the work you are quoting from or referring to in your text. These act as signposts back to the full reference in your bibliography.

A reference list: This provides full details of all the sources you have referred to directly in your writing and should be arranged alphabetically by author surname.

A bibliography: Uses the same format as the Reference List but includes all the material you've used in the preparation of your work.

On some courses you may be asked to provide just one alphabetical list in which a reference list and a bibliography are combined.

Tip: When pulling a direct quote from your source, it is recommended that you italicise the quotes. "Hello, HF. This is an example."