QMU Guide to the APA Style of Referencing

Only for students who need to use the APA style of referencing

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1. Introduction

The American Psychological Association (APA) have published a style guide that sets out the formatting and referencing conventions about how to acknowledge sources which must be followed in all written work:


The [APA style blog](http://blog.apastyle.org/) is the official online companion to the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* and is another valuable source of information.

This guide is an introduction to the APA style of referencing. The examples shown here are indicative of the sources of information you should be using when writing an academic essay in psychology. An example list of references appears at the end of this guide which reflects the examples cited in this guide.

> Tips and sources of further information are provided where you see this symbol.
1.1 What is referencing?

In your written work, you will use ideas and information from other sources to support points and arguments you want to make. Referencing is a way of crediting all the sources of information and ideas that you have used in any piece of academic work.

When you use someone else’s ideas in your work, you must reference the source in order to:

- Show you are aware of other people’s ideas and are including them
- Acknowledge other people’s ideas
- Support points and arguments you want to make
- Allow the reader to find the original material you have used

You must write everything in your own words and not just in a close paraphrase – i.e. only changing the order of the words, or sentences, or only changing a few words here and there.

1.2 When should I reference?

You must reference when you summarise or paraphrase ideas and information from someone’s work. If you do not do this carefully, you will risk being considered as having plagiarised the work you have mentioned if it is:

(1) Not acknowledged as someone else’s AND

(2) If you copy it from their work – whether acknowledged or not

**Failure to do any of the above is considered to be plagiarism.**
1.3 What is plagiarism?

“…the presentation by an individual of another person’s ideas or work (in any medium, published or unpublished) as though they were his or her own…” (Queen Margaret University, 2011, p. 30).

Plagiarism is considered to be a major breach of academic regulations.

For further information about plagiarism, look at Queen Margaret University’s plagiarism wiki:

https://sites.google.com/a/qmu.ac.uk/plagiarism/

1.4 Formatting

Sample text which demonstrates how work should be formatted can be seen in the appendix (pp. 32-35). APA style rules include basic rules and principles for preparing written work:

- Use a serif typeface (e.g. Times New Roman), 12-point sized font
  - **TIP**: the default font on the QMU student desktop is Arial so you will need to change this when writing essays or other pieces of written work!
- Indent on a new paragraph with no line breaks
- Use a 1 inch (2.54cm) margin on all sides
- Use double spacing
- Use left justified text
Use of quotes in essays is discouraged and if used they should be a very rare occurrence where the original author’s words are so apt or express something in such a way that the text would lose something really important if you used your own words instead.

- Use page numbers on the bottom of each page starting at page 1 for the title page.
- The list of references starts on a new page at the end of your essay. References in full are placed in alphabetical order of the first author.
- If you use appendices, then these should start on a new page following the list of references.

**TIP:** A guide to the correct style for writing in psychology – e.g. without bias and avoiding labelling by disorder (for example people diagnosed with schizophrenia instead of schizophrenics) – is provided in the *Concise Rules of APA Style* (pp. 22-33) as well as the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (pp. 70-77) and you should refer to these in preparing all your written work.

### 1.5 How do I reference?

There are two key features of referencing:

- Citing a source in your writing
- Creating a list of references at the end of your writing

A list of references:

- Is alphabetical by author
- Must contain full details of all the sources you have cited in your text
2. Citing a source in your writing

In the APA style of referencing, every time you refer to a particular document or writer, you should insert the author’s surname and the year of publication.

- Insert only the surname (family name), not the initial of the author
- The ‘author’ may sometimes be the name of an organisation
- The in-text citation is the first two elements of the full reference which appears in the reference list at the end of your work
- Use the word ‘and’ in the running text – for example Grusec and Hastings (2007) and an ampersand (&) in the bracket if the authors are not part of the sentence (Grusec & Hastings, 2007)
- Punctuation is an important element of any referencing style – including the APA style – please take care to follow the punctuation in the examples

2.1 Authors

When there is no author, the title takes the place of the author unless the author is stated as Anonymous.

If there are two authors then you must cite both of them in your text every time the reference occurs in the text:

(Choudhary & O’Carroll, 2007) or Choudhary and O’Carroll (2007)
If there are **three, four or five authors**, cite all of them the first time the reference occurs; in subsequent citations include only the surname of the first author followed by ‘et al.’ in your text. Et al. is short for ‘et alia’ which is Latin for ‘and others’. Note the full stop after ‘al.’

**First citation in the text:**

(Kessler, Sonnega, Bromet, Hughes, & Nelson, 1995)

**Subsequent citation thereafter:**

(Kessler et al., 1995)

If there are **six or more authors**, cite only the surname (family name) of the first author followed by et al. and the year for the first and subsequent citations. If two references with six or more authors shorten to the same form, cite the surnames of the first authors and of as many of the subsequent authors as necessary to distinguish between the two references.

- **TIP:** See page 183 of the *Concise Rules of APA Style* or page 177 of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* for a practical table on types of citation, number of authors and their first and subsequent citations in text

- **TIP:** In your list of references you should always **include all authors** regardless of the number with the exception of works with eight or more authors. Works with eight or more authors have the first six authors followed by three ellipsis points ( . . . ) followed by the last author. See page 195 of the *Concise Rules of APA Style* or page 184 of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* for more information on authors in a list of references
2.2 Same author, different year

If you need to refer to two or more pieces of work by the same author, published in different years, the year alone will distinguish each one in the text.

In a list of references, you should list each work in date order with the oldest first.

2.3 Same author, same year

Very occasionally, you may need to refer to two or more pieces of work by the same author, published in the same year. You should use lowercase letters to show the difference:

**In the text** of your essay:

| It is recommended that that works by the same author in the same year are listed in the reference list by alphabetical order of title (American Psychological Association, 2010a). The lowercase letters also appear in the reference list (American Psychological Association, 2010b). |

**In the list of references:**


2.4 Examples of sentence structure

There are several ways you can reference original sources in your essay, according to how the style of the sentence is written. The following examples are taken from the sample text in the appendix. Note how the following examples differ slightly in each case.
1. **State the information, then site the source as: (author, date)**

These prevalence rates are likely to be underestimates for several reasons, including reluctance, or perhaps inability (qv), to report trauma (Kessler et al., 2005).

2. **Use the author(s) as the subject of the sentence, with the date of the citation in brackets: author (date)**

Kessler et al. (2005) suggest these prevalence rates are likely to be underestimates for several reasons, including reluctance, or perhaps inability (qv), to report trauma.

3. **Introduce the subject then acknowledge the source before going on to amplify the first part of the sentence in what follows after the citation: (author, date)**

These prevalence rates are likely to be underestimates for several reasons (Kessler et al., 2005), including reluctance, or perhaps inability (qv), to report trauma.

4. **Set the date and then use the authors as the subject of the sentence in describing what they did. This style has no brackets but note the comma after the year.**

In 2005, Kessler et al. suggested these prevalence rates are likely to be underestimates for several reasons, including reluctance, or perhaps inability (qv), to report trauma.

- **TIP:** This last example is less commonly used and is not the best style to use for this particular content; it would be better used where the focus is perhaps on comparing different dates on which research was carried out.
2.5 Quotations

The use of quotes in essays is strongly discouraged. If used they should be a very rare occurrence where the original author’s words are so apt or express something in such a way that the text would lose something really important if you used your own words instead.

2.6 Short quotations (fewer than 40 words)

When you quote directly from the text, you need to include the page number. Look at the punctuation in these examples:

Haralambos, Holborn, Chapman and Moore (2013) state that “the family has often been regarded as the cornerstone of society” (p.509).

Reading, understanding and evaluating what you read is an important role in the learning process. “A well written literature review helps the reader understand disagreements and debates about the topic in context and also identifies gaps and omissions in previous work or identifies unanswered questions” (Landrum, 2012, p. 91).

- Do not use italics or bold typeface to indicate a quotation
- Use ‘p.’ for a single page and ‘pp.’ for multiple pages

2.7 Long quotations (40+ words)

- Must be indented from the left margin by 0.5 inch
- Do not require quotation marks, italics or bold typeface
- Lead-in statement ends with a colon:
- Separate the quotation from the lead-in with a new line
• If the quoted source is cited in the lead-in, only the year and page(s) are required at the end of the quotation

• Note the full stop is placed after the last sentence of the quotation before the author, date citation

Beech describes:

Informal or colloquial writing is a habit that some students find difficult to shake off. If you cannot help writing in this way, at least go back and edit your chatty style afterwards to make it suitably formal. A handy tip is to do a computer search for a single quote (‘) to find contractions such as ‘can’t’ afterwards.

(2009, p. 6)

2.8 Unfinished sentences or quotations

The omission of a word, phrase, line, paragraph, or more from a quoted passage is indicated by three spaced dots or ellipsis points.

“. . . research techniques are engulfing researchers in a deluge of data. JISC and other organisations are funding studies . . . to gain new insight and knowledge . . . within this resource”

(Redfearn, 2006, p. 6).

2.9 Page numbers and abbreviations

Page numbers are used with direct quotations or when referring to tables, illustrations or figures. You are also encouraged when paraphrasing to include a page number where possible to direct
interested readers to specific passages. This detail will appear after the date, followed by a comma within the brackets using one of these abbreviations:

- Page (p.)
- Pages (pp.)
- Section (s.)
- Sections (ss.)
- Track (tr.)
- Table (tab.)
- Diagram (diagr.)
- Figure (fig.)
- Illustration (illus.)
- Volume (vol.)

➤ **TIP:** For more information on citing references in text, see pages 178-188 of the *Concise Rules of APA Style* or pages 174-179 of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*.

### 2.10 Chapter in an edited book

Sometimes a chapter in a book is referred to as an ‘in’ reference when you are referring to a piece of work which is contained in another publication. For example:

- A chapter in a book of collected writings, brought together by an editor
- A conference paper in a collection of papers presented at a conference and gathered together in one book with an editor as the main author

**In the text** of your work you would cite the author of the paper/chapter as usual:

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**In the list of references** you will always reference at least two names:

 ➢ **TIP:** On some occasions, the author/editor may be the same person but you would still follow the same format

 ➢ **TIP:** Remember to include the page numbers of the relevant chapter or section of the book in the reference list

### 2.11 Citing multiple references

List the order they appear in the list of references, separated with a semicolon. Two or more works by the same author(s) should be listed by year of publication.

Statistics and data analysis are considered an essential element within the field of psychology (Coolican, 2014; McQueen and Knussen, 2006; Wilson and MacLean, 2011).

OR:

Coolican (2014), McQueen and Knussen (2006) and Wilson and MacLean (2011) all argue that statistics and data analysis is considered an essential element within the field of psychology.

### 2.12 Referring to a secondary citation

Citing the work of an author you have read within someone else’s work is known as secondary referencing and should be used sparingly. Where possible you should read the original work yourself. However, due to a lack of availability, you may sometimes need to use a secondary reference. This acknowledges that you haven’t actually read the original source but you are basing what you say on what another/other author(s) have said about it (as they have read it).

For example:
Interpersonal violence is the most inherently trauma producing event (Frederick, 1984; as cited in Adams, Barton, Mitchell, Moore & Einagel, 1998); combat and rape are the most potent events in precipitating PTSD.

- Use ‘as cited in’ to show that you have not seen the original article by Frederick but only what Adams et al. (1998) say about it
- Frederick (1984) is not required to be included in your list of references
- Only include works in your list of references that you have actually read

The full reference appears in the list of references as follows:

3. Creating a list of references

The examples shown here are indicative of the sources of information you should be using when writing an academic essay in psychology – articles in peer-reviewed journals, textbooks written by an expert and general textbooks. Website examples are given and should only be used in very rare exceptions where peer-reviewed evidence such as official, government-produced statistics is not available elsewhere.

When compiling a list of references **you must:**

- Start on a new page
- Include it at the end of your manuscript before any appendices
- Have the heading ‘References’ centred
- Organise it alphabetically by the surname (family name) of the author
- Ensure group authors should have their name in full (e.g. British Psychological Society)
- Use “Anonymous” only when a work’s author is designated as “Anonymous” otherwise list alphabetically under title and cite in the text the first few words of the title using double quotation marks
- Have a hanging indent following the first line
- Only includes the works you have cited in your text

➢ **TIP:** In the text of your work, you cite the author and year only to refer to a source in your list of references

**See section 5 for an example of a list of references.**
Correct and consistent punctuation is very important:

- Authors’ surnames should start with a capital letter, authors initials should also be in capitals
- The first word in the title and subtitle of books and any proper nouns start with a capital letter
- Journal titles, publishers’ names and places should also start with a capital letter

Note carefully how the examples in this guide are punctuated.

3.1 How to reference a journal article with a DOI

Author/Editor Surname, Initial(s).

Year. (in brackets)

Title of article. (Capitalize only the first word of the article title and of the subtitle)

Name of Journal, (in italics)

Volume(issue number) (note that only the volume number is in italics)

Page number(s).

doi:

doi:


doi:10.1037/0012-1649.23.1.68

➢ TIP: Include DOIs where available for both print and electronic format
3.2 How to reference a journal article without a DOI (when DOI is not available)

**Author/Editor Surname, Initial(s).**

**Year.** (in brackets)

**Title of article.** (Capitalize only the first word of the article title and of the subtitle)

**Name of Journal,** (in italics)

**Volume(issue number),** (note that only the volume number is in italics)

**page number(s).**


3.3 How to reference a journal article with more than seven authors

**Author/Editor Surname, Initial(s).** (list first six authors followed by . . . then last author)

**Year.** (in brackets)

**Title of article.** (Capitalize only the first word of the article title and of the subtitle)

**Name of Journal,** (in italics)

**Volume(issue number),** (note that only the volume number is in italics)

➢ **TIP:** In text citation for this article will be (Choe et al., 2013)

➢ **TIP:** Only give issue number if each issue starts on page 1. For example, 23, 2100-2117

    not 23(9), 2100-2117

➢ **TIP:** For more information on referencing work by multiple authors see pages 180-182 and 195 in the *Concise Rules of APA Style* or pages 175-176 and 184 of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*.

### 3.4 How to reference an early view or in press journal article

Journal publishers often offer an online early view to articles that have been accepted for publication but that have not yet been officially designated a volume and page numbers. Sometimes this is known as “early view”, “in press” or “advanced online publication”. Advanced online publication content is generally not changed or revised prior to formal publication (American Psychological Association, 2010b, p.199). Early view or in press articles are informally published and can be made available in a preprint archive and may be subject to change when published (American Psychological Association, 2012b, p.200).
Advanced online publication:

Author/Editor Surname, Initial(s).

Year. (in brackets)

Title of article. (Capitalize only the first word of the article title and of the subtitle)

Name of Journal. (in italics)

Advance online publication.

doi:


doi:10.1177/0956797614524581

➢ TIP: Give the URL of the journal home page when there is no DOI

In press article in a preprint archive

Author/Editor Surname, Initial(s).

in press. (in brackets)

Title of article.

Name of Journal. (in italics)

Retrieved from:


➢ TIP: Remember to check the reference prior to the submission of your manuscript and refer to the published version where possible
3.5 How to reference a book

Details for a book should be set out in the following order and with the punctuation as indicated:

**Author/Editor Surname, Initial(s).** (if editor, then write (Ed.). or (Eds.). after initial)

**Year.** (in brackets)

**Title of book.** (in italics)

**Edition.** (if later than the first and abbreviated to (ed.))

**Place of publication:** (town or city, include state in abbreviated form if available for US)

**Name of publisher.** (use the word Author when the author and publisher are the same)

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**Editions and editors**

- Use the abbreviation ‘ed.’ for edition and for editor use (Ed.). (Eds.).
- Only give details of the edition if it is later than the first
- Make sure the edition detail matches the copy of the text you have read
- A reprint is not a new edition
- When using a later edition the full stop comes after the edition statement and not the title

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Oxford University Press.

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3.6 How to reference a chapter in a book of collected writings by different authors

(‘in’ references)

Do not confuse the name of a contributor to a book of collected writings with that of the editor. Name the editor of the book in the reference list as this is the information needed by anyone wanting to find that piece of work.

**Author of the chapter** (as cited in your work) **Surname, Initial(s).**

**Year of chapter publication.** (in brackets)

**Title of chapter.**

**In: Initial(s). Surname of author(s)/editor(s) of the collected work**

(Ed.). (Eds. if more than one)

**Title of the collected work** (in italics)

**Edition, volume number** (if available), **page number(s) of the chapter referred to.** (in brackets)

**Place of publication:**

**Publisher.**

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3.7 How to reference an electronic version of a print book (Ebook)

Author/Editor Surname, Initial(s).

Year. (in brackets)

Title (in italics)

dition. (if later than the first and abbreviated to (ed.))

Type of electronic edition [in square brackets]. (if applicable – leave out if read via ebrary etc.)

Retrieved from: (use doi: where available instead of URL)


➢ **TIP**: For more information on what a doi is and how a URL is constructed see pages 200-207 in the *Concise Rules of APA Style* as well as pages 187-192 of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*
3.8 How to reference an electronic only book (Ebook)

Author/Editor Surname, Initial(s).
Year. (in brackets)
Title (in italics)
Retrieved from:


➢ TIP: For more information on referencing books see pages 222-226 of the *Concise Rules of APA Style* or pages 202-205 of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association.*

3.9 How to reference a website

Websites should only be used in very rare exceptions where peer-reviewed evidence such as official, government-produced statistics is not available elsewhere.

Author/Editor/Organisation. (as appropriate)
Year, Month Day. (in brackets) [n.d. if no date]
Title/heading. (Capitalize only the first word of the article title and of the subtitle)
Format description. [in square brackets] (only if non-routine such as blog post)
Retrieved from:

- **TIP**: Notice the title is not italicized
- **TIP**: Only include month and day if citing a blog post
- **TIP**: No retrieved date is required unless the site is likely to change

- **TIP**: For more information and examples on how to reference something you found on a website see Lee’s (2010) post on the *APA style blog*. 
4. Additional information

The following are all common features of academic writing. They are included here so that you can recognise and understand them in your academic reading. They should not be used in your academic writing!

4.1 Footnotes

Footnotes are used to strengthen the discussion and should only be included to provide additional content. APA style discourages the use of footnotes with the exception of alerting readers to additional information found elsewhere (American Psychological Association, 2010b, p.37).

4.2 Latin terms

**ibid.** Abbreviation of the Latin term ‘ibidem’ meaning ‘in the same place’. It is used as a ditto instead of repeating the previous reference.

**op.cit.** Abbreviation of the Latin term ‘opere citato’ meaning ‘in the work cited’. This is used after an author’s name to refer to the same work cited previously for this author.

**qv** Abbreviation of the Latin term ‘quod vide’ meaning ‘which see’ or ‘on this, go see’. It is used to reference material mentioned in another part of the text.

**sine loco (s.l.)** Latin term for ‘without place’. If there is no place of publication (s.l.) is used to indicate location unknown.

**sine nomine (s.n.)** Latin term for ‘without name’. If there is no publisher’s name (s.n.) is used.
5. List of references as they should appear at the end of your essay

References


Queen Margaret University. (2014). In your own words: Understanding and avoiding plagiarism. Retrieved from https://sites.google.com/a/qmu.ac.uk/plagiarism/


Trauma research: some context for using the Posttraumatic Diagnostic Scale (PDS; Foa, Cashman, Jaycox, & Perry, 1997) as a diagnostic screen for Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

The experience of traumatic events is common. The (US) National Comorbidity Survey (NCS; Kessler, Sonnega, Bromet, Hughes, & Nelson, 1995) found that, within their lifetimes, approximately 60% of men and 50% of women experienced at least one trauma, and estimated lifetime prevalence of Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) was 7.8%. Although men were more likely to experience trauma than women, more women than men had lifetime PTSD (10.4% vs. 5.0%). These prevalence rates are likely to be underestimates for several reasons, including reluctance, or perhaps inability (qv), to report trauma (Kessler et al., 2005).

Interpersonal violence is the most inherently trauma producing event (Frederick, 1984; as cited in Adams, Barton, Mitchell, Moore, & Einagel, 1998); combat and rape are the most potent events in precipitating PTSD. They are also most often experienced in adolescence and early adult life. Herman (2001) points out that the average age of the Vietnam combat soldier was 19; of women who are raped, half are aged 20 or under, and three-quarters are aged between 13-26 at the time of the rape. Indeed a recent review of the literature considering age of onset for all mental disorders found that approximately half of all lifetime disorders start by the mid-teens and three quarters by the mid-20’s (Kessler et al., 2007); for PTSD age of onset at the 50th percentile is 23 years and at the 75th percentile is 39 years (Kessler et al., 2005).

My research studies used the PDS as a self-report tool for investigating prevalence of PTSD and the three associated symptom clusters (hyperarousal – where the body is constantly on the alert for danger, avoidance of any reminders of the traumatic event and re-experiencing of the trauma, which is often fragmentary, through e.g. flashbacks and nightmares). I used the PDS for several large
scale studies: (1) 596 participants (50% students, 50% members of the general public visiting Glasgow Science Centre)\(^1\) (2) a replication in another general population sample consisting of 227 members of the general public visiting GSC over the Easter weekend, (3) 410 students/staff undertaking experimental studies using the Stroop task and (4) 108 + 60 students/staff for two other experimental studies.

It is understandable, and rightly so, that there are special concerns about conducting research in sensitive areas which include sexual assault and domestic abuse. While the PDS makes reference to these types of trauma, the research is not about engaging with people about these particular issues. The reason the PDS sets out a comprehensive list of possible traumas is because the nature of PTSD is such that memories of trauma are often in a dissociated state, that is, they are not always available to consciousness.

For example, Ehlers et al. (2004) describing examples from extensive clinical experience report in their example 15, a rape victim who initially failed to remember that she had been threatened with a knife by her assailant, something which memory theory debates on “weapon focus” would consider a central element, likely to be remembered (Loftus, Loftus, & Messo, 1987). This is typical of the disorder, which is essentially a disorder of memory; even though people with PTSD on one level are aware that they have suffered an event which has affected them, the factual details of the events may not be readily accessible, and they need to be reminded of what (from a research point of view - to try and capture all incidences of trauma) are important possible causes of PTSD. There is a literature on how, particularly for sexual trauma events, women (who typically experience them much more often than men) do not recall them if simply asked to state if they have ever experienced a ‘traumatic event’ (Cusack, Falsetti, & de Arellano, 2002). This finding may also partly explained by the increasing evidence that verbal memory is particularly adversely affected in fear states and PTSD; in a state of fear the language part of the brain is ‘switched off’ so that verbal accounts of the

\(^1\) Eg, in this sample, 56% had experienced a trauma and prevalence of PTSD was 8.6% (Choudhary & O’Carroll, 2007)
trauma may be prevented by the physiological state of the brain (Rauch et al., 1996).

This short introduction may be helpful in outlining the use of the PDS in student and general population samples and by providing some insight into PTSD and why it is likely underdiagnosed, some understanding of the reasons why the PDS, as a widely used instrument in PTSD research, is structured the way that it is.

Dr Carolyn J Choudhary
Lecturer in Psychology
References


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