



A 'How to' Guide to Referencing – Vancouver Referencing

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What is plagiarism and how to avoid it?

In recent years, plagiarism has become one of the major concerns for universities, schools, colleges and professional bodies across the world. The IBMS is no different. Plagiarism means that you attempt to present someone else's work as if it were your own. In other words, **you are being dishonest if you plagiarise.**

When the IBMS ask you to write an essay, produce a report, make a presentation, or do any other task as part of the assessment for a particular qualification, we expect that the work you submit will be your own. Copying from another candidate during an exam or taking something into the examination room that is not allowed is clearly cheating. Plagiarism is another form of cheating which the IBMS takes very seriously.

Plagiarism is when you copy material from the work of another candidate or from a book, journal or other publication, or obtain material from the internet or elsewhere and include it as part of your own work without saying where it came from. This does not mean that we expect everything you write to be an original idea. The way in which you say where it came from is called **referencing** or **citing (citation)** and its only by learning how to do this properly that you can avoid accusations of plagiarism.

Essays submitted as part of the IBMS Higher Specialist Diploma (HSD) qualification or work submitted for either the Diploma of Specialist Practice (DSP) or Diploma of Higher Specialist Practice (DHSP) will develop your understanding of scholarship. Using research that other people have undertaken and learning how to assess and evaluate it in a critical way is a crucial part of the process. You are therefore **supposed**, at least in part, to be presenting other people's ideas but you must do so honestly and transparently.

Recently in several essays submitted as part of the HSD portfolio candidates have failed to appropriately acknowledge the sources and ideas that they have used in their work; have included lots of ideas and thoughts from other authors but have provided little of their own views or opinions on the topic and/or have incorporated the views of others as if it were their own work. This is not acceptable.

It is expected that your work must reflect what you know and understand, so it should largely be in your own words. Of course, the knowledge and ideas you use will have come from various sources including books, journal articles, official publications, lecture notes and websites, but you should not just copy the words used in the original source. You should explain the ideas in your own words (a process known as **paraphrasing**) but you must acknowledge where the ideas came from. This is called **citation** or **attribution**. Paraphrasing is **not** just changing a few words (including the spelling of words if your original source is American) from the original text and including it in your work.

Citing your sources is good academic practice and by giving a reference it gives credibility to what you have written by allowing the facts or ideas you are quoting to be checked. The progress of scientific knowledge involves building on, and sometimes challenging, the work that other scientists have done. Proper referencing shows that you have read, and understood, the material

that is relevant to your subject. It demonstrates that you have used the sources you are citing or quoting fairly and accurately, rather than, for example, selectively quoting information and data that backs up one side of an argument or viewpoint.

It is also important to be careful in the sources that you cite. You should avoid citing from low quality or poor value sources like Wikipedia and other wiki-based internet sites as these can be accessed and edited by anybody. Instead, you should look to cite from high-value sources such as peer-reviewed journal articles, official publications (such as governmental reports) and books.

It is poor academic practice if your submitted work consists principally of several paraphrases from various authors, or is a close copy of another's argument, viewpoint, or logic even if you acknowledge the sources of this information. This is because it shows a lack of personal understanding of, and engagement in, the subject which, for these qualifications, the examiners expect you to have.

But you do not need to give a reference to every fact or opinion that you write. Some things are reasonably regarded as "common knowledge" - for instance that Body Mass Index (BMI) is one measure for calculating obesity or that the Earth orbits around the sun once a year.

Plagiarism does not apply only to written text but to all forms of content. You must therefore give an appropriate reference when you report a research or experimental finding, quote a significant or controversial theory or idea, use a picture, figure, image, or diagram or stating anything that, in biomedical science terms, could not be regarded as "common knowledge". This applies even to work you may have produced and submitted, perhaps for an example as part of an MSc project, which is now being used in work submitted to the IBMS. Sometimes it may be difficult to decide whether to cite a source for a piece of information. If you are in doubt, it is always better to give the reference!

In some limited cases you may wish to use the exact words that someone else has used, perhaps because they are a specific definition, or they express something particularly clearly or because they are well known. You should include these as a **direct quotation** and make it clear where these words have come from although in general, direct quotation is rarely used in scientific writing. You should not however include long stretches of quotations within your submitted work as you have a word limit to adhere to and it could mean that you could fail to demonstrate that you understand the issue/topic being discussed as instead you are relying on another author's work.

Checking for plagiarism, similarity, and poor academic practice

Some cases of plagiarism arise where candidates are deliberately dishonest and present work that they have copied, either from another candidate, published sources and in particular, online material as their own but in most cases, this happens accidentally however this still does not make it acceptable.

The IBMS reviews essays submitted for the HSD, dissertations for the DSP and theses for the DHSP using the originality checking software called *Turnitin*. This software compares the work with that submitted by other IBMS candidates and with millions of resources that have been published on the internet - including journals and books. This software is very powerful and produces a report that highlights not only how much text is similar to other sources but also where this material is located. Changing words in a sentence will not circumvent the software. The similarity score that the software produces as part of its report requires the academic judgement of the examiners and the IBMS Head of Examinations to interpret whether this necessitates action.

The examiners will also look for other indicators of plagiarism and poor academic practice in submitted work. These can include:

- changes in tone, style of writing, font and layout, fluency and confidence in what is being stated
- mixed referencing styles
- lack of referencing
- unusual formatting
- the unattributed use of non-British English

When plagiarism is detected, or if the similarity score is unacceptably high, it will be treated as **academic malpractice** and may have serious consequences. This could range from requiring candidates to resubmit revised work, the failure of the whole portfolio and in the most serious of cases the barring of the candidate from undertaking IBMS qualifications. Plagiarism may occur through ignorance because source material has not been properly cited. However, ignorance is not regarded as an excuse, so it is vital that you reference correctly.

Word Counts

Essays submitted as part of the IBMS Higher Specialist Diploma (HSD) qualification or work submitted for either the Diploma of Specialist Practice (DSP) or Diploma of Higher Specialist Practice (DHSP) have a word limit. It is important to note that the reference list **will not** be included in the word count for submissions.

Brief Guide on Referencing

There are various systems, and organisational specific variations on those systems, that can be used for citing references. The IBMS allows candidates to use either the Harvard **or** Vancouver Referencing Style. It is essential that within a piece of submitted work only one style of referencing is used. As with other referencing styles (such as Harvard) if you are using the Vancouver method of referencing there are two forms of references that are required; namely the in-text citation and a full reference list.

In the Vancouver style of referencing each piece of work which you cite in your text should have a unique number that is assigned in the order of citation (i.e. the first citation in your work will be number one). If, in your work, you cite the same piece of work more than once, the same citation number should be used each time. The citation number can be written either in curved brackets () or in superscript as long as it is consistent.

Note:

Some of the examples used within this guide have been invented by the Head of Examinations for illustrative purposes. Do not therefore expect to necessarily find the work that is being referred to.

Citing References in Submitted Work

When paraphrasing (i.e. expressing another's work in your own words) you can use an in-text citation to introduce point(s) of an author's ideas into your work in a way that will help with the flow and your style of writing. How you use an in-text citation depends on whether the emphasis is on the author or on the idea.

Citing one author

For example:

Recent research (1) has shown that the number of....

or

Recent research ⁽¹⁾ has shown that the number of

You can also include the author's name in your text if that helps with the flow of the work but if you do so you must also insert the citation number as well.

For example:

Recent research by Wainwright (1) has shown that the number of ...

or

Recent research by Wainwright ⁽¹⁾ has shown that the number of...

Citing different works from the same author

If you cite a new work which has the same author and was written in the same year as an earlier citation, each work will have a different number.

For example:

May (1,2) has shown on more than one occasion how...

If more than one publication from an author helps to illustrate the point you wish to make are published in different years' then the references should be cited in chronological order from the oldest to the newest. Each work will have a different number.

For example:

Rawling (4, 5, 7) has shown how the geography curriculum has evolved over the last twenty years as a result of....

Citing more than one author

If the piece of work you are citing has more than one author and you want to include the author names in your text you should use 'et al.' (which is an abbreviation of the 'et alia' which means 'and others' in Latin) after the name of the first author.

For example

May et al. (3) concluded that.....

Or

May et al. ⁽³⁾ concluded that.....

Citing from chapters from within an edited book

If you are citing work from a book that has many chapters written by different authors, you should cite the author(s) who wrote the chapter rather than the editor(s) of the overall book. In the reference list at the end of your work you must include details of the chapter author followed by the details of the entire work.

Citing more than one piece of work at the same time

On occasions you may want to cite several pieces of work and/or studies in the same sentence. If you do this, you need to include the citation number for each piece of work that you are citing. A hyphen should be used to link numbers which are inclusive and a comma where the numbers are not consecutive.

For example:

Several studies (3-6, 11, 14) have concluded that.....

or

Several studies ^(3-6, 11, 14) have concluded that...

Citing from a direct quotation

Direct quotation is not often used in scientific writing however where it is used, the quotation should be referenced in the text in the same way as indirect quotation. Short quotations should be placed in quotation marks (double quotation marks are used for quoting direct speech) and you must state the page number.

For example:

Brooke-Hitching ⁽⁶⁾ states that 'to find the stories of the very earliest named explorers we need to look at Ancient Egypt' (p.19).

If the quotation is more than two lines long, it should be inserted as a separate indented paragraph of text.

For example:

Smith (7) summarises the importance of mathematics to society and the knowledge economy, stating that:

'Mathematics provides a powerful universal language and intellectual toolkit for abstraction, generalization and synthesis. It is the language of science and technology. It

enables us to probe the natural universe and to develop new technologies that have helped us control and master our environment, and change societal expectations and standards of living.’ (p.11)

In addition, when you use quotations within your text, you may want to include a few additional words in the quotation so that your complete sentence is grammatically correct. This is most likely to be the case when you are quoting two parts from a longer paragraph(s) in the original source. To indicate the words that you have inserted into a quotation they should be enclosed within square brackets.

Citing an image/figure/table/ diagram/photographs etc.

You should provide an in-text citation for any images, figures, tables, diagrams, photographs etc. that you reproduce in your work and provide a full reference for these as you would for any other type of work. Such citations should be treated as direct quotes in that the author(s) should be stated and the page number shown both in the text where the diagram is being discussed and in the caption you write for it.

Citing works with no obvious author

If you wish to cite a piece of work that has no obvious author, you should use the ‘corporate’ author. In the Vancouver style of referencing, you can, but do not have to include, the author in your in-text citation, but you do need to include an author in the full reference at the end of your work. This applies to publications from companies, organisations, associations, government departments, professional bodies, select committees and agencies. Examples include the NHS, Institute of Biomedical Science (IBMS), Royal College of Pathologists (RCPath) and the Select Committee on Stem Cell Research. The citation in your text would be appear as, for example:

NHS England (5) has advocated a national strategy for.....

Or

A national strategy has been advocated for..... (5).

Citing material from websites

Material from **websites** should be referenced with the same amount of detail and accuracy as printed sources. These details will also need to be entered in the reference list at the end of your work (see below). Whenever possible, cite a specific document that you have found on a website, rather than the website itself. Do not put the URL (<http://www....>) into the text. If you are citing directly from a website it will be impossible to include an exact page number thus, the text citation should be same as for a book or article.

Secondary Referencing

This is when an author refers to another author’s work within their writing and the original (primary) source is not available. When citing such work, the author of both the primary source and the author of the work it was cited in should be used. The reference list at the end of the document should only contain works that you have read. In the following example you would only list the work by Jennings.

For example:

According to Moore and Knight, as cited by Jennings ⁽¹¹⁾, most individuals who have this illness.....

The Reference List - Vancouver Referencing Style

The Vancouver referencing style uses a 'numerical-endnote' approach. This is a list of all the sources that have been cited in the assignment and referred to in the text. When using the Vancouver style, the reference list should be in numerical (rather than alphabetical) order and each number matches and refers to the one in the text. It is also recommended that you include a space between each of the references but there is no need to use bullet points.

The wording and spelling of the title must be the same as the original source. For example, the title of the book might be 'color' rather than 'colour' if it is an American book. In this case 'color' should be used.

Books

You should take the information for your reference from the title page inside the book. If the book is not the first edition the edition number must be included in the reference. The format is:

- Author(s)/ Editor(s) surname and initials (if it is an editor always put (ed.) or (eds.) after the name)
- Title of Book (*this should be italics*)
- Series title and number (only if the book is part of a series)
- Edition (if not the first edition)
- Place of publication (if there is more than once place listed, use the first name)
- Publisher
- Year of publication

For example:

Book with a single author

Bain BJ. *Blood Cells: A Practical Guide*. 5th ed. Chichester: John Wiley and Sons Ltd; 2015.

Books with multiple authors

Marshall WJ, Lapsley M, Day A. *Clinical Chemistry*. 8th ed. Edinburgh: Elsevier; 2016.

Books with single editor

Ford M. (ed.) *Medical Microbiology*. 3rd ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press; 2019.

Books with multiple editors

Orchard G, Nation B. (eds.) *Histopathology*. 2nd ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press; 2018.

Books with six or more authors/editors

If the book you are referencing has more than six author or editors, you should state the first six followed by 'et al.'

Book: chapter in an edited book

You should take the information for your reference from the title page inside the book. If the book is not the first edition the edition number must be included in the reference. The format and order is:

- Author(s) surname and initials of the chapter
- Title of chapter followed by In:
- Editor (always put (ed.) or (eds.) after the name)
- Title (this should be in italics)
- Series title and number (if part of a series)
- Edition (if not the first edition)
- Place of publication (if there is more than one place listed, use the first named)
- Publisher
- Year of publication
- Page numbers (use 'p.' before a single page number and 'pp.' where there are multiple pages)

For example:

Cox A. Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) In: Hall A, Scott C, Buckland M. (eds.) *Clinical Immunology*. 2nd ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press; 2016. pp. 282-298.

Falzon M, Borg E, Saetta A. Breast Cancer In: Warford A, Presneau N. (eds.) *Molecular Diagnostics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press; 2019. pp. 270-290.

Book: online/electronic

The format and order is:

- Author(s)/ Editor(s) surname and initials (if it is an editor(s) always put (ed.) or (eds.) after the name)
- Title of Book (*this should be italics*)
- Series title and number (if part of a series)
- Edition (if not the first edition)
- Place of publication (if there is more than one place listed, use the first named)
- Publisher
- Year of publication
- Available from: URL
- [Date of access]

Journal articles (print)

The format and order is:

- Author(s) surname and initials
- Title of journal article
- Title of journal (*this should be italics*)
- Year of publication
- Volume number
- (Issue number)
- Page numbers of the article (do not use 'p.' or 'pp.' before the page numbers)

For example:

Elliott C. Change for Blood Transfusion Inspections. *Biomedical Scientist*. 2018; 62(5): 22-24.

Ringrow J, Bryant A. Maintain and Extend Accreditation. *Biomedical Scientist*. 2018; 62(3): 32-34

Journal articles (online/electronic)

The format and order is:

- Author(s) surname and initials
- Title of journal article
- Title of journal (*this should be italics*)
- Year of publication
- Volume number
- (Issue number)
- Page numbers of the article (do not use 'p.' or 'pp.' before the page numbers)
- Available from: URL (Include [Date of Access]) or Digital Object Identifier (DOI) (if available)

For example:

Waller P, Blann AD. Non-coding RNAs – A primer for the laboratory scientist. *British Journal of Biomedical Science*. 2019; 76(4): 157-165.

Available from: <https://doi.org/10.1080/09674845.2019.1675847> [Date of Access 13 July 2020]

Berryman J, Bolton-Maggs P. Laboratory Errors in Transfusion. *Biomedical Scientist*. 2019; 63(9): 37-38. Available from: <https://www.ibms.org/resources/documents/the-biomedical-scientist-september-2019/> [Date of Access 21 January 2020]

Web page/website

The format and order is:

- Author/Editor surname and initials (use the corporate author if no individual author or editor is named)
- Title (*this should be italics*)
- Available from: URL
- [Date of access]

If the document is contained within a large website (e.g. university or government agency), identify the host organisation and the relevant programme or department before the URL.

For example:

NHS Improvement. *Making data count*. Available from:

<https://improvement.nhs.uk/resources/making-data-count/> [Accessed 2nd January 2020].

Pitt SJ, Gunn A. *Slime of the Times*. Available from:

<https://www.thebiomedicalscientist.net/science/slime-times> [Accessed 2nd January 2020].

British Standards and International Standards

The format and order is:

- Name of Standard Body/Institution
- Standard number
- Title (this should be in italics)
- Place of publication
- Publisher
- Year of publication

For example:

British Standards Institution. BS EN ISO 9001:2015 *Quality Management Systems: Requirements*. London: BSI; 2015.

Health & Care Professions Council. *Standards of Proficiency - Biomedical Scientists*: London: HCPC; 2014.

Report

The format and order is:

- Author/Editor surname and initials (if it is an editor put (ed.) after the name)
- Title (this should be in italics)
- Organisation
- Report number (if part of a report series)
- Year of publication

For example:

Keogh B. *Review into the quality of care and treatment provided by 14 hospital trusts in England: overview report*. National Health Service (NHS); 2013.

<https://www.nhs.uk/nhsengland/bruce-keogh-review/documents/outcomes/keogh-review-final-report.pdf>

NHS England. *Our 2018/19 Annual Report*. NHS England; 2019.

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Annual-Report-Full-201819.pdf>



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