

Referencing terminology

Here's a quick guide to the meaning of the main referencing terms that you will come across when at university:

Term	Meaning
Citation / In-text citation	This is an acknowledgement that you place in your writing at the point you have referred to someone else's work. It may be in the author-date format (e.g., Jones, 2020), numeric format (e.g. [1]) or as a footnote .
Reference	Each citation should have a corresponding reference that provides further details about the source of information you have used. This may include the creator's name, date of publication, title of the work, publisher details and a URL if accessed online. References are usually placed at the end of your writing in a reference list . Sometimes you may see 'reference' used to refer to both the in-text citation and the full reference at the end of your work.
Reference List	The name given to the group of references at the end of your document. A reference list contains references for all the materials you have cited in your work.
Bibliography	This is another name for the list of references at the end of your document. A bibliography may also include references for materials you have read or consulted but not cited.
Referencing style	Referencing styles are a set of instructions. They tell you what information you need to include in your reference , the order that information should appear, and the way it should be formatted in your work. Some common referencing styles used at Newcastle University include Cite Them Right Harvard, APA, IEEE, RSC, OSCOLA, MHRA, MLA, Vancouver, and Chicago.
Author-date referencing	Author-date referencing styles use the author's surname and the date of publication (Smith, 2020) as the in-text citation , to mark the point a reference is made to another's work. The reference list is ordered alphabetically by author surname so that the corresponding reference is easy to find.

Term	Meaning
Numbered referencing	Numbered referencing styles use a number [1] as the in-text citation , to mark the point a reference is made to another's work. The number corresponds to a number in the reference list , which contains the full reference details.
Footnote	In footnote styles, a superscript number ¹ is placed in the text to point to the acknowledged source, and the corresponding footnote at the end of the page, provides citation details. Full references are included at the end of the work in a reference list or bibliography .
et al.	<p>et al. is an abbreviated Latin term meaning 'and others'. It is used in some referencing styles to shorten a citation or reference where there are a number of contributing authors. This means that you don't have to write all the author names out and simply use the first author, followed by et al. For example:</p> <p>Smith et al. (2020) state that....</p> <p>Smith, L. et al. (2020) <i>Referencing is fun!</i> Newcastle: Newcastle University Press.</p> <p>Each referencing style has its own rules about when et al. should be applied.</p>
Paraphrase	To explain someone else's ideas in your own words. Paraphrasing what you have read when writing is good academic practice as it demonstrates your understanding of what you have learned while also showing your ability to write concisely. When paraphrasing, you need to include an in-text citation and reference to acknowledge the source.
Direct quote	To use the exact words of the original source in your writing. The quote should have a clear purpose and work effectively to strengthen your argument. When using a direct quote, you must clearly mark the text using quotation marks and reference the original source accurately.