Referencing Policy
November 2018

Introduction

The referencing policy will inform the selection of referencing styles and the communication of those styles to students by academic departments, schools and institutes.

Referencing is a core academic skill which all students are required to develop. Lack of confidence in referencing can lead to poor academic practice and academic misconduct. Furthermore, effective citing of sources is a transferable skill which is valuable for graduate employability. Students need to easily identify the referencing style that they are required to use, identify resources that explain the referencing style and seek consistent guidance from academic and professional services staff who can support them when they encounter difficulties. By doing this, the University will create an environment in which students can develop competence in referencing.

The Library will support the adoption and implementation of the Referencing Policy, and provide opportunities for students to develop good academic practice and learn to use reference management software. This will be achieved through embedded sessions taught by Liaison Librarians, through KnowHow, the open programme of face to face workshops and via materials on the student intranet, and the referencing library guide http://libguides.liverpool.ac.uk/referencing.

Purpose

• To improve student experience by placing the emphasis on students’ understanding and application of the principles of referencing rather than becoming proficient in the use of multiple styles in order to satisfy departmental or school requirements. It is anticipated that this will result in a more consistent learning experience for students.

• To enhance the learning experience of students by minimising the number of referencing styles that a student is required to learn, to those required by their discipline or intended profession.

• To support the Code of Practice on Assessment, Appendix L : Academic Integrity Policy by ensuring that students receive clear and consistent guidance about referencing irrespective of which programme they pursue.

• To enable academic and professional services staff to effectively support taught students with referencing by minimising the range of referencing styles and variants of styles recommended to them.
University Referencing Policy Elements

1. All students must be informed of the referencing style for their department and/or school.

   The referencing style will be indicated in programme and module information and in assessment guidelines. These guidelines should also direct students to the referencing library guide information for that style. This will enable students to quickly identify the referencing style which they are required to use.

2. All referencing styles recommended to taught students must be a formally published style.

   In selecting a style consideration should be given to the breadth of published guidance available for students to use the style competently for academic work. Bespoke styles should not be recommended to students, including those produced in-house. Bespoke styles will not be supported by the Library.

   In rare exceptions, where, for example, a particular assignment requires students to apply the referencing style of a specific journal this must be clearly stated in the module guidelines. The module leader will be responsible for providing all of the necessary referencing guidance.

3. Students should, where possible, be expected to use a single referencing style within their discipline.

   Every effort should be made to minimise the number of referencing styles that students are required to learn. Only in exceptional circumstances should students be required to learn more than two referencing styles. In this regard, programmes including modules from multiple departments, for example Honours Select programmes, are at greatest risk, and therefore should be monitored by the programme director or a Faculty nominee.

4. Where students are required to use a Harvard author-date referencing style, they are expected to use the Harvard Cite them Right style.

   This variant of Harvard has already been adopted by Online Programmes and the majority of University departments that use the Harvard style. Details about Harvard Cite them Right are available at [http://libguides.liverpool.ac.uk/referencing](http://libguides.liverpool.ac.uk/referencing).

5. Where a student is registered on a programme including modules from multiple departments, like Honours Select programmes, and there is no disciplinary or professional requirement for a specific referencing style to be used, every effort should be made to adopt a single style.

   This will reduce the need for students to learn multiple referencing styles and enhance their learning experience. However, it is understood that in some instances this approach will be inappropriate.

6. Where it is felt that an appropriate published style is not available the School must consult with the Library about which style the school will adopt.
This will enable appropriate discussion about which referencing style can be supported best by all stakeholders.

7. The referencing library guide will provide information about all formally published styles agreed with the school. Departments and/or schools will liaise with their Liaison Librarian to ensure that the Library directs students to the appropriate style via a register of styles.

The referencing library guide can be consulted at http://libguides.liverpool.ac.uk/referencing. The register of referencing styles will enable the Library to provide access to all referencing styles and their variants which comply with this policy.

8. All marking of referencing will comply with a formal published style.

In rare exceptions, for example when a particular assignment requires students to apply the referencing style of a specific journal, this must be clearly stated in the assignment guidelines. The module leader will be responsible for providing all of the necessary guidance.

9. The Library will provide resources for students to learn about reference management software.

To enhance student research skills and employability, Deans and programme directors should ensure that an opportunity is provided for students to learn how to use reference management software. The Library will provide resources (video guides, workbooks and drop in sessions) to help students to do this.

10. The Dean, and the programme director have responsibility for the implementation and communication of this policy.

As part of this responsibility the Dean and the programme director will also ensure that the policy is embedded in the curriculum during the curriculum design and programme review process.