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Referencing for history students

The essence of research is the extraction from voluminous and scattered sources of those facts that are relevant to the topic, and recording and arranging the facts so that they can readily be used for analysis and composition. When making notes you should do so in your own words; otherwise, when the time comes to write up your findings, you may inadvertently plagiarise your sources.

You will save much time and temper by recording full details of primary and secondary sources as you take your notes, and by putting down at the same time the page references for all statements for which you are likely to provide a footnote. This applies to quotations, whether from documents or from secondary sources, and to statements which the reader may wish to check.

It is important to ensure that all borrowings from the ideas, discoveries or judgements of other persons are properly attributed. The source of statistics should also be cited. The regulations of the University prescribe very severe penalties for plagiarism.

Which referencing system should I use?

There are two systems for referencing, the footnote/endnote system and the author/date system, often called the Harvard system. Many scholars in the natural and social sciences increasingly use the latter system, but it is not appropriate for history. You should therefore use **the footnote/endnote system** for **all History and American Studies modules**, and for **any special study supervised** by the **History Subject Team**.

[Aims of referencing](#)

[The footnote-endnote system](#)

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