

# OXFORD REFERENCING- THE BASICS

This guide is intended as a basic introduction to the Oxford OSCOLA style of referencing used on Law courses at the University of Wolverhampton. A full guide is available separately through the [Skills for Learning webpages](#).

The university also subscribes to [Cite Them Right Online](#), a referencing tool that includes Oxford style.

## WHY REFERENCE?

The Oxford Standard Citation of Legal Authorities (OSCOLA) is the preferred referencing system for law and should be used by law students to cite legal materials. It is important for you to reference your work properly in order to fully acknowledge any sources that have informed your work, such as cases, legislation, books and articles. Referencing your work will show the marker/examiner that you have read widely around the subject and demonstrate that your reading has informed and supported your work. Failure to reference your work properly will mean that your work lacks credibility and this will result in a lower mark and possibly even a fail grade. It may also result in an accusation of academic conduct involving plagiarism or collusion.

Oxford Referencing includes two main elements:

- a citation within the text of your assignment using **footnotes**
- a list of references at the end of your assignment (the **bibliography**)

## FOOTNOTES

A footnote is placed at the bottom of the page in your document to reference sources in the text of your work. It enables the reader to check what your authority is for any proposition. You should give a footnote referring in detail to the exact source of your evidence for every reference or quotation you make – name the case, statute or author in your writing and then include a footnote number (either directly after the name or at the end of the sentence). For example:

As Paul Robinson<sup>1</sup> has suggested...

The view throws some light on the controversial case of *Stoke-on-Trent CC v Wass*.<sup>2</sup>

**Note:** *ibid* can be used to repeat the information given in the immediately preceding footnote where you are using information from the same source but a different page number.<sup>3</sup>

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

Your work must contain a bibliography which should start on a separate page at the end of your assignment. Include in your bibliography every secondary source which is mentioned anywhere in the text or footnotes of your essay, and any other work to which you referred in the course of your research. The examiner is going to take the bibliography as some evidence of how widely and deeply you have researched.

An Oxford bibliography should be divided into sections as follows:

- Books.
- Journal articles
- Official published sources such as Law Commission Reports/ Hansard
- Other published sources, for example newspapers
- Unpublished sources such as unpublished theses
- Other sources, for example private communications.
- Electronic sources, for example material from websites.

The sources within each section should be ordered alphabetically by author's surname.

**Note:** A Table of Statutes and a Table of Cases should be given on separate pages after your bibliography.

<sup>1</sup> Paul H Robinson, *Structure and Function in Criminal Law* (Clarendon Press 1997) 183. (Example book footnote)

<sup>2</sup> *Stoke-on-Trent CC v Wass* [1988] WLR 406. (Example case footnote)

<sup>3</sup> *ibid* 1414.

## PRIMARY SOURCES

### Statutes (Acts of Parliament)

A statute is cited by its short title (found in a section near the end of the statute) followed by its date, with no punctuation before the date and omitting 'The' at the start.

Example: Human Rights Act 1998

If using a particular section, subsection or paragraph of a statute, your footnote would also include these details as a pinpoint.

Example: Children Act 1989, s 47(1)(a)

### Case Law

Include the following information:

*Names of the parties* (Date – see brackets rule) Volume number Abbreviation of law report Start page, Court abbreviation (where relevant), Pinpoint(s) if applicable

Example: *R v Moloney* [1985] 1 All ER 1025, HL, 1026, 1028.

**Brackets Rule:** You should note the importance of the distinction between square and round brackets. Square brackets are used where the year of the case is essential to locate the case in the relevant law report. Round brackets are used when law report volumes are numbered consecutively and the year is not required for finding the report.

## SECONDARY SOURCES

### Books

Footnote - include the following information:

Author(s) with first name(s) or initials before surname(s), *Title* (edition, Publisher Year of Publication) Page Number if relevant.

Example: Mark P Thompson, *Modern Land Law* (3rd edn, OUP 2006) 45.

Bibliography – include the following information:

Author(s) with surname(s) before initials, *Title* (edition, Publisher Year of Publication)

Example: Thompson MP, *Modern Land Law* (3rd edn, OUP 2006)

**Multiple authors:** If there is more than one author insert 'and' before the last author's name. If there are more than three authors, note the first author only, followed by 'and others'.

### Journal articles

Footnote - include the following information:

Author(s) with first name(s) or initials before surname(s), 'Article title' (Published Year) Volume number Journal abbreviation Start page

Example: James Chalmers and Fiona Leverick, 'Fair Labelling in Criminal Law' (2008) 71 MLR 217.

Bibliography – include the following information:

Author(s) with surname(s) before initials, 'Article title' (Published Year) Volume number Journal abbreviation Start page

Example: Chalmers J and Leverick F, 'Fair Labelling in Criminal Law' (2008) 71 MLR 217

**Note:** Oxford Referencing uses standard abbreviations for law report and journal titles. To check these, use the Cardiff Index of Legal Abbreviations at <http://www.legalabbrevs.cardiff.ac.uk/>.

## OXFORD REFERENCING – FURTHER EXAMPLES

Adapted from: [https://www.law.ox.ac.uk/sites/files/oxlaw/oscola\\_4th\\_edn\\_hart\\_2012quickreferenceguide.pdf](https://www.law.ox.ac.uk/sites/files/oxlaw/oscola_4th_edn_hart_2012quickreferenceguide.pdf)

### Primary Sources

Do not use full stops in abbreviations. Separate citations with a semi-colon.

#### Cases

Give the party names, followed by the neutral citation, followed by the Law Reports citation (eg AC, Ch, QB). If there is no neutral citation, give the Law Reports citation followed by the court in brackets. If the case is not reported in the Law Reports, cite the All ER or the WLR, or failing that a specialist report.

*Corr v IBC Vehicles Ltd* [2008] UKHL 13, [2008] 1 AC 884

*R (Roberts) v Parole Board* [2004] EWCA Civ 1031, [2005] QB 410

*Page v Smith* [1996] AC 155 (HL)

When pinpointing, give paragraph numbers in square brackets at the end of the citation. If the judgment has no paragraph numbers, provide the page number pinpoint after the court.

*Callery v Gray* [2001] EWCA Civ 1117, [2001] 1 WLR 2112 [42], [45]

*Bunt v Tilley* [2006] EWHC 407 (QB), [2006] 3 All ER 336 [1]–[37]

*R v Leeds County Court, ex p Morris* [1990] QB 523 (QB) 530–31

If citing a particular judge:

*Arscott v The Coal Authority* [2004] EWCA Civ 892, [2005] Env LR 6 [27] (Laws LJ)

#### Statutes and statutory instruments

Act of Supremacy 1558

Human Rights Act 1998, s 15(1)(b)

Penalties for Disorderly Behaviour (Amendment of Minimum Age) Order 2004, SI 2004/3166

#### EU legislation and cases

Consolidated Version of the Treaty on European Union [2008] OJ C115/13

Council Regulation (EC) 139/2004 on the control of concentrations between undertakings (EC Merger Regulation) [2004] OJ L24/1, art 5

Case C–176/03 *Commission v Council* [2005] ECR I–7879, paras 47–48

#### European Court of Human Rights

*Omojudi v UK* (2009) 51 EHRR 10

*Osman v UK* ECHR 1998–VIII 3124

*Balogh v Hungary* App no 47940/99 (ECHR, 20 July 2004)

*Simpson v UK* (1989) 64 DR 188

### Secondary Sources

#### Books

Give the author's name in the same form as in the publication, except in bibliographies, where you should give only the surname followed by the initial(s). Give relevant information about editions, translators and so forth before the publisher, and give page numbers at the end of the citation, after the brackets.

Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan* (first published 1651, Penguin 1985) 268

Gareth Jones, *Goff and Jones: The Law of Restitution* (1st supp, 7th edn, Sweet & Maxwell 2009)

K Zweigert and H Kötz, *An Introduction to Comparative Law* (Tony Weir tr, 3rd edn, OUP 1998)

#### Contributions to edited books

Francis Rose, 'The Evolution of the Species' in Andrew Burrows and Alan Rodger (eds), *Mapping the Law: Essays in Memory of Peter Birks* (OUP 2006)

#### Encyclopedias

*Halsbury's Laws* (5th edn, 2010) vol 57, para 53

#### Journal articles

Paul Craig, 'Theory, "Pure Theory" and Values in Public Law' [2005] PL 440

When pinpointing, put a comma between the first page of the article and the page pinpoint.

JAG Griffith, 'The Common Law and the Political Constitution' (2001) 117 LQR 42, 64

#### Online journals

Graham Greenleaf, 'The Global Development of Free Access to Legal Information' (2010) 1(1) EJLT  
<<http://ejlt.org//article/view/17>> accessed 27 July 2010

#### Command papers and Law Commission reports

Department for International Development, *Eliminating World Poverty: Building our Common Future* (White Paper, Cm 7656, 2009) ch 5

Law Commission, *Reforming Bribery* (Law Com No 313, 2008) paras 3.12–3.17

#### Websites and blogs

Sarah Cole, 'Virtual Friend Fires Employee' (*Naked Law*, 1 May 2009) <[www.nakedlaw.com/2009/05/index.html](http://www.nakedlaw.com/2009/05/index.html)> accessed 19 November 2009

#### Newspaper articles

Jane Croft, 'Supreme Court Warns on Quality' *Financial Times* (London, 1 July 2010) 3

