

**Dublin Institute of Technology**

**College of Business**

**STYLE GUIDE**

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# Introduction

As part of your studies in The Faculty of Business, you will have to complete many assignments, essays, projects and perhaps a major project or dissertation in the final year. It is required that these be written and presented in an appropriate academic style.

Writing in academic style requires a particular approach and method of presentation of your ideas and the sources of ideas. Many of the ideas will be your own, but you will invariably draw on the works of other thinkers in the area with which you are dealing. In your writing it is important to write in a careful, rigorous and measured way, to indicate the range of reading you have engaged in and to acknowledge the ideas of other people which you incorporate into your discussion and arguments.

There is a well-established way for doing this and it is called academic writing. This style guide sets out the conventions used in academic writing and how it applies to three important areas of your academic activity, namely, major project and thesis assignments, certain kinds of continuous assessment and abstract writing.

## Part 1.

### Using Sources

It is an essential part of submitting an essay/assignment/project/dissertation that you reference your sources.

There is a good practical reason for this: a reader of the paper may want to know where you read about a particular issue, idea, company or case study, in order to follow up on it and read it for himself. This is part of the process of academic research; one of the ways academics keep current with developments and thinking in their field is by reading articles in journals and papers at conferences, and then following up on references used.

In addition, if references are not used then the writer is essentially passing off ideas read elsewhere as his own. This is fundamentally dishonest, and is referred to as plagiarism. **The Faculty of Business has a strict policy on plagiarism and severe penalties will apply where students do not reference their sources, as outlined in section 6 below.**

Citations are the way you acknowledge what sources you have used. There are many different conventions used for handling citations. While there are a few very well known systems, few institutions adopt any one system in its totality. Most institutions adapt one of the well-known systems to their own requirements. The key objectives of any system are to provide consistency and clarity about sources.

#### What is meant by Citing and Referencing?

The source of all published and unpublished documents regardless of format (i.e. print, non-print, electronic, internet) referred to, directly quoted from, paraphrased or summarised in your essay, project, dissertation or thesis must be acknowledged. This process of acknowledging other people's work is known as citing.

References are cited twice in a document:

- [a] at the immediate point where a document written by someone else is referred to, otherwise known as an **in-text citation** and
- [b] in the **bibliography** or **reference list** at the end of your work.

#### Why is referencing important?

Good referencing is an essential component of good academic writing. It is important for a number of reasons:

- It shows the depth and breadth of your reading
- It demonstrates how your work relates to others who have written on the same subject
- Most importantly it helps to reduce the possibility of plagiarism as you will have declared all of your sources of information and ideas.
- It allows your ideas to stand out clearly within the text.

- It enables readers of your work to locate the original information source.

The Faculty of Business has chosen to adopt a version of the Harvard (or “in text” system) because we believe that it is easier for both readers and writers. The reader sees immediately what the source is, and footnotes are used only in special cases. The Harvard system is a parenthetical referencing system, meaning that the citation is listed in the text in parentheses (brackets). It is very close to the parenthetical system from *The Chicago Manual of Style* outlined in Turabian, K.L. (1996) *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses and Dissertations* (6<sup>th</sup> Edition) Chicago: University of Chicago Press, Chapter 10, and also close to the American Psychological Association style. The conventions we wish you to use are outlined below and you must follow them in presentation of your dissertation.

The Harvard System or author–date system as it is also known is the most widely used method of acknowledging quotations both direct and indirect. It consists of a citation in the text that points forward to a list of references. Readers then may refer to a list of references, ordered alphabetically at the end of the work, for the source of the quotation. The citation is enclosed in parentheses followed by a full stop thus linking the citation to the sentence where it belongs. **There is no punctuation between name and date and, where a page reference is given, a comma follows the date.** The abbreviation for page (p.) is used or, if the quotation extends over two pages, the abbreviation for pages (pp.) is used. There are a number of alternative methods of referencing authors within a body of text under the Harvard system. Some of the more common methods are as follows:

There are two stages to acknowledging the sources of any information or ideas you use. The first is in-text citation: this is where you acknowledge the use of a source in the body of the text. It is your way of letting the reader know that you have just taken an idea or perspective from a source, used the writer’s ideas in your own words, or indeed quoted directly. At this stage in the text you give the reader an abbreviated version of the reference. The second stage is where you give the source of the information in full. In other words you give the reader the full reference so that she can go and look the source up for herself if she wishes. This is done in a list at the end of the work which is headed “References”.

## 2. In-Text Citation

Once you have decided to use a source in your text there are three different ways in which you can introduce the material: quotation, paraphrase or summary.

### 2.1 Quotation – When to use

This is where you take the words directly from a source, without changing anything, and where **you must use quotation marks**. Beware of overuse of quotation. If you feel that the original expresses the idea much better than you can ever do, then there will be a temptation to quote at length from what you have read. This can lead to a situation where a chapter in your dissertation is dominated by quotations and simply punctuated with your links. As a result the chapter can seem disjointed, and it can be difficult for your lecturer to assess whether you have actually understood what you have read.

The main exception to this is where you are analysing a primary source. Primary sources are first-hand accounts, interviews, research, surveys, experiments and so on. A student of literature who was commenting on a poem, novel or play would have to quote extensively from this primary source. A student of marketing who was asked to evaluate or comment on a specific piece of research, report or set of results would have to do likewise. Qualitative research, for example is a primary source, and if using this you would quote extensively from interviews.

However, many of the texts you cite will be secondary sources, which draw together information and research from a variety of primary sources. A guidebook or encyclopaedia is a secondary source for example. Many of your textbooks will be secondary sources. Where you are using secondary sources the use of direct quotations need not be as extensive.

A useful set of criteria for the use of direct quotation from secondary sources is suggested by Fowler and Aaron (1995) in *The Little Brown Handbook*:

#### Tests for direct quotations

*The author's original satisfies one of these requirements:*

- The language is unusually vivid, bold, or inventive
- The quotation cannot be paraphrased without distortion or loss of meaning
- The words themselves are at issue in your interpretation
- The quotation represents and emphasises the view of an important expert
- The quotation is a graph, diagram, or table

*The quotation is as short as possible:*

- It includes only material relevant to your point
- It is edited to eliminate examples and other unneeded material

Source: *The Little, Brown Handbook* (1995, p.557)

## 2.2 In-Text Citation-Direct Quotation and Paraphrasing

### Direct Quotation

This is where you take the words directly from a source, without changing anything, and where **you must use quotation marks**.

When quoting directly from another author you must give the author, year and page and ensure that the full reference is given in the reference list.

Normally quotations should be enclosed in single inverted commas in the text. For example:-

Kotler argues that 'reflective marketing is the essential key to lasting success' (1994, p.67).

Use double inverted commas **only** for quotes within a quote.

Quotations over about **forty** words in length or four lines of text should not be enclosed in inverted commas but should be **block indented** from the left and typed in single line spacing, for example:

-

Kotler (1994, pp.290-1) notes:

Sellers can take three approaches to a market. Mass marketing is the decision to mass produce and mass distribute one product and attempt to attract all kinds of buyers. Product variety marketing aims to offer a variety of products to broaden the customer base.

Omissions from the material being quoted should be indicated as follows:-

Kotler (1994, pp.290-1) notes that ‘Product variety marketing aims . . . to broaden the customer base’.

### **Paraphrasing**

Paraphrasing involves restating the author’s idea in your own words. The ideas are not enclosed in quotation marks but **must still be acknowledged**. It is not essential to give page numbers when you paraphrase. However, where a paraphrase contains controversial viewpoints or a starting point for a detailed analysis, a page reference may be included following the author and date.

For example:-

Mass marketing is an approach which aims to attract a wide spectrum of buyers through the mass production and distribution of one product (Kotler 1994, p.290).

Or

Kotler (1994) argues that mass marketing is an approach which aims to attract a wide spectrum of buyers through the mass production and distribution of one product.

### **In-Text Citation: Work Written by More Than One Author**

If there are two or three authors, all are included in the citation. For example:-

Ferguson and Clark (1990)

If there are four or more authors, the usual practice is to use **et al.** (the Latin abbreviation for “and others”), for example:-

Murphy et al. (2000)

### **In-Text Citation: Reference to Several Works**

Sometimes a similar argument is made by several authors, so your reference will have to include each of those authors. For example:-

Many experts agree that .... (Murphy 2000; Jones 2001)

### **In-Text Citation: Multiple Works by Same Author in Same Year**

If you're citing several different works by the same author, all published in the same year, the different works are distinguished by the letters **a, b, c...** after the date. For example:-

(Jones 2001a) argues...  
Several authors believe ... (Jones 2001b)

### **In-Text Citation: Corporate Author**

If the author of a work is an organisation rather than individual, use the organisation's name in the citation: For example:-

Bord Gais (2006) indicated...

### **In-Text Citation: No Author Given**

If no details of the author are provided in the work, use the title of the book or report instead. For example:-

Politics in Fiji (1992) is a ...

If the work is a newspaper article, the name of the newspaper replaces the author:

It was reported (Irish Times 8<sup>th</sup> June 2003, p.14) ...

Section 2.5 *Introducing Material from Sources* outlines the Harvard style of referencing authors within a given body of text.

### **In-Text Citation for a Web Site**

The in-text reference for a website is formatted in the same way as for a book, journal article, i.e., Author Name, Date. For example:-

Best practice for the assessment of information literacy advocates that both process and product should be assessed to evaluate student outcomes (Association of College and Research Libraries 2003).

Do **not** include the web address (URL) for the website in the body of your essay or project. The web address should only be included in the Reference List at the end of your assignment.

### 2.3 Summary – When to Use

This is where you record the gist of an author's idea. You may want to summarise a paragraph, a section, a chapter or indeed a whole article or book. Summary allows you to bring together the thread of an idea which runs throughout a text. For example you may not wish to summarise an entire article, but rather to summarise what the author says throughout that article on a particular theme. A summary is shorter than the original. Obviously the longer the text you are summarising, the shorter the summary in proportion to the original, and the more skill you will need to achieve brevity without sacrificing accuracy. Capturing the essence of what has been said is a skill.

### 2.4 Introducing Material from Sources

Whether you are using a quotation, paraphrase or summary, you must at all times try to integrate the material as smoothly as possible into your own text. The way in which material from any source is integrated should help to inform your line of thought, and the reader's understanding. You can help to achieve this by giving your reader additional information which can aid his understanding of the material, or by putting it in context. For example you could let the reader know:

1. Whether the material supports or contradicts your line of thought. For example: - This approach to product positioning is endorsed by the Chief Executive of Coca Cola Ireland who said at a recent conference "....."
2. Whether the material is in agreement with most of the other sources you have read. For example: - Unlike most other writers on the subject however, McCarthy (1996) contends that.....
3. Who the writer is – where relevant. For example: - Subsequent research (Jones 1982; Murphy 1995) supports Kotler's views on this. (Kotler 1977; 1982)
4. If reference is being made to a specific volume of a work, the volume, and page number too if appropriate are included within the parentheses: Other research (Ferguson 1990, Vol. 2, p.67) noted that...
5. Who the writer is and from which text you are drawing - where relevant. For example: - Katz and Lazerfeld's book *Personal Influence* (1955) has become a classic of interpersonal communications literature, and required reading on all relevant courses.
6. Who the writer is, from which text you are drawing, and what the writer's credentials are - where relevant. For example: - This report, "Consumer Research after the Millennium" (Fitzgerald, 1985) is particularly relevant in the context of this paper, as its author, Ian Fitzgerald, now head of research with IIR, was for many years a Director of Consumer Marketing with Proctor & Gamble.
7. On occasion, an author may not be stated. If the work is a book, the title of the work takes the place of the author; if the work is a newspaper article, the newspaper replaces the author:  
It was reported (The Irish Times 8<sup>th</sup> June 2003, p.14) ...

You don't always have to name the author, source or credentials in your text, as the last three examples above do. In fact, you should be careful that such introductions are only done where they will enhance your text, and not obstruct the smooth flow of your thought in any way. A critical element in the introduction of any source material is the verb you use in constructing your introductory sentence. Again, Fowler and Aaron (1995) in *The Little, Brown Handbook* provide a useful list:

### Verbs for introducing summaries, paraphrases, and quotations

Introduce borrowed material with a verb that conveys information about the source author's attitude or approach to what he or she is saying. In the sentence *Smith\_\_\_\_\_ that the flood might have been disastrous*, filling the blank with *observes*, *finds*, or *insists* would create different meanings. (Note that all these verbs are in the present tense, the appropriate tense for discussions of others' writings.)

<b>AUTHOR IS NEUTRAL</b>	<b>AUTHOR INFERS OR SUGGESTS</b>	<b>AUTHOR ARGUES</b>	<b>AUTHOR AGREES</b>	<b>AUTHOR IS UNEASY OR DISPARAGING</b>
Comments	Analyses	Claims	Admits	Belittles
Describes	Asks	Contends	Agrees	Bemoans
Explains	Assesses	Defends	Concedes	Complains
Illustrates	Concludes	Disagrees	Concurs	Condemns
Notes	Considers	Holds		Deplores
Observes	Finds	Grants		Deprecates
Points out	Predicts	Insists		Derides
Records	Proposes	Maintains		Laments
Relates	Reveals			Warns
Reports	Shows			Speculates
Says	Suggests			
Sees	Supposes			
Thinks				
Writes				

Source: *The Little, Brown Handbook* (1995:558)

### 3. The List of References

The reference list should contain a full reference of every work *directly referred to in the text*. If you have read something as background, but have not used it in the body of your text then it should not appear in your reference list. Your reference list should be in alphabetical order by surname of the author, followed by the first name or initials as given in the work cited. The style to be adopted is the Harvard Style. The rules are outlined below along with a number of examples.

- No punctuation after initials or date

- If there were multiple authors they would be joined by **and** as opposed to **&**
- Book and Journal names in title case i.e. Capitals are used for the first letters of the Key words
- Book and Journal names are given in italics
- Commas separate publishing elements
- Edition is given without brackets or punctuation
- Publisher is followed by place of publication

### Referencing a Book:-

Surname, Initials (Year of Publication) *Title of Publication in Italics*, Edition, Publisher, Place

For example:-

Elliot, B and Elliot, J (2003) *Financial Accounting & Reporting*, 7<sup>th</sup> ed, Prentice Hall, London

Where first edition or none specified: -

Pickton, D and Broderick, A (2001) *Integrated Marketing Communications*, FT Prentice Hall Pearson Education, London

If a book is edited, the abbreviation ed or eds is placed in parentheses following the name of the author(s)

Note: The book title should come from a full page and not the spine.

### Referencing a book with multiple authors:-

Blattberg, R C, Glazer, R and Little, J D C (1994) *The Marketing Information Revolution*, Harvard Business School Press, Boston

### Referencing a chapter or article within an edited work: -

When reference is made to a chapter or article in an edited book, both the author and title of the chapter or article, together with the editor and other details of the book are included in the one bibliographical entry. Thus the reference has three components

- name(s) and initials of author(s) together with date of edited work
- title of chapter or article
- name(s) of editor(s), title of edited work, publisher and place of publication, this component is preceded by the word *In*.

McCann, J M (1994) Generating, Managing and Communicating Insights. In Blattberg, R C, Glazer, R and Little, J D C (Eds) *The Marketing Information Revolution*, Harvard Business School Press, Boston

### **Referencing a particular chapter in a book by the same author:-**

Blattberg, R C (1994) Modelling Market Responses. In Blattberg, R C, Glazer, R, and Little, J D C (Eds) *The Marketing Information Revolution*, Harvard Business School Press, Boston

Note: The date cited in the list of references is the date of the edited work (not necessarily the date of the original article) since the edited work is listed as the source of information.

### **Referencing two publications by the same author from one year:-**

Kotler, P (1994a) *Marketing for Schools and Colleges*, Prentice Hall, New York

Kotler, P (1994b) *Marketing Planning Management: Analysis Planning and Control*, 8th ed, Prentice Hall, New York

Note: If in different years arrange by date of publication; if in same year arrange alphabetically.

### **Referencing a forthcoming publication:-**

Blattberg, R C, Glazer, R and Little, J D C (forthcoming) *The Marketing Information Revolution*, Harvard Business School Press, Boston

### **Referencing articles:-**

In the case of journal articles, the place of publication and the publisher are not included since this information is usually well known. However, the volume number, issue number if used, and the inclusive page numbers for the article are given.

Author, Initials (Year of Publication) Name of Article. *Name of Journal in Italics*, Volume or Series Number, Issue Number/Month of Publication, article page numbers

For example:-

Levitt, T (1980) Marketing Success through Differentiation of Anything. *Harvard Business Review*, January-February, 322-40\*

[\*Note when referencing page numbers of the article it is important to provide the least amount of information e.g. 332-40 not 332-340, page numbers are specified without accompanying abbreviations (p.) or (pp.)].

See **Referencing Electronic Sources – Online Databases** for an example of referencing an article retrieved from a database.

### Referencing an article with multiple authors:-

Wind, Y and Cardozo, R (1974) Industrial Market Segmentation. <i>Industrial Marketing Management</i> , 3(3), 153-65.
--

### Citation within Quotations

Whether paraphrasing or quoting an author directly, you must credit the source

Hirschman (2002) reviews research on hair and grooming practices ... ..

In this case an author is cited indicating that this article has been consulted and Hirschman would be referenced in the list of references or in the bibliography.

If referring to an author cited by Hirschman credit is given to the source i.e. Hirschman and the original author she is citing along with the year the original citation was published. It should be noted that the original author is not included in the list of references or in the bibliography as the original source was not consulted, whereas the citing author consulted – in this case Hirschman – is included in the list of references or in the bibliography.

Hirschman (2002) refers to a study conducted by Kyle and Mahler (1996) which examined the impact of women's hair colour upon perceptions of her ability to perform a professional role

Or Hirschman (2002) cites Kyle and Mahler (1996) who conducted a study into the impact of women's hair colour upon perceptions of her ability to perform a professional role. They found that blonde and redheaded women were deemed significantly less capable than brunette women and assigned a lower starting salary.

Hirschman is included in the list of references but Kyle and Mahler are not as the original source was not consulted. If the original source is traced and consulted it can then be addressed separately to Hirschman and included in the list of references or bibliography. **You should avoid having too many references to work cited by other authors. It may be taken as an indication of failure or laziness to consult original sources.**

A number of studies have addressed the subject of hair in the context of consumer behaviour (Kyle and Mahler 1996; Hirschman 2002)

In this case it is clear that both articles have been consulted they are both in brackets separated by a semicolon and they can both be included in the list of references or bibliography.

### Referencing Government Reports and Publications:-

Department of Labour (1989) *Case Studies in Employee Participation*, Stationery Office, Dublin

Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU) (1993) *New Forms of Work Organisation*, ICTU, Dublin

Sometimes if you have a number of government publications it might be better to place them under a separate heading

For example:-

**(a) Government Publications**

(all published by the Government Publications Office, Dublin).

**(b) Books and Articles**

(all other books and articles would be referenced as normal under this heading).

### Referencing unpublished manuscripts, theses, dissertations and working papers:-

Titles of unpublished materials are not italicised or underlined and are in sentence case \*

McNally, N (2005) Sales Promotion and Consumer Franchise Building, B.Sc. (Mgmt) unpublished dissertation, Dublin Institute of Technology, Dublin.

McNally, N (2004) Sales Promotion and Consumer Franchise Building, B.Sc. (Mgmt) Working Paper, Faculty of Business, Dublin Institute of Technology, Dublin.

\*Sentence case uses capitals for the first letter of the first word and for proper nouns

### Referencing Newspaper Articles:-

Newspaper or magazine articles are treated similarly to periodicals except that it is normal to precede the page numbers with the abbreviation p. or pp. as appropriate:

Author, Initials (Year of Publication) Name of Article. *Name of Newspaper in Italics*, Date, Start of article page number

For example:-

Myers, K (2005) The Youth of Today. *The Irish Times*, 11<sup>th</sup> March, p.14

## Referencing Electronic Sources:

The primary objective in making reference to an item, whether in print or electronic format, is to give enough information so that it can be located by the reader. Referencing electronic sources is not unlike referencing print sources, however two new elements are introduced, a “type of medium” statement such as online, CD-ROM, or disk and an “available” statement, which generally replaces the information on place of publication and publisher. Punctuation must be used accurately as a stray full stop, comma, or slash can be mistaken for part of an address. The guidelines below adhere closely to the APA (American Psychological Association) style of citation (not the Harvard system); this is the preferred style for referencing electronic sources.

### Referencing Electronic Sources – CD-ROM:-

Author (Date) *Title* (Edition), [Type of Medium]. Producer (optional). Available: Supplier/Database identifier or number

Sternberg, M L A (1994) *The American Sign Language Dictionary on CD-ROM* (Windows version), [CD-ROM]. Available: HarperCollins

If no author is given the title becomes the first element of the reference, and the work is alphabetised in the reference list by the first significant word in the title. The “Type of medium” statement, defining the format of this title, should precede the date.

*Title* (Edition), [Type of Medium]. (Date). Producer (optional). Available: Supplier/Database identifier or number or

*Oxford English Dictionary Computer File: On Compact Disc* (2nd Ed.), [CD-ROM]. (1992). Available: Oxford UP

If the work is under regular revision, use the date of the last revision, or if that cannot be determined, give the date on which the search was done.

### Referencing Electronic Sources: - Online Databases:-

Referencing an Article retrieved electronically:

Schoenberger, C H (2006) Trading Places. *Forbes*, 178(12), 174-76. Available from Business Source Premier [Accessed 7 December 2007].

Referencing a Market Research report retrieved electronically:

Euromonitor International (2007) *Beer: Ireland*, Euromonitor International, London. Available from Global Market Information Database [Accessed 14 February 2008].

## Referencing Electronic Sources - HTTP:-

Author (Date) *Title* (Edition), [Type of medium]. Available HTTP: URL  
or  
*Title* (Edition), [Type of medium]. (Year) Available HTTP: URL [Date Accessed]

For example:-  
Lehman, M A and Brown, R H (1994) *Intellectual Property and the National Information Infrastructure* [Online]. Available:  
<http://www.uspto.gov/nii/ipwg.html> [Accessed 1 September 2008]  
or  
*Educating America for the 21st Century: Developing a Strategic Plan for Educational Leadership for Columbia University - 1993-2000* (Initial Workshop Draft) [Online]. (1994) Available: <http://www.ilt.columbia.edu/CONF/EdPlan.html> [Accessed 10 July 2008]

Note: Citing Electronic Sources is a relatively new phenomenon, which tends not to be outlined in the traditional style guides. A good reference is Li, Xia and Crane, Nancy B. (1996) *Electronic Styles: A Handbook for Citing Electronic Information* (2nd Edition) New Jersey: Information Today.

If an article or referenced work is available electronically and in conventional hard copy, e.g. a journal, the reference should be to the hard copy source.

## 4. Other Conventions

### Use of Lecture Notes

Do not use citations from your lecture notes. These are intended as the framework and the basis from where your reading and self-study begins. Go to the sources suggested and refer to these directly.

### Abbreviations

Acronyms should be spelled out in full on first usage, for example European Monetary System (EMS) and as EMS thereafter.

Omit full stops in abbreviations consisting of capitals, e.g. ERM, SME

Avoid contractions in the text such as e.g. i.e. viz. as these are a form of shorthand.

Non-English words should be italicised unless these are reasonably common terms.

### Numbers

Numbers less than 10 should normally be spelt out e.g. four companies.

### Percentages

Use 'per cent' in the text and % in tables

## **Figures and Graphs**

Figures and graphs should have a title and should be numbered in separate series by chapter and in order of appearance e.g.

*Figure 4.1 Non Media Expenditure* is the first figure in section 4 while

*Figure 4.2 Trends in Non Media Expenditure* is the second figure in section 4.

The axis of graphs should be clearly labelled. Each line in a graph should be labelled or you may provide a 'key' or 'legend' to the diagram. The source for the graph or table should be given.

## **Tables**

Again tables must have a title and the source for the table be clearly given. Tables should be numbered in separate series by chapter and in order of appearance.

## **Footnotes and Endnotes**

These should generally be avoided. Where footnotes or endnotes are used they should be numbered sequentially within your paper.

Footnotes must appear at the bottom of the page on which they are introduced. Endnotes should be placed at the end of the paper.

## **5. Clarity and Effectiveness of Language**

The reader of your dissertation has only your written word on which to base her judgement. Therefore the clearer and more effective your expression and use of language then the better you will be understood. Some tips follow.

### ***Spelling***

Microsoft Word has a spell-check option. Use the UK English version only. However don't forget that if you put in an incorrect word spelt correctly, it will not be identified by the spell-check.

### **Example**

'Immorality is a bad thing'. However if you type 'Immortality is a bad thing' by mistake, the spell-check will not identify this mistake.

It is very important to get into the habit of carefully proof-reading your final copy of any document before submitting it. Sometimes people proof-read sections of a document as they produce it, and while this is useful, it does not detract from the necessity of proofing the final complete document in its entirety.

### ***Vocabulary***

As shown above spell-checking a document does not ensure that you have chosen the correct word in the context in the first place. Microsoft Word also has a thesaurus, which can be useful and once again you should ensure that you are using the UK English version. In general a hardcopy dictionary and a thesaurus are invaluable aids to good writing and correct use of vocabulary. But even the electronic thesaurus is no substitute for careful proofing.

### ***Grammar***

Grammar and the construction of effective sentences is the kernel of clear expression. If in doubt keep it simple. Microsoft Word has a grammar option, but we are cautious in recommending this, having seen some of the more bizarre sentences to emerge from consulting it. As a general rule of thumb use this tool, if at all, with caution. If you are aware that grammar is your weak point we recommend that you avoid this tool in Microsoft Word, and instead purchase, keep close at hand and consult frequently with a good textbook on the subject. There are a number of good textbooks on the market. A particularly good reference, which has been referred to throughout this guide is: Fowler, H. Ramsey and Aaron, Jane E. (1995): *The Little, Brown Handbook* (6th Edition) New York: Harper Collins College Publishers.

### ***Common Errors***

Avoid confusing the words below. As these words are perceived as basic, their misuse gives your work the appearance of illiteracy.

to, two, too  
there, their, they're  
your, you're  
were, where  
its, it's  
are, our

## **6. Policy on Plagiarism**

Plagiarism occurs when you fail to acknowledge the words or ideas of others. Specifically it occurs when:

- Phrases, sentences, paragraphs or whole sections are copied from a source and not acknowledged
- Ideas are paraphrased or summarised without citing the source
- Other students' work is handed in as your own
- Papers are written in conjunction with other students where the requirement is for an individual piece of work
- Data or any information collected by others is presented as your work.

If you use key phrases, sentences or paragraphs from someone else and simply give a reference at the end of the chapter; this will also constitute plagiarism, as you are presenting the relevant words as your own. It is not clear from such reference at the end of the chapter or the overall work which words, phrases etc. were taken from that source. You must clearly indicate any such sourced ideas by putting phrases, sentences or paragraphs taken from a work, in parenthesis or by way of indentation and immediately putting the reference in brackets with full referencing at the end of the chapter or work.

**Plagiarism is a very serious offence. It normally results in a zero mark for the assessment in question, and may result in disciplinary action leading to termination of your participation as a registered student of DIT or other severe penalty including failure of the full subject concerned or full year of the course.**

Knowing what to acknowledge is sometimes a difficult task. After all, students ask; ‘isn’t every possible claim you could make already made somewhere?’ Isn’t it impossible to avoid plagiarising someone, somewhere, even if you don’t know that you are doing it? A useful guide is to try and distinguish into which of the three categories below the point you are making falls.

#### *Your Independent Material*

Your thoughts, ideas, observations, research results - none of these need to be acknowledged as they are truly your own. For example it is perfectly acceptable to make a point about crowd behaviour in the relevant context, based on your own experience of attending football matches.

#### *Common Knowledge*

Standard information in any field of study, together with common-sense observations fall into this category. Standard information includes the major facts of history. So for example the dates of World War II do not have to be referenced, whereas a reference to the causes of the war does, as these are a matter of interpretation, analysis, evaluation and historical scholarship. A common-sense observation could take the following form for example: “Inflation is most troublesome for those on low and fixed incomes”. However, comments from the ESRI regarding the probability of inflation in the Irish economy over the coming year are not common-sense observations, and must be referenced.

#### *Someone Else’s Material*

All material that does not fall into the above two categories must come from somewhere, and therefore must be acknowledged. If you are using ideas, perspectives, themes, words, phrases, paragraphs - *any material* - which are neither your own nor common knowledge then they **must** be referenced. So for example, if you refer to cross-cultural differences in the meanings of gestures in crowds, then it is clear that this could not have come from your observation but must have been researched by someone. Unlike your own observations about the crowds at football matches you have attended, this piece of information must be acknowledged.

### **How to Avoid Plagiarism**

- Read the Library’s guide on Plagiarism
- Then read this guide!
- Quote and cite phrases, sentences and paragraphs taken directly from original sources
- Never copy and paste ideas from the Internet or buy assignments online.
- Know and follow the referencing and citation style for your course
- Be consistent! Follow the same set of rules each time a work is cited.

## **7. References**

Anderson, J and Poole, M (1994) *Thesis and Assignment Writing*, 2nd ed, John Wiley & Sons, Brisbane

Fowler, H R and Aaron, J E (1995) *The Little, Brown Handbook*, 6th ed, Harper Collins College Publishers, New York

Li, X and Crane, N B (1996) *Electronic Styles: A Handbook for Citing Electronic Information*, 2nd ed, Information Today, New Jersey

Turabian, K L (1996) *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses and Dissertations*, 6th ed, University of Chicago Press, Chicago

## **7. Capital Letters**

### **Capital Letters in Text**

There is a tendency to use capital letters where traditionally this would have been considered wrong. In ordinary text, capitals should only be used for proper pronouns, e.g. names of people places etc. Nowadays capital are often used when discussing concepts, e.g. if discussing “Internationalisation”, the writer may spell the word each time with a capital. This should be avoided. Some situations are ambiguous, e.g. if writing about “The Faculty of Business” in DIT, it would be usual to use capitals as it is a specific entity and a proper noun. However if writing about faculties of business in general, lower case should be used.

### **Capital Letters in Headings**

Some people use capitals for every word in a heading. This is acceptable, although normally capitals are not used for prepositions, as in the heading to this paragraph ( e.g. ‘in’) or for definite and indefinite articles (a, an, the) or for the words ‘or/and’. It is important to be consistent. Do not have some headings with capitals for every word and similarly important headings with lower case words.

## **8. References**

Anderson, J and Poole, M (1994) *Thesis and Assignment Writing*, 2nd ed, John Wiley & Sons, Brisbane

Fowler, H R and Aaron, J E (1995) *The Little, Brown Handbook*, 6th ed, Harper Collins College Publishers, New York

Li, X and Crane, N B (1996) *Electronic Styles: A Handbook for Citing Electronic Information*, 2nd ed, Information Today, New Jersey

Turabian, K L (1996) *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses and Dissertations*, 6th ed, University of Chicago Press, Chicago

## **Part 2 Guidelines on submission of Continuous Assessments**

### **1. The Assessment**

The assessment must be:

- Entirely the student's own work
- Not have previously formed a part or whole of a submission for any course work or requirement of a degree or any other qualification at DIT or any other academic institution or qualifications awarding body.

### **2. Presentation**

The assessment must be stapled in the top left-hand corner and have the following information on the front page:

- Title of the project
- Name of the student
- Subject and course code, including year, e.g. Communications DT 365/1
- Academic Year of submission e.g. 2005/06
- Assessment date due e.g. 5th February 2006, on lower right hand corner
- Lecturer's Name on lower right hand corner.
- The assignment must be referenced in accordance with the conventions set out in Part 1 of this Style Guide

### **3. Declaration**

Following the front page will be the 'declaration'

I hereby certify that this material, which I now submit for assessment as a continuous assessment project in SUBJECT (e.g. communications) on the course (INSERT COURSE CODE & YEAR, e.g. DT 365/4), is entirely my own work and has not been submitted in whole or in part for assessment for any academic purpose other than in fulfilment for that stated above.

*Signed:* ..... *Date:* .....

*(Candidate)*

### **4. Table of Contents**

Every assessment shall have a paginated table of contents following the declaration / title page.

### **5. Appendices**

When used, appendices should be named alphabetically.

## 6. Plagiarism

Please refer to Section 6 of Part 1 of this Style Guide for discussion on plagiarism.

## 7. Referencing

The required method of referencing is outlined in Part 1 of this Guide.

## 8. Headings and Sub-Headings

There is no standard style with regard to headings and sub-headings. However they must be consistent in terms of font size, upper and lower case, etc, throughout the piece of work. The following is a useful approach. **Chapter or section headings** should be in capitals, bold text, centred and separated from the body of the text thus: -

### **STRATEGIC MARKETING MANAGEMENT**

The essence of strategic marketing management is...

Very often a sub-heading will be used immediately following a chapter or section heading

### **STRATEGIC MARKETING MANAGEMENT**

#### **Introduction**

The essence of strategic marketing management is...

**Sub-headings** within a chapter should be lower case, bold text, placed in the left hand side of the page and separated from the body of the text as follows:-

#### **The Role of the Product Life Cycle**

The product life cycle has had a major influence on the information of marketing strategies.

Very often a sub-heading will be used immediately following a chapter or section heading

#### **Sub-sections**

These headings are used to indicate further sub-sections. This heading should be in lower case, bold text and is contained within the body of the text as follows:-

**Pricing and the Product Life Cycle.** Pricing strategy and tactics often change over the life of a product. In the introductory stage of the product cycle...

Where a piece of work is fairly long it may be useful to use a numbering system for sections as in part 1 of this style guide.

## **9. Printing and Typing**

The assessment shall be printed on one side only of 80 gr. A4 paper in Times New Roman font, 12 point. Paragraph spacing should be one and a half spaces.

## **10. Pagination**

Pages must be numbered consecutively throughout the text, including those pages incorporating photographs or diagrams which are included as whole pages. Page numbering should commence on the first page of text following the table of contents. Page numbers should not be used on the title page or the table of contents page.

## **11. Research Report Abstract**

Some projects require a research report abstract. Guidelines on this are given in Part 3 of this document (page 24).

## **Part 3**

### **Research Report Abstracts**

#### **1. What is an abstract?**

An abstract is a short, crisp summary of a longer research report. It prefaces the main body of your report. The function of an abstract is to sell your work. It is written after your research report is completed and it appears as a separate page, just after the title page, and before the research report itself.

#### **2. Importance of well written abstracts**

Reading an abstract allows the reader to decide whether they want to read the full report, article, or paper. Therefore a good abstract entices the reader to read further. In a business context an abstract may function as an “executive summary” and is often the only piece of a report read by the decision maker. Now that the use of on-line publication databases is prevalent, writing a really good abstract has become more important than ever.

#### **3. Abstract contents**

Despite the fact that an abstract is quite brief, it must do almost as much work as the research report on which it is based. It should contain three parts:

- The problem
- The methodology
- The findings

##### **The problem**

The abstract should start with a description of the problem you examined. This section should include – the importance of your work, the difficulty of the area, and the impact your findings may have.

## **Methodology**

This part should answer the question – how did you go about solving or making progress on the problem? Did you use a qualitative or quantitative approach? What data collection technique(s) did you employ? What important variables did you control, ignore, or measure?

## **Findings**

What are the results of your study? And what are the implications of your findings? Are your results generally applicable or specific to a particular case?

## **4. Qualities of a good abstract**

A good abstract will use one or more well developed paragraphs, which are unified, coherent, and concise.

Uses a structure which presents the research report's purpose, methodology, conclusions, and recommendations in that order.

Adds no new information, but simply summarises the contents of the report.

## **5. Writing effective abstracts**

To write an effective abstract it is recommended that the following steps are applied:

Reread the article, paper, or report with the goal of abstracting in mind.

Look specifically for these main parts: purpose, methods, scope, results, conclusions, and recommendations.

Use the headings, subheadings, and table of contents as a guide to writing the abstract.

If you're writing an abstract about another person's report, the introduction and summary are good places to begin. These areas generally cover what the article emphasises.

After you've finished rereading the report, write a rough draft without looking back at what you're abstracting.

Don't just copy key sentences from the report or you may put in too much or too little information.

Don't rely on the way material was phrased in the report, summarise the information in a new way.

Revise your rough draft to:

- Correct weaknesses in organisation
- Improve transitions from point to point
- Drop unnecessary information
- Add important information you left out
- Eliminate wordiness
- Fix errors in grammar, spelling, and punctuation

Print your final copy and read it again to catch any mistakes you can find.

Remember that Abraham Lincoln said it took him days to write a two-minute speech, but he could give a two-hour speech off the top of his head.

## **6. Sample abstracts**

### **Sample 1**

This paper defines hedonic consumption as those facets of consumer behaviour that relate to the multi-sensory, fantasy and emotive aspects of product usage experience. After delineating these concepts, their theoretical antecedents are traced, followed by a discussion of differences between the traditional and hedonic views, methodological implications of the latter approach, and behavioural propositions in four substantive areas relevant to hedonic consumption- mental constructs, product classes, product usage and individual differences. Conclusions address the usefulness of the hedonic perspective in supplementing and extending marketing research on consumer behaviour.

### **Sample 2**

This paper investigates the difference in the value relevance between the accounting information prepared and audited under the Chinese GAAP for A-share investors and under the international accounting standards (IAS) for B-share investors in the Chinese stock market. The study reports three primary findings. First, accounting information influences the pricing process of both the A-share market and the B-share market. Second, the accounting information in the B-share market is more value relevant than the A-share market, as expected. Finally, the value relevance level of accounting information in the A-share market was lower in earlier years, peaked in 1996, and then decreased due to changes in the disclosure environment. However, the value-relevance level of accounting information in the B-share market had no substantial changes. Using a constant sample, control variables on firm features, and measures of traders' behaviour, we obtain robust results. These findings have implications for policy makers on recent moves replacing local GAAP with the IAS.

