

MANCHESTER  
1824

The University of Manchester

Manchester  
Access Programme

# Academic Writing and Research Skills Workshop

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# Ice Breaker

You have 3 minutes to talk to the person next to you and find out:

- One thing you both have in common
- An unusual fact about the other person
- The most interesting person your partner has ever met and why
- Your partner's wildest dream

# Behaviour

- We expect you to be engaged whilst in this workshop.
- Get involved!
- If you do not get involved then a member of the MAP staff team will be informed and you may not get your full units.

# Objectives

- Find out more about the MAP academic assignment.
- Know how to search for and identify credible information sources.
- Know how to formulate an argument and a structure for your assignment.
- Know what plagiarism is and how to reference properly.

# Academic Assignment

- Compulsory and worth 30 MAP Units
- 1500 words, not including reference list
- Decide topic with tutor
- Meetings with tutor:
  - Wed 10<sup>th</sup> April- Fri 31<sup>st</sup> May
  - Mon 15<sup>th</sup> July- Fri 9<sup>th</sup> August

<b>Skill Area</b>	<b>Learning Outcome: Upon successful completion of the Academic Assignment the student will be able to:</b>
<b>Knowledge and Understanding</b>	<b>1. Demonstrate subject knowledge and understanding of the topic.</b>
	<b>2. Describe subject knowledge in own words in an appropriate academic style and with a clear and logical structure.</b>
<b>Intellectual Skills</b>	<b>3. Explore a range of information making clear links between different materials and ideas so the assignment flows in a coherent way.</b>
	<b>4. Select and summarise relevant information and reach appropriate conclusions.</b>

## **Practical Skills (Research Skills)**

**5. Demonstrate an ability to research the Academic Assignment using a range of appropriate resources.**

**6. Demonstrate the origin of their ideas by showing referencing skills (examples on [www.bham.skills4uni.ac.uk](http://www.bham.skills4uni.ac.uk)).**

## **Transferable Skills**

**7. Communicate effectively with tutor in person, by email or by phone and respond positively to advice.**

**8. Demonstrate use of appropriate ICT skills in the presentation of their Academic Assignment using the guidelines provided.**

# Finding Appropriate Information Sources

This is the start of the research phase.

Information sources are everywhere. How many can you think of?

## Group Activity

➤ In your groups, list as many information sources as you can in 3 minutes.



# How many did you think of?

## Library Resources

- Books: e.g. *Gulliver's Travels*
- Journals: e.g. *Journal of African-American Literature*

## Internet Resources

- Search Engines e.g. *Google*
- Online media e.g. *Guardian website*

## Offline Media

- Newspapers e.g. *The Times*
- Magazines e.g. *The Spectator*
- TV e.g. *The Sopranos*

## Other Research

- Interviews Data
- Case Studies

# Finding Appropriate Information Sources

- **Visit the library!**
- **Don't** use Wikipedia!
- You are only allowed to use **a maximum of 3** internet sources.
- Beware! Internet sources can be unreliable.

# Finding Information Using Sources in the Library

<http://catalogue.library.manchester.ac.uk/>

# Internet Sources

## Group Activity

➤ How would you be able to tell if an Internet source is reliable or not?

- Who published the information?
- Why did they publish it?
- When was the information published?
- Where was the information published?

• Remember!

Use a recognised search engine e.g. Google.

# Finding Appropriate Internet Sources

You are researching the effect of anaesthetics on patients and come across these websites. Which is more reliable?

A.

The screenshot shows the NHS Choices website page for 'Anaesthesia'. The page has a blue header with navigation links like 'Health A-Z', 'Live Well', 'Cancers Direct', 'Health news', and 'Health services near you'. The main content area is titled 'Anaesthesia' and includes a 'Definition' section with a video player showing a medical professional. To the right, there are 'Useful links' and 'External links' sections. The page is presented in a clean, professional layout typical of a government health service website.

B.

The screenshot shows a Yahoo! Answers page for the question 'How do anaesthetics work?'. The page has a green header with 'Ask', 'Answer', and 'Discover' buttons. The question is listed as a 'Resolved Question' by user 'Duncan H'. Below the question, there is a 'Best Answer' section with a green background, chosen by voters. The answer explains that anaesthetics act on the GABA-A receptor. To the right, there is an advertisement for a 'Personal Loan 5.9% APR Representative'. The page layout is cluttered with various elements, including search bars and navigation menus.

<http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/Anaesthesia/Pages/Introduction.aspx>

<http://answers.yahoo.com/question/index?qid=20080726025820AAvVRXg>

You are researching how unemployment effects the economy and come across these websites. Which is more reliable?

A.

[http://wiki.answers.com/Q/How\\_does\\_unemployment\\_affect\\_your\\_economy](http://wiki.answers.com/Q/How_does_unemployment_affect_your_economy)

B.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/business/2012/oct/17/uk-unemployment-fall-economists>

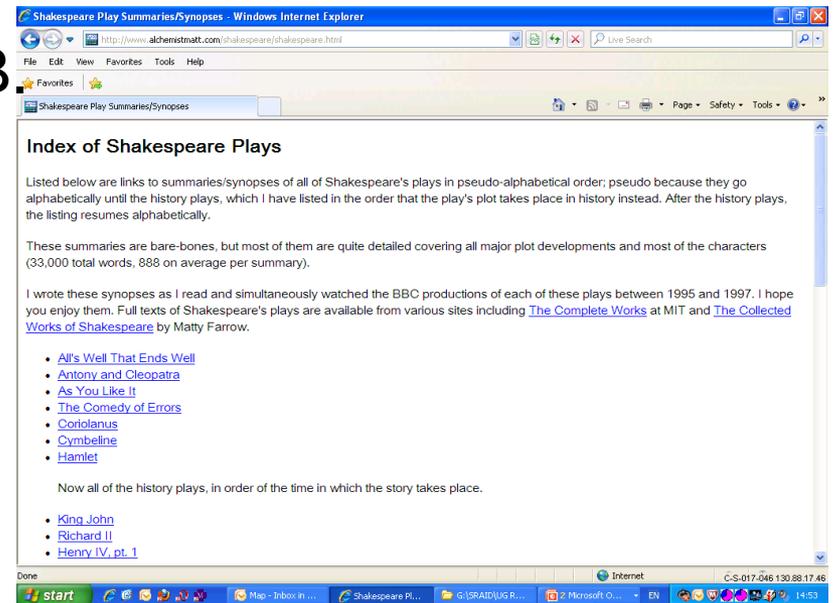
You are researching Shakespeare's plays and come across these websites. Which is more reliable?

A.



<http://podcasts.ox.ac.uk/series/approaching-shakespeare>

B.



<http://www.alchemistmatt.com/shakespeare/shakespeare.html>

# Formulating an Argument

- Introduction 7-8% of total length (105-120 words)
  - explains what the essay is about
  - tells the reader what to expect i.e. the aims of the essay
- Main body (1150 words)
- Conclusion 12-15% (180-225 words)
  - summary which draws together the key points
  - **never** contains new information

# Formulating an Argument

- Have a clear **purpose** in mind and keep referring back to the title!

## **Group Activity**

- In your groups, you have 5 minutes to come up with a single sentence which encapsulates what your answer to this essay title would be about.

E.g. Essay title- “Euthanasia should be legalised in England.” Discuss this statement taking into consideration different viewpoints.

Sentence- This assignment will outline the arguments for and against the legalisation of euthanasia using appropriate examples in order to come to a conclusion about whether or not it should be legalised in England.

# Assignment Structure

Your structure will depend on:

- Your subject
- You!
- The title you have chosen

## **Group Activity**

➤ In your groups, you have 10 minutes to fill in the essay map for your essay title. In the relevant boxes, you need to make a note of:

- What your introduction will include.
- 3 main points/ sections for inclusion in the main body
- Any supporting details for that main point.
- A conclusion.

**Title: “Euthanasia should be legalised in England.” Discuss this statement taking into consideration different viewpoints**

- Law in the past/ current law in England.
- Mention places where euthanasia is legal.
- Explain what I am going to cover in the assignment.

**Main Idea 1**

Pro- Quality of life- a person who is in a lot of pain should be able to decide whether they want to live or not. Con- However, they might not be in the right frame of mind to make that decision independently.

**Supporting details**

- Provide an example of a case which was covered by the British press.
- Show a similar example from someone in a different country.

**Main Idea 2**

Discuss the religious arguments for and against Euthanasia.

**Supporting details**

Possible examples:

- Christianity- all life is God-given.
- Hinduism- helping to end a painful life is performing a good deed.
- Islam- all human life is sacred because it is given by Allah.

**Main Idea 3**

Look in more detail at euthanasia in the UK. If euthanasia were legal, it would be difficult to control.

**Supporting details**

- British law – why is euthanasia illegal?
- Are there any groups for the legalisation of Euthanasia.
- Look at countries where euthanasia is legal but is proving difficult to control.

**Conclusion**

Summarize what has already been discussed and give my own opinion taking into account the arguments I have looked at.

# Referencing

## Referencing

- Citations
- Creating a reference list

## Plagiarism

- Recognising what it is
- How to avoid it

# Referencing – Why Bother?

- Referencing is important - academic writing requires you to respond to the ideas and writing of other people. The skill lies in how well you can understand and respond to other people's work.
- Referencing your source material also allows your readers to find your sources and read them for themselves.
- It stops you plagiarising!

# When and What do I Need to Reference?

## Group Activity

- Write down as many sources you can think of that require referencing.
  - Statistics
  - Quotations
  - Facts
  - Examples from other people's work
  - Diagrams
  - Images and photographs
  - Models
  - Equations
  - Theories/ideas

# Referencing True or False

1. Information on the internet is 'free'. Anyone can use it without having to reference it. **FALSE**
2. As long as I use speech marks, I don't have to say where the quotation is from. **FALSE**
3. I can copy pictures/diagrams/photos without referencing them. **FALSE**
4. If I summarise other people's ideas, I still need to reference them. **TRUE**
5. If I paraphrase or rewrite the information, I don't need to reference it. **FALSE**

## Referencing True or False (cont.)

6. Some info is 'common knowledge', it doesn't need to be referenced. **TRUE**

7. Being caught plagiarising can result in the failure of a degree course. **TRUE**

8. Statistics need to be referenced. **TRUE**

9. If I cite someone once, I can use their ideas later without needing to cite them again. **FALSE**

10. Plagiarism is copying published work; I can copy my mate's work because it's not been published. **FALSE**

# A Quick Guide to Referencing

- In the **body text** you need to clearly detail the name of the author and the year their work was published – **citation**.
- The reader should then be able to cross-reference this to a more detailed list at the end **Reference List**.
- Both should be systematic, uniform and thorough, and really easy to understand.
- Throughout any written report, make sure you use the same system consistently.

# One Good Style to Use - Harvard

Referencing a book:

- Harvard System *in body text*  
Author (Date, page number)  
Darwin (1972, p.344) famously outlined his theory of evolution, based on his close observations of variations between species around the world.
- Reference List *at the end*  
Who, When, What, Where & By Whom & page numbers  
Darwin, C. (1972) *The Origin of Species*. London: Dent, 324-355

# Referencing Journals and Websites (Harvard)

Referencing a journal article:

- Harvard System *in body text* :

Surname[s] of author[s], Initial[s]. (Year) Title of article, *Journal Title*, **Volume** (Part), Pages

- Reference list *at the end*

Wong, S. T. and Goodin, S. (2009) Overcoming drug resistance in patients with metastatic breast cancer. *Pharmacotherapy*, **29 (2)**, 954-965.

Websites: include the date accessed

<http://www.bmj.com/> (Accessed 16/03/2009)

# Plagiarism

- Plagiarism is the use of any source, published or unpublished, without proper acknowledgement or referencing.
- It is easy to commit plagiarism accidentally. Carelessness when it comes to referencing is a key cause, but so are poor note-taking skills and inappropriate use of cut and paste from the internet.
- Many students don't intend to cheat but, because of poor academic practice, end up committing plagiarism with serious consequences.

# Spot the Plagiarism

- You have been given examples of a student's work, and the original source.

## Group Activity

- Decide in your groups whether the work is:
  - Plagiarism
  - Bad Practice
  - Acceptable

# Sources

- The key to avoiding plagiarism is to make sure that you acknowledge your sources in the text. To do this properly you will need to do two things:
  1. Take good notes, making sure you have sufficient detail to allow you to trace your sources
  2. Follow a standard system of referencing

Both these things will help you avoid wasting your time. You will probably need to revisit sources and ideas and well referenced notes are the short cut to doing this without starting again from scratch!

# The “Perfect” Notes...

Notes can be useful to help you understand what you have just read, or they can be used to jot down any questions that you have, or ideas that you want to pursue further.

Important things to note down:

- Any facts and figures
- Direct quotations I might want to use
- Paraphrase, not just copying chunks
- Source details!!!

# Some Final Tips!

- If in doubt: reference it.
- Make sure you record the source when taking notes. When taking notes make it clear if you are copying directly, paraphrasing or summarising.
- Use different colours when you write down direct quotes.
- **ALWAYS** make notes in your own words.
- Don't cut and paste!
- Be prepared to go and find a reference for something you already know, for instance a scientific claim, in order to back it up.

## In a nutshell..

To avoid plagiarism...

...And to show you've really  
*extended* yourself during your  
research...

**Reference your sources!**

# Questions?

# Library Access

- Please note that MAP students will **not** have access to the Library during exam time: **from 1<sup>st</sup>-31<sup>st</sup> May 2013.**
- You will still be able to go to the front desk to collect your card during this time but you will not be able to study in the Library.
- If you wish to collect resources from the Library during this time, you will be advised to email:

[Natalie.patton@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:Natalie.patton@manchester.ac.uk) OR [Muazama.Ali@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:Muazama.Ali@manchester.ac.uk)

- You should email Natalie or Muazama 24 hours beforehand to request the book(s) you would like to borrow and these books will be ready to collect from the front desk the next day.

# IT Sign-up

- Please complete the IT sign-up after you have collected your library card.
- Please collect your library card when you come to meet your tutor for your first meeting.

# ExamsTutor

- Each of you has been provided with an ExamsTutor log in
- ExamsTutor is a fantastic resource that will help you to get the best possible grades in your upcoming AS exams
- To make sure you can get the most out of using this resource there will be an **ExamsTutor Information session 3-4pm on Wednesday 1st May**
- If you can make it, we advise that you attend this session! It will be delivered by one of the developers of the site and will be very useful!
- To book a place you can visit the Upcoming Activities section of the latest MAP Newsletter

**Thank you!**