

AN ARCHAEOLOGY STUDENT'S GUIDE TO GOOD ACADEMIC CONDUCT, ESSAY WRITING AND REFERENCING

Every essay must be written in your own words, with any quotations clearly indicated.

Writing an essay is a way of conveying your opinions about a particular issue to your reader. Your opinions will have been informed by those of other scholars, but you should aim to paraphrase your sources rather than repeat them word-for-word. This shows your readers that you have understood and processed everything that you have read.

From time to time, it may be appropriate to quote the exact wording of your sources. You should only do this if:

- a) you want to highlight a specific detail from a source;
- b) another scholar has expressed a particular idea in an especially interesting or useful way.

In both cases, the quotation needs to be enclosed in double quotation marks (" . . . "), to distinguish it clearly from those parts which you have expressed in your own words. Quotations of more than 40 words should also be indented. Both kinds of quotation are shown in the example below:

One crucial aspect has remained particularly underdeveloped in this discussion: the question of the economic basis underlying the possible emergence of complex social structures. One of the few voices addressing this matter notes the absence of economic changes necessary for such a development:

“Indicators that point to the presence of a controlled surplus economy are totally absent. The settlements are small, with no remains suggesting the presence of a ruling class that is in control of the economy. Nowhere to the west of the Taurus range, there are temples, monumental public buildings, communal storage facilities or socially differentiated buildings. [...] This does not imply that there was not a ruling social group; but it seems evident that this ruling social body was not interested either in the accumulation or in the distribution of commodities.” (Özdoğan, 2002, 67–8).

This statement contrasts dramatically with a recent analysis by B. Arbuckle (2012) who investigated pastoral strategies followed at a number of Central Anatolian sites. Arbuckle suggests the presence of a managerial elite, systematic surplus production and complex economic relationships for the Late Chalcolithic.

Whenever you use something that you have found in someone else's work, you must provide a full reference to the source which you used.

Regardless of whether you are paraphrasing something that you have read, or quoting it directly, you must also provide a reference to show the reader where you got your information. We do this in order to leave a 'paper trail' that readers (and examiners) can use to find the original source.

In archaeology, references are usually placed in round brackets at the end of the sentence to which they apply. Here, the author's surname, the year of publication and the relevant page(s) are given. (Footnotes are not permitted in your assignments, as they are generally not used in archaeology publications.) This abbreviated citation refers to a full entry in an alphabetically ordered bibliography at the end of your paper. This is shown in the following example:

Specifically, the successful hunting of wild boar often requires highly skilled dogs, which are prized above all others, and without which many hunters attest boar hunting would be virtually impossible (Bulmer, 1968, 315; Dwyer, 1983, 162–3). The effectiveness of hunting dogs in the Pacific Coast Jōmon environment, along with the presence of many dog burials in this region, indicates that Jōmon hunters were probably using dogs as tools for the hunting of sika deer and wild boar, as hunters in Japan still do today.

Bibliography

Bulmer, R., 1968. 'The strategies of hunting in New Guinea', *Oceania* 38, 302–18.

Dwyer, P.D., 1983. 'Etolo hunting performance and energetics', *Human Ecology* 11, 145–74.

In this example, the first sentence is paraphrasing the ideas of other people, and so has been supplied with references in brackets. The second sentence has no reference, which shows that the opinion contained within it is the author's own interpretation.

Sometimes it is appropriate to cite more than one source in support of the same point. They should be placed in the same set of brackets at the end of the relevant sentence, and listed in chronological order, with the earliest published source given first, as in the example above.

All references should refer accurately and honestly to the specific source which you used.

Sometimes you will wish to make use of information which you have obtained at second hand. This might be through one archaeologist's summary of another's work, or through a lecture handout containing a useful extract from a source that you have not otherwise read.

Second-hand information of this kind is perfectly acceptable, as long as it is accurately and honestly acknowledged in your references. The following examples show some of the ways that you can indicate this to your reader:

(Hamerow, 1993; quoted in course handout)
(Hodder, 1976; summarized in Johnson, 2010, 103)

Citing websites

Although external websites should not constitute the bulk of your reading, there is absolutely no problem in using them when they are genuinely appropriate.

In order to assess an electronic source, you need to identify its origin. Are you reading a scan of an article that was previously published in a physical format, or an ebook which you have found through the library? If so, then you can simply handle it as if it were a physical article or book, and cite it like the examples in the previous pages.

If instead you are reading a third-party website, then you need to take extra care and provide more information for your reader. Any references to such websites need to be provided with their exact URL address in the bibliography, and a note of the date at which you accessed that site (in case the site is updated in future).

In-text reference:

(*Digital Egypt for Universities* website)

In the bibliography:

Grajetzki, W. *et al.* (2000), *Digital Egypt for Universities*, <<http://www.ucl.ac.uk/museums-static/digitalegypt>> [accessed 24 August 2016].

Ideally, you should also provide the name of the author(s) and the date of publication. If a website does not provide such information, it can often be a sign that you should treat its contents with caution.

Failing to give an accurate and honest account of your sources, or failing to provide a reference for information which you have taken from elsewhere, are examples of plagiarism.

By following the steps above, you will be able to show the examiners that you can distinguish your own ideas from those of others, and that you can accurately document all the sources which helped you produce the essay.

Essays which do not accurately cite their sources will be guilty of plagiarism – that is, they will have passed off the work of others as their own. This is a form of dishonesty that runs counter to the principles of academic study, and is therefore taken very seriously by the University. This is true regardless of whether or not there was any deliberate intention to cheat. Unintentional plagiarism is still plagiarism, and all suspected cases will be reported to the School Academic Conduct Officer, and may be investigated by the College Academic Misconduct Officer. Plagiarised work may lead to a heavy deduction of marks, or result in the essay being given a mark of zero.

Examples of plagiarism include:

- copying the exact wording of sentences without marking them as quotations;
- paraphrasing someone else's work without referring to the source of that material in a reference;
- closely following the stages of another person's argument without also offering original opinions of your own;
- using another person's material without acknowledging it (regardless of whether or not that person gave permission for re-use);
- letting another person write all or part of your essay for you;
- buying or being allowed to copy another person's essay, whether in whole or in part.

Self-plagiarism is still plagiarism.

Students should also be aware that the University also considers self-plagiarism to be a form of academic misconduct. If you have already submitted a piece of work for assessment, you cannot submit it again, nor copy any section of it into a new piece of coursework. Every student who submits a piece of work signs a declaration to that effect, and is expected to hold to this rule. If you are concerned about potential overlap between different pieces of coursework, then this is something which you should discuss with your tutor or supervisor at the earliest opportunity.

Accurate note-taking and citation is essential for avoiding plagiarism.

You must ensure that you take full and accurate notes when conducting research for your essays. Make sure that you know whether you have copied down someone else's words, or whether you have paraphrased them in your own words. Whenever you make a note of anything you find in a book or article, make sure that you have also kept a record of exactly where that information came from (which book or article? who wrote it? which page?).

You may also find it useful to consult the EUSA student guide on how to avoid plagiarism, which is available online:

https://www.eusa.ed.ac.uk/support_and_advice/the_advice_place/academic/citeright/