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07 May 2026

Guidelines for Referencing

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A one-page summary of these guidelines

When writing your assignments and thesis reports you will need to reference any material you use. These guidelines explain why and how to reference and include a long list of examples for referencing various sources. Use the linked headings in the **Table of Contents** to find the section showing you the example you need. This page summarises the main principles and gives examples of the most common references.

Giving references in the text:

The **in-text reference** should contain at least the key word (usually the author's name) and the year. Often you will also give the page number in the source. In-text references are typically written in one of these ways:

1. Give the authors' names with year and page number in brackets followed by your summary or paraphrase:

> Smith and Jones (2021, 60) state that ...
>
> According to Johnson, Rogers and May (2020, 10), there are ...

2. Write your summary/paraphrase. Then give the authors' names with year and page number in brackets:

> ... (Johnson, Rogers & May 2020, 10).
>
> ... (Johnson et al. 2020,10).

Notes: a) Laurea uses a **comma only between the year and page number,** not between author and year.

b) If there are 3-5 authors, all surnames are given in the **first reference,** e.g., (Smith, Kay & Hill 2000). In **later references,** the first author's name and "et al." are used, e.g., (Smith et al. 2000).

Listing references at the end of the text:

All in-text references are listed in alphabetical (not chronological) order in a section called **References** or **List of references**. All in-text references must correspond to an end-text reference and vice versa. The most common references are to books, websites, and online journals:

1. Examples of printed books with one author or with many authors:

> Bailey, S. 2022. Academic writing for university students. Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge.
>
> Grewal, D., Levy, M., Mathews, S., Harrigan, P., Bucic, T., & Kopanidis, F. 2021. Marketing. Sydney: McGraw-Hill Education.

2. Example of a webpage without an author (the website is used as the author instead):

> Statistics Finland. 2007. Finns consume eleven times more now than 100 years ago. Accessed 24 October 2012. http://www.stat.fi/tup/suomi90/heinakuu_en.html

3. An article in an online journal:

> Robinson, S., Irmak, C. & Jayachandran, S. 2012. Choice of cause in cause-related marketing. Journal of marketing, 76 (4), 126-139. Article from EBSCO Business Source Elite. Accessed 20 May 2012. http://www.ebscohost.com/

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1 Introduction

These guidelines are intended for Laurea students who are seeking detailed instructions and examples on how to refer to sources and compile reference lists in English-language assignments and thesis reports.

Laurea follows a modified version of the **Harvard standard** of referencing. For this reason, these guidelines may differ from those found elsewhere. However, they closely follow the Finnish-language guidelines applied at Laurea and other UASs in Finland. Some differences between Finnish- and English-language referencing conventions are discussed in Section 3.4.

The document is structured in three parts. First, **general information** is provided about source referencing, and its importance in academic work. Second, different methods of **referring to sources from within the text** are reviewed. Finally, instructions are given on **how to compile a list of references**, with examples showing how to reference a range of source types.

The guide includes examples covering most of the source types you are likely to encounter. The final section gives suggestions for further reading and links to useful websites and tools.

AI has also been utilized in preparing some of the content of this guide (see Section 3.7).

2 General information about referencing

Referencing is the method used to acknowledge the influence and origin of another person's ideas, concepts, and data in your work. These must be acknowledged in **two** places:

1. **In-text references**[1]
   Here the source is indicated **in the main text**, usually by giving the author's **surname** (or key words) and the **year** of publication **in brackets** close to where the original idea is mentioned. For example:

   > The ability to read critically is often undervalued (Bailey 2011).

   Note: in-text references should be kept **as brief as possible** so that they do not interrupt the flow of the text. If an author's surname is not known and key words are used instead, (for example, the title of the work), these should be shortened as appropriate (see Section 3.1.2).

2. **End-text references**
   The **full** reference to the source is given in the **list of references** at the **end of the document**. For example:

   > Bailey, S. 2022. Academic writing for university students. Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge.

[1] **In-text references** are also often called **citations**. *Citation* can also refer to the direct **quotation** of another person's text and in this sense is like the Finnish term ***sitaatti***. In this guide, an effort has been made to use **in-text reference** to avoid confusion.

Note: End-text references must contain **complete publication details** and should **not** be shortened, except in cases where very long URL addresses need to be abbreviated (see Section 3.5 for more details).

In general, the heading **References** is used for the list of all sources that are referred to in the body of the text. The similar term, **Bibliography**, refers to a list of works that influenced the writer in composing the work, but which may not have been referred to in the main text.

As a Laurea student, you should only use the heading **References** or **List of References**. All entries in this section are therefore referred to from within the main text.

2.1 Why and when to reference

It should always be clear to the reader what material or ideas are your own and what comes from another source. If the material originates elsewhere, this must be clearly indicated with a reference. This applies to all student assignments, whether they are reports, essays, PowerPoint presentations, posters, or other forms of academic work.

Referencing also allows you to **demonstrate familiarity with professional literature** and ongoing discussions in your subject area. This is particularly important in the theoretical section of the paper, where the context of the study is examined, and where you are expected to show understanding of key concepts, issues, and debates.

References **provide evidence for the opinions and arguments** presented in your work. They enable the reader to trace the origin of ideas and to evaluate the strength of the claims made. Referring to established authorities to substantiate or justify a position increases the credibility of that position.

Because referencing is an important aspect of academic writing, it is given careful attention in assessment. Students must therefore **follow the guidelines for in-text references and reference lists very carefully**. Lack of care in this area will reflect on the work as a whole. If the appropriate format for referring to and listing sources is not followed, this may be taken as an indication of lack of care in other areas and is likely to weaken the credibility of the document as a whole.

In general, **sources should be referenced whenever they are used** in the text. This applies to material used in reports, essays, projects, presentations, or web pages. When referencing a source, **the source text should never be copied directly unless this is a quotation**. In such cases, the exact wording of the original must be reproduced and clearly indicated.

Normally you will not reference your own ideas unless these have already been submitted elsewhere in another document or format. In these cases, the standard rules for referencing will apply.

2.2 What to reference

References should be provided for any material used in the production of a document, report or presentation. In addition to books and journal articles, it is also possible to reference web pages, television programs, online videos, lectures, or written correspondence.

When referencing a source, **the version actually consulted must be the one cited** in the text and included in the list of references. Whenever possible, you should try to track down and consult the original source and refer to this directly. The immediate source of an idea is not necessarily the most authoritative one. You may have heard the idea in a casual conversation, but this carries little academic credibility if the original source lies in published material. So, you should identify and consult the best or most reliable version of the source you wish to use.

If you're unsure of the origin of an idea, then you should conduct research to determine the likely source.

Students must also exercise judgement in deciding whether an idea or fact constitutes **common knowledge**. If something is considered common knowledge it does not require a reference. Examples of common knowledge might include the fact that ice hockey is a popular sport in Finland or that saunas are common in Finnish homes.

Some facts may not be widely known (such as the date of Mannerheim's birthday), but if the information is easily verifiable in standard reference works, a reference may not be necessary in routine academic writing.

In some instances, a topic may appear to be common knowledge, but also a point of controversy. For example, discussions about whether humans have five or more senses demonstrate how simple topics may involve scholarly debate (see the website plagiarismtoday.com for a discussion of this). In such cases, it is safer to provide a reference while bearing in mind the level of knowledge of the reader and the context of the writing. Common knowledge in Finland is not the same as common knowledge in the US.

If an idea or opinion originates from unpublished material, such as personal correspondence, and you wish to identify the source, you must **obtain permission before referencing it**.

2.3 Avoiding plagiarism

Plagiarism is the practice of **using another person's ideas or work and presenting them as one's own**. It is a serious academic offence and may result in a piece of work being rejected, or in the most serious cases, expulsion from the institution.

Plagiarism can take several forms:

1. **Unacknowledged copying of text**.
   Perhaps the most common form of plagiarism occurs when text (often from an online source) is copied and pasted into an assignment without acknowledging the source. Any

text reproduced in this way **must be placed in quotation marks and accompanied by an appropriate in-text reference**.

2. **Copied text with acknowledgement but without quotation marks**.
   In this case, the source is mentioned but the text is not placed in quotation marks. Without the quotation marks this appears to be a paraphrase of the original text when it **is** in fact the original text. This is still considered plagiarism.

3. **Unacknowledged use of ideas**.
   Plagiarism also occurs when the writer adopts an idea or line of argument that has been developed elsewhere and presents as original, without proper acknowledgement of the source.

   An example of this form of plagiarism can be found in a literature review where another writer's analysis is used to such an extent that the discussion closely resembles the original, but the contribution of the original writer is not acknowledged.

   Sometimes this happens because the writer is unaware that the idea has been introduced elsewhere. Although efforts should be made to track the origin of distinctive ideas (as opposed to common knowledge), this may not always be straightforward. Nevertheless, one purpose of academic writing is to demonstrate familiarity with ongoing scholarly debates and discussion. Failure to acknowledge relevant sources may suggest lack of familiarity with the discussion.

   For this last reason academic writers take care to acknowledge the ideas of others. Doing so strengthens the credibility of their own writing and demonstrates understanding of the wider context.

   If AI tools have contributed ideas or wording to a text, their use must be disclosed as explained in Section 3.7.

4. **Copying of structure, phrases, or metaphors**.
   Even when text is not copied word for word, plagiarism may occur if the structure, distinctive phrases, or metaphors of the original source are reproduced too closely. Simply changing a few words or rearranging sentences does not make the text original.

   Similarity-detection software can identify patterns in the way texts are structured and distinctive expressions. Text that remains substantially similar to the source in these respects may still constitute plagiarism.

This last form of plagiarism is avoided by giving clear acknowledgement of the original source (always essential) and by applying appropriate techniques of **paraphrasing** and **summarizing**.

These skills are reviewed in the next section, together with a more detailed overview of situations requiring in-text references.

3 In-text references

This section contains examples and instructions on **how to provide in-text references** and **quote sources** in a variety of situations. In addition, the key skills of **paraphrasing** and **summarising** are discussed in more detail.

3.1 Principles of source referencing

In the Harvard method of referencing the standard format includes the **author's name** and the **year of publication**. When there is more than one author, or when the author is not known, variations apply. This section provides guidelines for these and other common situations.

3.1.1 Referring to one or more authors or editors

One author

If the author and year of publication are known, the basic method of in-text referencing is to provide the author's name and the year of publication in brackets.

> Jones (2020, 34) states that...
>
> In a recent survey (Jones 2020, 34), it was found that...
>
> The cause of the increase in customer loyalty was "entirely due to improved customer satisfaction" (Jones 2020, 34).

Please note that there is **no comma between the surname and the year** when these appear together in brackets. However, **there should be a comma between the year and the page number**.

In general, a page number should be included when the reference contains a direct quotation, as in the above example, or when referring to specific information in a source that has pages numbers.

Two authors

If a source has two authors, both names must always be included in the in-text reference:

> Smith and Drake (2011, 45-47) argue the need for new legislation.
>
> It has been argued that new legislation is needed (Smith & Drake 2011, 45-47).

Note that it is acceptable to use "&" when linking the names inside brackets (or in the list of references), but outside brackets the word "and" should be used.

Three or more authors

If a source has **three to five authors**, all authors' names are given in the first reference. In subsequent references, the abbreviation "et al." may be used.

If there are **six or more authors,** "et al." may be used throughout the text (including the first mention):

According to Taylor, Johns and Moss (2019), there are…

Recent research (Taylor et al. 2019) has demonstrated…

Taylor et al. (2019) conclude that…

With multiple authors, names are given in the order in which they appear in the publication. The same order must be used in the list of references. The first listed author (Taylor in the examples above) is normally the lead author.

Multiple references to authors

If the **same author is referred to several times**, each in-text reference should follow **the same format** (unless abbreviated using "et al." as explained above.

The practice of using the Latin terms *ibid.* or *op. cit.* to indicate references to the same source should **not** be used.

If multiple authors or works are referred to at the same point in the text, they should be separated by a **semi-colon**:

Several studies have shown that alcohol consumption impairs brain function (Smith 2020; Hall 2018).

Referring to editor(s)

If a source is edited, and no individual author is identified, the editor(s) are referred to in the same way as authors:

Hall and Peel (2005) demonstrate that…

The reference list entry will indicate that Hall and Peel are editors:

Hall, E. & Peel, R. (eds.) 2005. Market forces. New York: Wiley and Sons.

Note that if there is only **one editor**, the correct abbreviation is (ed.).

3.1.2 References where the author or year is not known

In some situations, it may be impossible or difficult to identify the author of a source or the year of publication.

Author unknown

When the author is not known, **the title of the document or book can be used as the key word(s)** in the in-text reference:

According to the Dictionary of Urban Slang (2007), a 'nano nap' is a...

A 'nano nap' is an unintentional.... (Dictionary of Urban Slang 2007).

As mentioned in Section 2, references should be kept brief. If the source title is long, it is enough to use the first few words of the title in the in-text reference followed by an ellipsis (...), as the full title is given in the list of references.

The complete title must always be given in the list of references at the end of the document. Entries are always arranged in alphabetical order. Sources without a named author are listed alphabetically and placed among the other entries accordingly.

If the author is **an organisation, company, or government body**, this name **should be used as the key word** in the in-text reference:

(Kone 2021)

In a press release Kone (2021) stated that...

For online sources, the corporate author, or organisation name is often used rather than the title of the document. The choice should be made consistently and clearly. More information can be found in Section 3.5.

Year unknown

If the year of publication cannot be identified, this should be indicated in the reference with the letters 'n.d.'[2] (which stand for "no date)":

Smith (n.d.) offers a possible solution to the dilemma.

In the list of references 'n.d.' should be given as the year of the publication:

Smith, G. n.d. Rationalization processes. Accessed 7 December 2011. http://edff.smith.org

3.1.3 Referencing the same author(s) or authors with the same name

Same author, different years

If different publications by the same author are referenced, they are **distinguished by year**:

Kotler (2007) describes...

[2] See Section 3.5 for more discussion about finding a date in electronic sources and differences with the Finnish guidelines

This situation is more fully outlined by Kotler (2003).

Same author, same year

If an author has multiple publications from the same year, these are **distinguished by adding a letter after the year**:

Kotler (2003a) argues...

This is due to... (Kotler 2003b).

In the list of references, these publications are arranged in alphabetical order and identified using the corresponding letters:

Kotler, P. 2003a. Marketing insights from A to Z: 80 concepts every manager needs to know. Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons.

Kotler, P. 2003b. Marketing management. 11th edition. Upper Saddle River: Prentice Hall.

Different authors with the same name

If two authors share the **same surname** and have works published in the **same year**, the in-text reference should include their initial to distinguish between them:

C. Jones (2012) and R. Jones (2012) both find that...

3.1.4 Referencing the sources of figures, tables, diagrams, and illustrations

Copyright restrictions must be observed when reproducing figures, tables, diagrams, and illustrations created by other authors.

If such material is included, the source should be given in the normal way underneath the caption:

Figure 10: Cloud application development process
(Moyer 2011, 34)

In the above example, Moyer will appear in the list of references as normal:

Moyer, C. 2011. Building applications for the cloud: concepts, patterns and projects. Upper Saddle River: Addison-Welsey.

Because the source is given underneath the caption it will not appear separately in the list of figures.

Usually, borrowed figures or tables are **also** referred to in the main text:

> In his book on cloud applications, Moyers (2011, 34) illustrates the process shown in Figure 10.

If a figure, table, diagram, or illustration is used purely for **decorative** purposes and does not contain information necessary to advance the argument or support theory presented in the text, it is sufficient to give the source beneath the figure. In such cases, it does not need to be included in the list of references or cited separately in the text.

If the creator of the diagram is not the same as the author of the book, then the **principle of secondary referencing** applies (see Section 3.3.2):

> Moyer (2011, 102) illustrates this concept with a diagram by Crowley, reproduced in Figure 11.

The reference list **includes only the work actually consulted (**so, no mention of Crowley):

> Moyer, C. 2011. Building applications for the cloud: concepts, patterns and projects. Upper Saddle River: Addison-Welsey.

3.2 Quoting sources

This section contains guidelines for using quotations, including layout and punctuation, and the principles for accurately reproducing an author's text.

Quotations are required **whenever** another writer's **exact words** are reproduced, even if this amounts to only a few words. For more information about quoting correctly to avoid plagiarism see Section 2.3.

Quoting is a useful tool in academic writing, but it should be used **with caution**. As a general principle, quotations should only be included when they provide a particularly concise or relevant expression of the point being made. Quotations are more often used to illustrate different opinions than to present factual information, although this depends on the genre of writing. In all cases, writers should carefully consider whether a quotation is necessary or whether the information would be better paraphrased instead (see Section 3.3).

3.2.1 Including quoted sources

As mentioned above, quoting refers to the use of someone else's **exact words** in your own text. This is shown by either enclosing the words in quotation marks ("……") or indenting the text in a separate paragraph.

Use of quotation marks

The following examples illustrate common issues related to quotations.

> According to Smith (2012, 11), the new proposals were "wholly inadequate".

Note that there are differences between British and American English in the placement of the **full stop** (or other punctuation marks) at the end of a sentence which ends with a quotation. The **above example follows British English conventions**.

In **American English** all punctuation appears inside the quotation marks (here underlined):

> According to Smith (2012, 11), the new proposals were "wholly inadequate."

More information can be found online about these differences in punctuation (see Bibliography). It is acceptable to use either style; however, **consistency** throughout the document is essential.

To avoid this issue, the in-text reference can be placed after the quotation, at the end of the sentence and before the full stop:

> According to Smith, the new proposals were "wholly inadequate" (2012, 11).

Unless a quotation is one of several from the same source within a sentence or across successive sentences, the **reference must be included** either immediately **before** or immediately **after the quotation**. In all cases, the source of the quotation must be clear to the reader.

This question is also discussed in Section 3.4 with regard to differences in quoting and referencing in Finnish and English-speaking contexts.

Indenting quotations

Short quotations can be integrated into the sentence and enclosed in quotation. Longer quotations, especially those running to several sentences, should be presented as a separate indented paragraph:

In his guide to referencing, Neville highlights the lack of clear guidelines in many universities:

> Referencing styles adopted may vary from one department to another within the same institution, and even then, there may be inconsistencies among tutors in how these styles are interpreted and applied (2007, 1).

In such cases, line spacing may be adjusted (e.g. to 1 pt) to make the quotation stand out from the surrounding text.

Use of page numbers

Page numbers must **always** be provided for quotations. If a piece of information or opinion is taken from a specific page or section of a book, it is also advisable to give the page number after the year.

In the Laurea version of the Harvard standard, **the abbreviation 'p.' is not used before the page number**. Instead, the year of publication is followed by a comma and the page number:

(2008, 121) or (Smith 2008, 121)

If the in-text reference refers to more than one consecutive page, these should be indicated with a hyphen ('-'). This is essential for quotations that continue onto the following page[3]:

> Neville states that "plagiarism, in an academic context, refers to a deliberate decision not to acknowledge the work of others in assignments – or deliberately ignoring an obligation to do this" (2007, 4-5).

Sometimes the original text **does not include page numbers** that allow for more precise location of the quoted text, for example on websites, in legislation, or in e-books. In such cases, if the text is divided into sections or paragraphs, these should be indicated in the reference, using abbreviations 's.' for section or 'para.' for paragraph:

(Jones 2008, s. 4) = a publication by Jones in the year 2008, section 4

(Jones 2008, para. 6) = a publication by Jones in the year 2008, paragraph 6

See also Section 3.1.1 for more discussion of using page numbers in references. Also see the end of Section 4.2.1 for a discussion of page numbers in e-books, and Section 4.2.3 for examples of how to refer in-text to specific parts of other media, such as video and audio.

3.2.2 Changing quoted text

An important principle to observe when quoting is to ensure that the quoted text is an **exact reproduction** of the original text.

Use of *sic*

If quoted text contains any mistakes these should be indicated to demonstrate to the reader that the writer is fully aware of the defects of the original and has not simply misquoted it. To indicate mistakes the Latin adverb *sic* is used. This is usually written in square brackets and in italic letters:

> The police authorities announced that they would "review there [*sic*] policies".

In the above example "there" should be written "their" and is thus incorrect.

In general, the writer is unlikely to need to use *sic* since quotations should be selected on the basis that they are well-written expressions of a particular thought or viewpoint. Also, it should be noted that the use of *sic* in the English-speaking world is often viewed with suspicion, as it can be used to sarcastically undermine the credibility of the quoted source.

[3] The use of hyphens to show that several pages are covered in a reference is not restricted to quotations but applies equally to regular in-text references (e.g., Smith 2019, 13-19). However, if the number of pages is more than 20 (e.g., ~~Smith 2019, 13-33~~), it is better to use several references to cover the material you want to reference.

In student research *sic* **should therefore be avoided** when quoting spoken statements as speech is by nature imperfect. If *sic* is used then it should be reserved for **rare** cases when mistakes, factual or orthographic, are reproduced in **credible sources**, and where the writer feels that it is essential to quote that particular text.

Omitting or inserting text

Other acceptable ways of modifying quoted text include the use of **ellipsis** ([...]) to omit words and the insertion of **pronouns or other explanatory words in brackets** to help the quotation fit the surrounding text:

> "Referencing in Britain [...] is part of a societal value system that vigorously supports the idea of the intellectual property rights of others" (Neville 2007, 4).

Square brackets should be used with ellipses or when inserting text to show that these changes are not in the original.

> Zamel advocated that writing teachers "no longer present [them]selves as authorities, but act instead as consultants, assistants and facilitators" (1985, 86).

In the second example, Zamel originally recommended that:

> "...we no longer present ourselves as authorities..."

The change made here (our->them) is more appropriate to the third person perspective used in the reference.

3.3 Paraphrasing and summarising

As discussed in the previous section, quotations should be used **sparingly** and only when the writer feels that the original text expresses a particular idea or point in such a succinct, precise or memorable way that including the original would benefit the text.

In contrast to quoting, the complementary skills of paraphrasing and summarising should be used frequently in academic writing. Particularly in the literature review or theoretical section of a thesis or report, the writer needs to paraphrase and summarise the ideas of other authors, sometimes presenting factual information and at other times integrating and synthesising other perspectives.

Paraphrasing refers to the process of rewriting or retelling another author's text in one's own words. In a paraphrased text it is important to render the ideas and points of the original text faithfully. The paraphrased text may also be longer than the original text. In comparison, a **summary** is always an abbreviated version of the original text, in which the main points are mentioned but no attempt is made to recount all the details.

It is important to remember that when paraphrasing or summarising another author's text, **the source must still be acknowledged,** even if none of the original wording has been used.

The following sections review guidelines for paraphrasing and summarising.

3.3.1 Techniques for paraphrasing and summarising

Paraphrasing and summarising are **important skills** that demonstrate that the writer has properly understood the source text and is able to translate these ideas into their own words and style, while retaining the original meaning.

Paraphrasing

When paraphrasing or summarising, it is **not** enough to copy the original text and change a few individual words. Ideally, the writer should make notes of the original and then construct a new version based on these notes. This helps ensure that there is no obvious reproduction of phrases or structure from the original and that the paraphrase accurately reflects its meaning.

For non-native speakers, it may be helpful to be aware of specific techniques that can be used in paraphrasing. Although writers **should avoid applying these techniques too mechanically**, they can help less confident writers incorporate the ideas of others into their own text.

These techniques, reviewed in Bailey (2011, 50-54), involve the use of **synonyms**, and changes in **word class** and **word order.**

Synonyms

English is rich in synonyms and writers can often find other words that approximate the original:

companies > businesses

opinions > viewpoints

Most word-processing software includes s thesaurus, which can be a useful tool for finding synonyms. However, you should carefully check the meaning of suggested alternatives to ensure accuracy.

Changes in word class

Very often the sense of the original can be preserved by changing the **word class** of the word in a new sentence:

benefit > beneficial

reproduction > reproduce

Changes in word order

By combining the above techniques with changes in the structure and word order of the original text, a **new and significantly different text** can be produced:

Original text:

> "Effective paraphrasing is a key academic skill needed to avoid the risk of plagiarism: it demonstrates your understanding of a source" (Bailey 2011, 50).

Paraphrased text:

> According to Bailey (2011, 50), it is essential for academic writers to paraphrase effectively so that plagiarism can be avoided, and writers can show that they have properly understood the original text.

Note that not every word is changed in the above example. The paraphrased text is nevertheless sufficiently different from the original, and the source is properly acknowledged.

Summarising

When **paraphrasing** the writer should render the meaning of the original fairly closely without copying the text. A **summary**, in contrast, is a more condensed and shorter version of the original which will leave out details. Both techniques still require the **source** to be acknowledged.

To summarise effectively, the writer should identify the key points or arguments in the original text and include these in the summary. As with paraphrasing, the writer should avoid copying phrases from the original and instead express the main ideas in a concise and original form.

3.3.2 Referencing work not read in the original

The practice of referring to work that has not been read in the original but has been read about in another source is called **secondary referencing**.

Although, ideally, writers should try to track down and consult the original sources of the ideas and material they use, this may not always be possible. In such cases, **secondary referencing is used to indicate the original source**.

A typical example is when a writer wishes to refer to a study or author mentioned in another work. For example, the writer would like to refer to research conducted by Jones that is referred to in a work by Smith, but does not have access to Jones's original text.

In this case, the writer should indicate that they have read about Jones in Smith's work:

> Smith (2017, 60) refers to a study by Jones in 2014 on the introduction of vulnerability assessment models in the food industry.

Or:

> ...as demonstrated by a study on the introduction of vulnerability assessment models in the food industry (Jones 2014, cited in Smith 2017, 60).

Similarly, if the first source **quotes** a second source and the writer wishes to use this quotation the same principle applies:

> According to Smith (2017, 60), Jones states that "climate change will be the single most important factor affecting food security in the coming years".

In the list of references Smith – **not Jones** – should be included, since the original work by Jones was not consulted:

> Smith, J. 2017. Food security. New York: Wiley.

3.4 Differences in Finnish and typical English-language referencing conventions

Content-based versus author-based

Differences can be observed between Finnish referencing conventions and those common in the English-speaking world. One distinction concerns '**content-based**' versus '**author-based**' referencing.

In content-based referencing, the main focus is on the origin of the **factual information** presented. In author-based referencing, greater prominence is given to the **opinions** or arguments of the source author.

This difference in emphasis can be seen in the **positioning** of in-text reference and the **punctuation** used.

Punctuation in the in-text reference

In Finnish academic writing, punctuation is used to indicate whether an in-text reference applies to a **single sentence** or to **several sentences**.

If the reference applies to **one sentence** only, it is placed **inside** the sentence:

> A paraphrase should be significantly different to the original text while accurately rendering its meaning (Bailey 2011).

If the reference applies to **several sentences**, it is placed **outside** the sentences with **a full stop inside the brackets**:

> Summarising is a familiar technique in daily life when the contents of a film or book are retold. For academic writers it represents an important and necessary skill as the main points of long source texts often need to be presented succinctly. (Bailey 2011.)

In English-language texts little attention is paid to punctuation at this level. As a general principle, in-text references should appear within the sentence, as in the first example. The second example above might be considered vague in English, since it is not clear which information comes from Bailey and which is the writer's own contribution.

Positioning of the reference

The distinction between **content-based** and **author-based** referencing also affects the positioning of the in-text reference in Finnish texts.

In Finnish author-based referencing, the paraphrased text focuses on presenting the source author's views, and the in-text reference appears close to the relevant information. This follows international referencing conventions:

> According to Salonen (2008), this decrease is due to...

However, in Finnish academic writing, it is acceptable to place an in-text reference at the end of a paragraph in which factual information is presented (content-based referencing). Since this reference covers all preceding sentences, it is punctuated with a full stop inside the brackets, as shown earlier.

This style is generally less common in English-language academic writing, where references are typically placed closer to the specific claim. English-language writing may give less prominence to the source of factual material, but **the principle of keeping in-text references as close as possible to the paraphrase is very strong**. If a longer section of factual source text is paraphrased in English, it is better to indicate the source at the beginning (and possibly again at the end) of the paraphrased text.

To illustrate these differences the same text taken from Neville (2007, 148-9) is paraphrased twice in the following section. The first paraphrase follows a style acceptable in Finnish academic text and the second follows the English-language guidelines recommended here. The paraphrased text discusses important considerations when referencing electronic sources.

Comparing Finnish and international English-language conventions

In the first example, a Finnish style is used, with the in-text reference given at the end of the paraphrase:

> When referencing electronic sources four principles should be followed. Firstly, the in-text reference should clearly link to the end-text reference through a key word, which can be the author's name, organisation name or title of document but not the URL address. Secondly, the reader should be able to access the exact source with the information given in the reference, and so password-protected sources should be avoided. Thirdly, the URL address should always be checked. Finally, hard copies should be made of the source in case the site disappears. These can then be included in the appendix if necessary. (Neville 2007, 148-149.)

Here the paraphrase is almost entirely based on Neville's text, with the exception of a brief clarification in the second sentence added by the author: "which can be the author's name, organisation name or title of document but not the URL address". There are similarities in

wording and structure, but by Finnish standards this would be considered acceptable. The author's name, year of publication, and page numbers are correctly given at the end.

In English-language academic writing, however, this version would be **less** acceptable. Despite differences in wording, the similarity in structure and sequence of points would require a clearer acknowledgement of the influence of the original author than is provided by the brief in-text reference at the end of the paragraph.

Using the same example, a more acceptable presentation in English-language academic writing would adopt an author-based style:

> Neville suggests four principles that should be followed when referencing electronic sources. Firstly, the in-text reference should clearly link to the reference. Secondly, the reader should be able to access the exact source with the information given in the reference, and so password-protected sources should be avoided. Thirdly, the URL address should always be checked, and, finally, hard copies should be made of the source in case the site disappears, which can then be included in the appendix if necessary (2007, 148-149). In addition, it is important to emphasise that the URL address should not be included in the in-text reference, which should consist of a key word: either the name of the author of the source, or otherwise the document title or name of the organisation.

Although slightly longer, the second text clearly separates the author's views from those of the source. In addition, the whole section of paraphrased text is bookended by references to Neville.

Different approaches to objectivity

The differences described in this section may reflect cultural values with respect to methods of indicating objectivity and authority in academic writing.

Objectivity is an essential quality in all academic writing. However, in English-language academic writing (though not necessarily in the highly technical or scientific disciplines) the voice of the writer plays an important role in establishing objectivity. In contrast, Finnish academic writing tends to downplay the role of individual voices in the text.

In English-language academic writing, readers should always be able to identify the writer's voice. Other voices – in the form of opinions or factual information – are introduced through clear in-text references. In some Finnish academic traditions, particularly when presenting factual information, excessive reference to sources may be seen as undermining objectivity. The distinction is not about the

Students must decide for themselves how to introduce other voices into their texts, but it should be clear that there are many ways to refer to a source and that these are also influenced by cultural conventions.

Since many Finnish teachers are naturally familiar with the Finnish referencing practices, they may expect students to follow this style even when writing in English. Although this guide does not recommend using a Finnish punctuation and positioning conventions in English-language texts, students who are unsure should consult their teachers regarding expectations.

3.5 Using electronic sources

Electronic sources can present challenges for academic writing. The Internet contains a vast amount of information, but much of it may be **anonymous or lack editorial oversight**. Even when authorship is given, material may be self-published and not subject to fact-checking or peer review. Such material, however persuasive, may lack the academic reliability required for scholarly work.

Whenever possible, the **most credible source** of an idea should be located. Online resources such as **Wikipedia** can be useful for initial research, identifying key terms, or locating references to primary sources, but they are **not** considered definitive scholarly sources. Similarly, AI tools can be useful for brainstorming or summarizing information, but they should not be treated as authoritative sources because their content is not verifiable or stable. See Section 3.7 for more detailed guidance on this topic.

Despite these cautions, online platforms are the dominant medium for most source material available today. Books and journals are increasingly available electronically, and many reputable sources are published online. Therefore, students are expected to make use of credible online resources when preparing assignments.

Referring to electronic sources

The same principles apply when citing **electronic and online sources** as for **printed** sources. Where possible cite the author's name and year:

> Zurier (2021) reports on the trend of companies assessing cyber maturity.

The above reference is taken from a website Dark Reading (www.darkreading.com). The following is **not** acceptable:

> ~~Zurier states that organisations are increasingly assessing their cyber maturity (www.darkreading.com).~~

URL addresses should not appear in in-text references; they belong only in the end-text reference list. When listing this source in the references section the details would be given as:

> Zurier, S. 2021. Some 65% of organizations now weigh their 'cyber maturity' Dark Reading, 27 July. Accessed 3 September 2021. https://www.darkreading.com/risk/some-65-of-organizations-now-weigh-their-cyber-maturity-

Note that full stops are used to separate information in the reference, but **not** at the end of a URL address.

When the author is not known

If no author is given, the in-text reference can use:

1. The organisation as the author
2. The title of the document (or a shortened version)

Examples:

> Healthcare providers, in particular, have been an attractive target for ransomware operators. (Dark Reading 2021).
>
> Healthcare providers, in particular, have been an attractive target for ransomware operators (Researchers examine active market2021).

In the reference list, the entry begins with the key term used in the in-text reference:

> Dark Reading. 2021. Researchers examine active market for stolen network access. 10 August. Accessed 3 September 2021. https://www.darkreading.com/analytics/researchers-examine-active-market-for-stolen-network-access

Or:

> Researchers examine active market for stolen network access. 2021. Dark Reading, 10 August. Accessed 3 September 2021. https://www.darkreading.com/analytics/researchers-examine-active-market-for-stolen-network-access

Recommended hierarchy for "no author" cases:

1. Named author
2. Organisation or corporate author
3. Document title

Finding the date

Identifying the correct publication date for online sources is important:

- If the online source is a version of a print article, use **the original publication date**.
- If the article exists only online, use **the date it was written or reposted**.
- If no date is provided, check if the website indicates **a last updated date. If present, this may be used.**
- The date you access the source should always be included in the reference but **not used as the publication date.** [4]

[4] The **Finnish guidelines for referencing** are different in this respect and **do recommend** using the date of access if no date can be found. Students can decide for themselves if they would prefer to follow the Finnish guidelines in this case.

If no date can be found, indicate this with “n.d.” in both in-text references and the reference list:

> Smith (n.d.) offers a possible solution to the dilemma
>
> Smith, G. n.d. Rationalization processes. Accessed 7 December 2025. http://edff.smith.org

Additional Notes

- Always prioritise sources with stable, verifiable information, such as journal articles, books, or sources with DOI numbers. Where available, include the DOI in the reference instead of the URL.
- The fact that a source is online does not make it automatically unreliable; the credibility depends on authorship, editorial control, and publication context.
- Consistency in formatting (author–date style, use of italics, punctuation) is essential.

3.6 Citing legal sources

These guidelines for citing legal sources here follow Finnish legal citation practice and this section is closely based on information in the Finnish-language guidelines for referencing.

As a rule, you are advised to retain Finnish statutory numbering and formatting also in English-language texts. Do not convert Finnish chapter and section numbering into Anglo-American formats (e.g. “Chapter 3, Section 2”).

National legislation (Acts and Decrees)

When referring to national legislation (Acts and Decrees) for the first time, indicate, in addition to the name of the Act or Decree, the statute collection number and the year of enactment in parentheses. For example:

> Universities of Applied Sciences Act (932/2014)

If the Act has an established abbreviation, this may also be used. For example:

> Administrative Procedure Act (HL 434/2003)
>
> Constitution of Finland (PL 731/1999)
>
> Criminal Code (RL 39/1889)

If you use an abbreviation, write the full name of the Act together with the abbreviation (and the statute collection number and year of enactment) in parentheses the first time it is mentioned. Later in the text, the abbreviation alone may be used.

Note that the names of Acts and Decrees are written with a lowercase initial letter in running text unless the full official title is used.

Referring to specific provisions

A reference to an Act may be made in the following ways:

> Chapter 2 of the Constitution of Finland (731/1999) contains provisions on fundamental rights.
>
> "Children shall be treated equally as individuals and shall be allowed to influence matters affecting them in accordance with their level of development" (Constitution of Finland 731/1999, 2 luku, 6 §).

Chapter and section numbers must also be included in the reference.[5]

Remember to inflect Act names and abbreviations grammatically where required by the sentence structure. For example:

> In Chapter 2, Section 2 of the Act on the Status and Rights of Patients (785/1992), it is defined that ...

Finnish statutory numbering (e.g. 2 luku, 6 §; 3:2.2; 45.2 §) must be retained in English-language texts and must not be converted into Anglo-American formats (such as "Chapter 3, Section 2, Subsection 2" inside the parentheses).

Government proposals

When referring to a government proposal, indicate the proposal number followed by the abbreviation vp (valtiopäivät). A government proposal that includes page numbers is cited as follows:

> (HE 24/2006 vp, 20[6])

If specific page numbers are cited, include them in the reference.

EU legislation

EU directives and regulations are referred to in the text using their established short titles or abbreviations due to their long official names, for example: Universal Service Directive, General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

---

[5] In references to statutory provisions, the following Finnish formats may also be used:

- HL 45.2 § (= Section 45, subsection 2 of the Administrative Procedure Act)
- RL 6:8.1,4 (= Chapter 6, Section 8, subsection 1, paragraph 4 of the Criminal Code)

For example: According to Inheritance Code (PK 40/1965) 3:2.2, the parties' liability for the debts of the deceased is generally limited to the value of the estate.

In subsequent references: The general rule is that the parties' liability for the debts of the deceased is limited to the value of the estate (PK 3:2.2).

[6] A government proposal without page numbers is cited as follows: (HE 129/1995 vp, detailed justifications for section 3)

The full official title of the act, including its established abbreviation, must be provided in the bibliography. For example:

> Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data, and repealing Directive 95/46/EC (General Data Protection Regulation)

Other official sources (e.g. legislative drafting materials) are cited in the same way as other publications. See also Section 4.2.5.

3.7 Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in coursework and assignments

These guidelines for using AI have been updated in line with the recommendations in the Finnish-language referencing guidelines and current practices at Laurea.

Laurea's AI Policy

- AI may be used to **support learning**, but it **cannot replace the student's own thinking or knowledge**.
- Students are **always responsible** for the content of their submissions, even if AI was used.
- **All AI use must be clearly acknowledged**: indicate what stages of the work AI was used for and how. Failure to disclose use may be considered misconduct.
- Text, images, or other content generated by AI c**annot be presented as the student's own work.**

Laurea follows **Arene's traffic light model**, which offers a colour-coded system for indicating differing AI policies. These are: **RED** (AI not allowed); **AMBER** (allowed but must be reported); **GREEN** (allowed and does not need to be reported); **BLUE** (AI must be used and reported).

If the type of policy in place is not clear for a given assignment, students should clarify this with their teacher.

How AI (LLMs) works

AI applications, such as ChatGPT, that can generate text are based on machine learning and language models. AI-generated text is based on the material used for training and statistical patterns of word co-occurrence. While the amount of training data is growing, this does **not** guarantee that AI-generated content is accurate or of high quality.

AI should be approached **critically**: it generates text but cannot produce new theoretical knowledge. It can imitate styles of reports, newsletters, press releases, or academic texts, but cannot create authentic research-based content.

Important: AI-generated text may contain **biases, errors, or unverifiable sources**. References and bibliographies created by AI are **not reliable**. Students must verify all sources and information themselves.

AI and information searching

Students may use AI-based tools to support literature searches (e.g., Elicit, Research Rabbit, and Keenious). Results may be limited; AI tools do not always provide the best or most relevant sources.

Always consult original sources such as books, journal articles, or official reports. Cite only original sources — AI tools themselves cannot be used as references. If AI suggests a source, students must access and verify that source before citing it.

Tip: Seek guidance from Laurea's information specialists at the library for effective literature search strategies. You can also book a time for personal guidance in searching for material.

Critical use of sources

Academic work requires **high-quality**, **expert**, and **current** sources. Students must assess, summarise, and apply these sources in their own work.

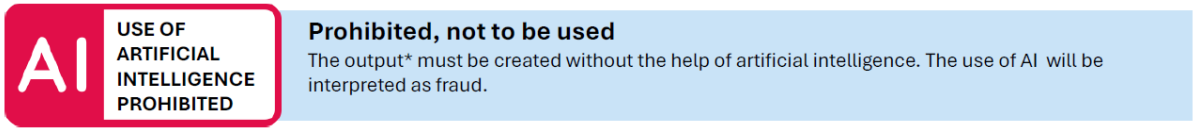
AI-generated content **cannot be used as a source**, as its authorship and origin are unknown. Students are **responsible for verifying all content and sources**.

Copyright and data protection

- AI **cannot be used to modify copyrighted material** without permission.
- Do **not input personal data, sensitive information, or privacy-violating content** into AI systems without consent.

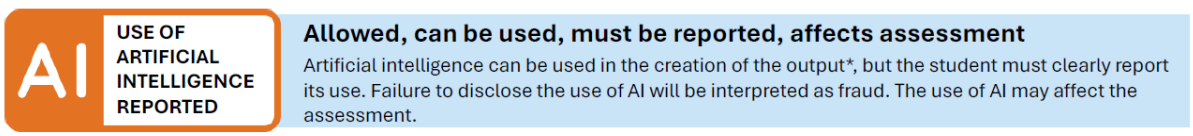
AI for language feedback

The specific AI policy for each assignment always applies. **If an assignment has a red light**



you must not use AI to edit, smooth, or improve the readability of your text. These tasks assess your own ability to design and write, including your language and style. Typical examples are essays and learning diaries.

When the assignment allows AI use,



you may use AI for language support in the following ways:

- **Getting feedback without direct editing** – Ask the AI to comment on your text rather than rewrite it. For example, you can prompt:
    - "How can I clarify my text?",
    - "Give feedback on my summary",
    - or "Give feedback on the text style."

  Then make the changes yourself. This helps you improve your own writing.
- **Grammar and spelling checks** – AI works fairly well for checking punctuation errors and any grammatical issues. Prompt the AI to point out errors, for instance:
    - "Check my text for punctuation, word forms, and show where there are errors."

  Make the corrections yourself to develop your writing skills.
- **Streamlining and editing text (only if permitted)** – If allowed, you may ask AI to edit your text for fluency. Be aware that AI editing can unintentionally alter content, word choices, accuracy and style, which means the text may no longer be entirely your own. You remain responsible for the correctness of the content. If you use AI in this way, carefully review the final version and acknowledge the use.

If AI is used to correct language, it must be **acknowledged in the introduction** or methods section. Example statement:

- "ChatGPT has been used in this report to streamline and edit the text."
- "In this report, ChatGPT has been used to correct the spelling of the text."

If you have the language edited entirely by AI (where permitted), always read the corrected version carefully before submitting or publishing, and include an acknowledgement.

AI and translation

AI **cannot be used for translation** in assignments that assess your language skills or your ability to communicate course content in the language of instruction.

If translation is allowed, we recommend using accurate translation tools such as DeepL. Always check the translation carefully – the process can change style and precision – and you remain responsible for the accuracy of the content.

Reporting AI use in coursework or theses

Assignments and thesis reports demonstrate student learning and skills. AI use must always be transparent and justified. Presenting AI-generated output as your own is cheating.

- Clearly report **which AI tool you used**, **for what purpose**, and **why** you used it.
- Indicate AI use in the specific part of the work where it was applied (e.g., a chapter, section, figure, image, or a particular stage such as a development process step).

- Keep **records of prompts** and intermediate versions.
- Keep the original, **unedited version of your text** (before any AI language check). In a thesis, you must be able to provide this to your supervisor if requested.

Examples of prompts:

- "What should be included in a marketing plan?"
- "How can I clarify instruction X?"
- "List key considerations when planning services for elderly people."
- "Check my text for punctuation and compound-word errors."

Examples of AI use statements in assignments or theses:

- "ChatGPT was used to create a draft marketing plan, which was adapted to the client's requirements."
- "Microsoft Copilot assisted in structuring and planning a video script."
- "DeepL was used to translate patient instructions into multiple languages, which were then reviewed and edited by the author."
- "ChatGPT has been used in this report to streamline and edit the text."

AI quick checklist

- AI is not a source.
- **Verify all information** from original sources.
- Check the assignment's AI policy (red/amber/green/blue). If AI is prohibited, do not use it for any writing or editing.
- Always **disclose AI use** and specify in which part of the work it was used.
- **You are responsible** for your text and its content.
- **Keep prompts, unedited versions, and intermediate versions.**

Appropriate AI uses:

- Idea generation
- Structuring text
- Brainstorming keywords or research questions
- Creating visuals, diagrams, or figures
- Checking language correctness

3.8 Using Zotero and other reference management tools

A **reference management tool** is software that allows you to store, organise and export references for all the sources you consult. The tool recommended in this guide is **Zotero**, which can be downloaded free of charge from zotero.org. You will need to create a free account to use the software. This enables you to synchronise your reference database and access it from any device on which Zotero is installed.

Zotero **supports a wide range of source types** and is well maintained. You can install a **browser extension** that allows you to save reference details directly from web pages, library databases and journal articles into your chosen folder in Zotero.

Zotero can also be integrated with MS Word, allowing you to insert in-text references directly into your document while writing. When your document is complete, you can automatically generate a reference list containing all the sources cited. If you install one of Laurea's specially modified styles, references will be formatted according to Laurea's guidelines. However, some minor manual adjustments may still be required.

Laurea provides two modified citation styles:

- Laurea ammattikorkeakoulu – Harvard (Finnish version)
- Laurea UAS – Harvard (English version – as shown in this guide)

These styles are available as .csl files (CSL = Citation Style Language) and can be downloaded from Laurea's LibGuides Reference Management page.

Installing and using Laurea's Zotero styles

1. Download and install Zotero from zotero.org and create a free account.
2. Download the desired Laurea style (.csl file).
3. Double-click the downloaded .csl file to install it automatically in Zotero. You may install both the Finnish and English versions if needed.
4. Add references to Zotero either manually or by using the browser extension.
5. To preview a reference list, right-click on a reference (or a selection of references) and select "Create Bibliography from Items".
6. In the style selection dialogue box, choose the appropriate Laurea style:
   Finnish: Laurea ammattikorkeakoulu – Harvard; **English**: Laurea UAS – Harvard

Important notes when using Zotero

The Laurea styles handle the most common source types presented in the Finnish and English guidelines effectively. However, some details require attention:

1. **Sentence case in titles**

Titles are formatted in sentence case. This means that only the first word of the title and any proper names are capitalised. You should therefore check each title carefully and correct the capitalisation of proper names where necessary.

For example, Zotero will export as follows:

> Pagán-Rodríguez, R. & Pérez, S. 2012. Depression and self-reported disability among older people in western europe. Journal of Aging and Health, 24(7), 1131–1156. https://doi.org/10.1177/0898264312453070

You should correct “western europe” as follows:

> Pagán-Rodríguez, R. & Pérez, S. 2012. Depression and self-reported disability among older people in Western Europe. Journal of Aging and Health, 24(7), 1131–1156. https://doi.org/10.1177/0898264312453070

2. Complex source types (e.g. legislation)

Some source types, such as laws, may not automatically appear exactly as required. Ensure that the title field is correct and provide any additional necessary information in the “Extra” field in Zotero. Content entered in the Extra field is usually added at the end of the reference.

3. Field visibility and output

Not all Zotero fields are required for every source type, and some fields may not appear in the final output depending on the selected style. It is advisable to review how each reference appears when exported and make adjustments where necessary.

4. Importing from Laurea Finna

If you want to import the details of a journal article source from Laurea Finna you should find the **Export reference** option and choose **Export to RIS**. Opening the RIS file will automatically add the reference to your database in Zotero.

Other tools

MS Word includes a built-in citation manager. However, it is significantly more limited than Zotero, and Laurea’s modified styles cannot be installed in it. For this reason, it is not recommended in these guidelines.

Mendeley is another free reference management tool similar to Zotero. At present, Laurea-specific styles have not been created for this software.

Several online databases can assist in locating complete publication details. One particularly useful resource is worldcat.org, which provides information on authors, publication year, place of publication and publisher. If you are unable to find complete bibliographic details elsewhere, this website may be helpful.

4 The list of references

This section reviews the main principles followed when listing **end-text references** in the references section. This is followed by extensive examples showing how to format end-text references for different **source types**.

4.1 General principles in formatting end-text references

Some key principles apply to all references.

1. **The end-text reference begins with the same key word used in the in-text reference.** For example, if the in-text reference uses a corporate author (e.g., "Nordea") then the end-text reference should begin with the corporate author (not, e.g., the title of a webpage.)
2. **The references section is arranged in alphabetical order.** Sometimes the Reference section may be divided into sub-sections, with a section for published sources and one for unpublished sources. The alphabetical rule then applies within each section.

Some other important **Laurea** conventions are as follows:

- Titles are written in **sentence case** (only the first word and proper nouns begin with a capital letter).
- Italics are **not used** in Laurea's reference list formatting.
- In the reference list, use **&** before the last author's name.
- In running text, use **and** outside brackets and **&** inside brackets.

One of the most common source types is the **book**, so the first example below shows the key pieces of information that should be included in a book reference. Later sections will give examples for other source types.

1. **Name(s) of the author(s)**. The surname is given first followed by a comma and each initial separated by a full stop:

   Bailey, S. ... (or Smith, J.S. & Jones, F.R.)

2. **The year of publication.**

   Bailey, S. 2025. ...

   If no year is available, the letter 'n.d.' (=no date) can be given:
   Hall, R. n.d. ...

3. **The name of the work or document**.

   Bailey, S. 2025. Academic writing: a handbook for international students. ...

4. The **edition** where several editions of a work are available.

   Bailey, S. 2025. Academic writing: a handbook for international students. 6th edition. ...

5. The **place of publication** followed by a **colon**.

   Bailey, S. 2025. Academic writing: a handbook for international students. 6th edition. London: ...

6. The **name of the publisher** (without information about the type of company).

   Bailey, S. 2025. Academic writing: a handbook for international students. 6th edition. London: Routledge.

4.2 Examples of how to refer to and list different source types

In the following sections examples are given for how to refer to and list references for such sources as books with multiple authors, online books, print and online journals, newspaper articles, magazines, blogs, conference proceedings, government and organisational publications, laws, video or television media, artworks, and private correspondence.

4.2.1 Books

	Example end-text reference	Example in-text reference
Books with one author	Hinkel, E. 1999. Culture in second language teaching and learning. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.	As Hinkel (1999, 89) observes...
Books with two authors	Murray, R. & Moore, S. 2006. The handbook of academic writing: a fresh approach. Maidenhead: McGraw Hill Education. *List all authors in the order they appear in the publication.*	Paradoxes of academic writing are identified in Murray and Moore (2006).
Books with three or more authors	Grewal, D., Levy, M., Mathews, S., Harrigan, P., Bucic, T., & Kopanidis, F. 2021. Marketing. Sydney: McGraw-Hill Education.	According to Grewal, Levy, Mathews, Harrigan, Bucic and Kopanidis (2021, 32), ...
	If there are up to five authors, the first time these are mentioned all their names will be given in the in-text reference. From the second mention onwards et al. is used for all but the first author. If there are six or more authors, et al. can be used in the first mention as well. The list of references gives the names of all the authors.	

	Example end-text reference	Example in-text reference
Books with one editor	Ashwin, P. (ed.). 2006. Changing higher education. Abingdon: Routledge. *Note the full stop between (ed.) and the year.*	Learning technologies have... (Ashwin 2006).
Books with two or more editors	Burley, J. & Harris, J. (eds.). 2002. A companion to genethics. Malden: Blackwell.	Genethics refers to... (Burley & Harris 2002)
Books with no author	Rome and the Vatican: guide to the city divided into 11 zones. 2001. Roma: Edizioni Lozzi. *1. If no author is given begin the reference with the title.* *2. The full title is not needed in the in-text reference for this example as it is quite long.*	A guide to Rome mentions that... (Rome and the Vatican 2001).
Book in a second or later edition	Bailey, S. 2011. Academic writing: a handbook for international students. 3rd edition. London: Routledge. *It is necessary to record the edition that was used only if it is the second or later edition. Authors can make significant changes in each edition, so students should try to use the latest edition of a given work.*	Bailey (2011, 45) mentions...
Chapter of an edited book	Benford, G. 2008. After the stars are gone. In: Broderick, D. (ed.). Year million: science at the far edge of knowledge. New York: Atlas & Co, 248-263. *At Laurea, the word In: is used before the editor's name.*	Benford's pessimistic vision is encapsulated in his 2008 essay on...
Part of an anthology	Kilian, K. 2009. Experiential marketing and brand experiences: a conceptual framework. In: Lindgreen, A., Vanhamme, J. & Beverland, M. (eds.) Memorable customer experiences: a research anthology. Farnham: Gower, 25-44. *If articles by **different writers** are used from the same anthology, then a new reference is created for each individual writer/article. Note that the year is not repeated after the editor of the anthology and page numbers are given at the end separated by a comma from the publisher.*	Kilian (2009, 33) identifies three ...

	Example end-text reference	Example in-text reference
Part of an encyclopedia	Turner, M. 2006. Business plan. In: Helms, M. (ed.) Encyclopedia of management. 5th edition. Detroit: Gale Group, 54-59. *Note that if the encyclopedia or anthology consists of several volumes, then the **volume number** should be given **before the page numbers** indicating the selection covered: e.g., 2, 41-80. would mean that the chapter appears from pages 41-80 in the **second** volume of the series.*	The basic elements of a business plan include ... (Turner 2006).
Dictionary with author(s)	Statt, D. 2015. The Routledge dictionary of business management. 3rd edition. London; New York, NY: Routledge.	Brand-stretching is "..." (Statt 2015, 45)
Dictionary with no authors	Merriam-Webster dictionary. 2023. Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster. *If the title is long, it may be shortened in the in-text reference:*	(Merriam-Webster dictionary 2023) (Merriam-Webster 2023)
Translated book	Dostoyevsky, F. 1955. The idiot. Translated by David Magarshack. London: Penguin classics. *Include the translator after the title.*	... (Dostoyevsky 1955).
Translated book not in English	Niemi, M. 2004. Nahkaolo. Translated by Tuula Tuuva. Helsinki: Like. *The translated title is also used, not the original.*	...Nahkaolo, the Finnish translation of Niemi's second book (2004).
Reprinted book	Butler, S. 1968. The way of all flesh. Reprint. London: Everyman. Originally published 1903. *In this last example the book was originally written in 1903, but the version consulted was published in 1968. The original year of publication is nevertheless used in the in-text reference.*	Butler (1903) exposed Victorian hypocrisy...

	Example end-text reference	Example in-text reference
No Date Available	Smith, J. n.d. Leadership principles in modern organisations. London: Business Press. *If no publication year is available, use n.d. (no date).*	(Smith n.d., 14)
Books accessible online	Dawson, C. 2011. Projects in computing and information systems : A guide for students. 2nd edition. Harlow: Addison-Wesley. Accessed 7 January 2025. https://ebookcentral.proquest.com *If the book is identical to the print version (with stable page numbers), reference it as a normal book and add access information.*	Dawson (2011, 110) explains ...
E-books	Zuboff, S. 2019. The age of surveillance capitalism: the fight for a human future at the new frontier of power. E-book. Public Affairs. *An e-book is one which is read using dedicated software on an e-reader or other device. Since page numbers in e-books may change depending on the font size used for viewing, it is preferable to use the chapter or section of the book in the in-text reference. In the E-book end-text reference the place of publication is not given.*[7]	... (Zuboff 2019, chap. 3).
Books or sources with a DOI	Spiller, L. & Tuten, T. 2019. Assessing the pedagogical value of branded digital marketing certification programs. Journal of Marketing Education, 41 (2), 77–90. https://doi: 10.1177/0273475318822686 *If a DOI (Digital Object Identifier) is available in addition to the URL, it is preferable to use the DOI as your link to the source, as DOIs are more permanent than URLs. If a DOI is used, it is not necessary to mention the date the resource was accessed. Format DOIs in the URL format.*	Spiller and Tuten (2019, 89) conclude that ...

[7] If you use Zotero, you should add the text "E-book" to the field "Format" so that it appears in the correct position in the outputted reference.

4.2.2 Journals, conference papers, newspapers and magazines

Articles and papers from journals, conferences, newspapers and magazines require extra information in the reference. This may include the volume and issue number of a journal, page numbers, DOI, or (for restricted databases) the name of the database.

Although many online databases allow references to be exported automatically, these must always be checked and formatted to conform to Laurea's referencing standards.

	Example end-text reference	Example in-text reference
Articles in a print journal	Phillips, W. & Jang, S. 2012. Exploring seniors' casino gaming intention. Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Research, 36 (3), 312-334. *The numbers after the journal title refer to:* • *36 = volume number* • *3 = issue number* • *312-334 = page range of the article*	Phillips and Jang (2012, 318) show how...
Articles in online journals (restricted database access)	Robinson, S., Irmak, C. & Jayachandran, S. 2012. Choice of cause in cause-related marketing. Journal of Marketing, 76 (4), 126-139. Available at EBSCO Business Source Elite. Accessed 20 May 2012. *If the article is accessed through a restricted database (e.g. EBSCO, ProQuest), it is not necessary to provide the full URL. If a DOI is available, it should be used instead.*	Robinson et al. (2012, 130) argue that ...
Article with a DOI (preferred format)	Pagan-Rodriguez, R. & Perez, S. 2012. Depression and self-reported disability among older people in Western Europe. Journal of Aging and Health. 24 (7), 1131–1156. https://doi.org/10.1177/0898264312453070 *If a DOI (Digital Object Identifier) is available, an access date is not required.*	Pagan-Rodriguez and Perez (2012, 1135) outline...
Abstract only (not full article)	Pagan-Rodriguez, R. & Perez, S. 2012. Depression and self-reported disability among older people in Western Europe. Journal of Aging and Health, 24 (7). Abstract. Available at: Sage Journals. Accessed 20 October 2022.	(Pagan-Rodriguez and Perez 2012)

If you have accessed only the abstract and not the full article, this must be indicated.

	Example end-text reference	Example in-text reference
Conference paper (published in proceedings)	Kunnan, A. 2004. Test fairness. In: European language testing in a global context: proceedings of the ALTE Barcelona conference July 2001. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 27-48	The importance of test fairness has been well documented (Kunnan 2004).
Conference paper (not published)	Jones, G. 2009. Lexical cohesion as a predictor of item difficulty. Paper presented at the Sixth Annual Conference of EALTA, Turku, Finland, June 2009.	According to Jones (2009), there are…
Newspaper article in print	Cavaglieri, C. 2012. Pack a free overdraft as you head off to university. The Independent, 16 September, 14. *14 here refers to the page number on which the article appeared.*	Cavaglieri (2012) advises…
Newspaper article online	Garside, J. 2012. Apple Maps service loses train stations, shrinks tower and creates new airport. The Guardian, 20 September, 32. Accessed 28 September 2012. http://www.guardian.co.uk/technology/2012/sep/20/apple-maps-ios6-station-tower *Note that a comma separates the following information: the name of the newspaper, the date of the article, the page number at which it appeared (e.g., 'The Guardian, 20 September, 32.') If no page numbers are available, omit them.*	Garside (2012) described the chaos which…
Newspaper article with no author	The Daily Herald. 2006. The perils of porcelain. 1 April, 5. If no author is given, begin with the name of the newspaper.	(Daily Herald 2006)
Newspaper article not in English	Kanniainen, T. 2012. Väärä valinta lisää vakuutuslaskuasi satasilla. Taloussanomat, 15 September, 6. *Use the original title.*	Kanniainen (2012) writes that…

4.2.3 Online sources in general

Examples of books and newspapers accessed online are provided in earlier sections. This section covers other types of online material such as blogs, social media, wikis and general web pages.

General principles for web pages:

- The key word in the reference is normally the author's surname.
- If no personal author is given, use:
  - The organisation responsible for the site, or
  - The title of the web page.
- If no publication date is available, use n.d.
- If the page shows a copyright year or "last updated" year, this may be used.
- Since web pages usually do not have page numbers, refer to:
  - Section headings
  - Paragraph numbers (if visible)

	Example end-text reference	Example in-text reference
Web page with an author	Cherry, K. 2025. How do psychologists define happiness? Verywell mind. Accessed 21 February 2026. https://www.verywellmind.com/what-is-happiness-4869755	Cherry (2025) describes happiness as ...
	If there is an author use that as the key word, but also give the website name after the title.	
Web pages with a site author	Statistics Finland. 2023. More time spent in front of screens in 2021 than ever before. Accessed 19 February 2026. https://stat.fi/en/publication/cl8ipicxx123r0bw2oxe42g8i	According to Statistics Finland (2023), Finns are...
Web pages with no author or where the site title is the author	Online Application to Polytechnics in Finland. 2011. Accessed 28 September 2011. https://www.admissions.fi/vierashaku/prod_index.html	...have at least level 6 on the IELTS scale (Online Application to Polytechnics in Finland 2011).
	If no author is identifiable, use the title.	

	Example end-text reference	Example in-text reference
Blog post	Anderson, M. 2012. Displaying online work – some ideas & methods. Blog post, 24 August. Accessed 2 September 2012. http://ictevangelist.com/?p=1044	Anderson (2012) comments...
X post (formerly Twitter)	Ojasalo, K. [@katriojasalo]. 2021. Jakoon tuore esimerkki Laurean kehittämispohjaisesta oppimisesta. October 28. X. Accessed 29 October 2021. https://x.com/katriojasalo/status/1453609771744043008 *The username of the person who wrote the tweet is also given in the end-text reference. If the post is long, only the first words are used as the title.*	Ojasalo (2021) ...
Social media profile	Kosonen, J. 2011. Profile. LinkedIn. Accessed 3 September 2012. http://fi.linkedin.com/in/jjjkosonen	(Kosonen 2011)
Wiki page	wikiHow. 2026. How to stop being broke. Accessed 21 February 2026. https://www.wikihow.com/Stop-Being-Broke *Usually, the title of the wiki will be the key word. When available, include the "last modified" date.*	(wikiHow 2026)
Wikipedia (use with caution)	Wikipedia contributors. 2021, August 9. Business process. Wikipedia. Accessed 24 September 2021. https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Business_process&oldid=1037921440 ***Important note:*** *Wikipedia and other general encyclopedias may be useful for gaining background information. However, they are not considered reliable academic sources for research reports or essays.* *Students are expected to consult scholarly sources and acknowledged experts in the field. Overreliance on Wikipedia may negatively affect the evaluation of academic work.*	(Wikipedia contributors 2021)

4.2.4 Video and audio: online or offline

Online media such as YouTube videos, podcasts and streamed broadcasts must be referenced with enough information for the reader to locate the source. The exact details depend on the platform.

Online media, such as podcasts or YouTube videos, should be referenced so that enough information is given for the reader to be able to locate the source. Exact details will depend on the repository.

If the material is hosted online, include:

- The name of the uploader or channel (as the key word)
- Year of publication or broadcast
- Title (written in sentence case, with only the first word capitalised)
- Type of media in square brackets: [video], [podcast] etc.
- Access date before the URL
- URL

Offline media (e.g. television broadcasts, DVDs, CDs) should include:

- Programme or series title (usually the key word)
- Episode title (if applicable)
- Year
- Type of media in square brackets: [TV], [radio], [audiobook], [CD], etc.
- Broadcaster or production company
- Date of broadcast or publication

Only the first word of titles is capitalised (sentence case), unless the title contains a proper noun or acronym (e.g. BBC).

When referring to a specific moment in audio or video material, include the time stamp in the in-text reference.

	Example end-text reference	Example in-text reference
Online video	homeproject. 2009. Home. [video]. Directed by Yann Arthus-Bertrand. Accessed 24 October 2021. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jqxENMKaeCU	...as shown in the documentary Home (homeproject 2009).

Note: The key word is the name of the channel or uploader, not the subject of the video.

	Example end-text reference	Example in-text reference
Podcast	A week of you and yours. Liquid collagen drinks. 2012. [podcast]. BBC Radio 4. Broadcast 28 September. Accessed 24 October 2012. http://www.bbc.co.uk/podcasts/series/yyhighlights	...as described in a popular podcast (A week of you and yours 2012).
	The series name is the key word and given first with the episode name given second. Podcasts and similar online broadcasts (TV shows, radio programmes) are unlikely to be stored online for long. So, the link is to the page publishing the podcast. Always include the access date.	
Radio broadcast	Puheen aamu. Mitä taksissa puuhataan? 2012. [radio]. YLE Puhe. 22 October.	According to Puheen aamu (2012, 16m), ...
	The series title is the key word.	
TV broadcast	Human planet. Grasslands – roots of power. 2012. [TV]. BBC1. 24 October.	(Human planet 2012, 45m 20s)
	In the above two examples, the first piece of information is the programme series title. This is followed by the title of the episode and the year. The reference shows whether the programme was seen on TV or heard on the radio, along with the date of the broadcast. The time within the broadcast is also shown in the in-text references in these examples.	
Audiobook	Brown, T. 2019. Change by design, revised and updated: how design thinking transforms organisations and inspires innovation. [audiobook]. HarberAudio. Listened 13 September 2019. https: //www.s orytel.com/fi/fi/books/749329-Change-by-Design-Revised-and-Updated-How-Design-Thinking-Transforms-Organisations-and-Inspires-Innovation	(Brown 2019, 2h 23 mins)
	In this example, the source is an audiobook obtained online, so the date when this was accessed should be mentioned as usual, though as an audiobook the word "Listened" can be used instead of "Accessed". Note also that it is preferable to give the time within the recording in the in-text reference, rather than a chapter number as this is an audio recording.	
News broadcast	BBC news summary. 2020. [TV]. BBC1. 24 October, 09.30.	...as reported by the BBC (BBC news summary 2020).

	Example end-text reference	Example in-text reference
Feature film	The two towers. 2002. [DVD]. Directed by Peter Jackson. New Line Cinema. *If streamed online, include an access date and URL instead of DVD format.*	(The two towers 2002, 2h 26m 20s)
Commercial or training film	Effective presentations. 1991. [video]. Oxford: Oxford University Press.	(Effective presentations 1991)
Music	Bon Iver. 2008. For Emma, forever ago. [CD]. London: 4AD Ltd. *Some media will have a place of publication and publisher as with books or printed materials. These should be given in the standard way with the type of media in square brackets.*	Bon Iver (2008) ...

4.2.5 Legislation, government and institutional sources

Legislation is cited according to the Finnish legal citation format described in Section 3.6. Legislation is not treated as a web publication, even if accessed online. Therefore, access dates and URLs are not required for Acts, Decrees, EU regulations or directives.

	Example end-text reference	Example in-text reference
A. Legislation	When referring to Finnish Acts and Decrees, use the official name together with the statute number and year (number/year).	
Finnish Act	Universities of Applied Sciences Act (932/2014). Or with abbreviation introduced: Administrative Procedure Act (HL 434/2003). *Note: Finnish statutory numbering (e.g. 3:2.2, 45.2 §) must be retained in English-language texts and must not be converted into Anglo-American chapter and section formats.*	(Universities of Applied Sciences Act 932/2014) (HL 434/2003) Reference to specific provision: (Inheritance Code (PK 40/1965) 3:2.2) Subsequently shortened: (PK 3:2.2)

	Example end-text reference	Example in-text reference
Foreign Legislation	Finance Act 2012 (United Kingdom, c. 14). Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.	(Finance Act 2012 (UK)) (Americans with Disabilities Act 1990)
	When referring to legislation from other countries, follow the official citation format of that jurisdiction. Indicate the country where necessary to avoid ambiguity.	
EU Directive	Directive 2011/24/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council on the application of patients' rights in cross-border healthcare.	(Directive 2011/24/EU)
EU Regulation	Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data (General Data Protection Regulation).	(Regulation (EU) 2016/679) Or: (GDPR)
	Use the official title and number of the directive or regulation. In the text, the established short title or number may be used. Full details must be included in the bibliography.	

B. Government, Institutional and Corporate Publications

Government and institutional publications are cited as standard publications using the author–date system. If institutions in different countries are cited, include the country where necessary to avoid ambiguity.

Finnish government publication	Ministry of Education and Culture. 2009. Strategy for the internationalisation of higher education institutions in Finland 2009–2015. Accessed 11 August 2012. http://www.minedu.fi/export/sites/default/OPM/Julkaisut/2009/liitteet/opm23.pdf?lang=en	(Ministry of Education and Culture 2009)
	If ministries in different countries were being referred to, the country would also be given in the reference.	
Publication by a European institution	Council of Europe. 2001. Common European framework of reference for languages: learning, teaching, assessment. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.	According to the Council of Europe (2001) …

	Example end-text reference	Example in-text reference
Publication by an international organisation	World Health Organization. 2008. The world health report 2008. Accessed 24 October 2012. http://www.who.int/whr/2008/en/index.html	...as described in the World Health Report (World Health Organization 2008).
Corporate white paper	Webmethods. 2004. Realizing the promise of business process productivity. Webmethods Ltd. White paper from CRN White Paper Library. Accessed 24 October 2012. http://research.crn.com/whitepaper662	According to Webmethods (2004), ...
Market research report	MicroCapital. 2012. Friends with benefits: on microfinance networks. Preview edition of MicroCapital Monitor. Accessed 24 October 2012. http://www.microcapital.org/downloads/monitor_volume7/MicroCapitalMonitorPreview_Sep2012.pdf The database used for the white paper or market report is mentioned.	MicroCapital (2005)...
Company annual or other report	Kesko Corporation. 2011. Corporate social responsibility report. Helsinki: Kesko Corporation.	Kesko describes its... (Kesko Corporation 2011).
Company annual report online	Nokia Corporation. 2008. Nokia in 2008. Accessed 3 August 2012. http://i.nokia.com/blob/view/-/264254/data/1/-/Request-Nokia-in-2008-pdf.pdf	...in their annual report (Nokia Corporation 2008).
Computer programme	Pinnacle. 2012. Pinnacle studio 16. [computer program]. Corel.	(Pinnacle 2012)
Product manual instructions	Adobe. 2001. Photoshop elements user guide. San Jose: Adobe Systems Incorporated.	(Adobe 2001)

4.2.6 Maps, images, tables, figures and artwork

Sources must be given for any maps, tables, figures, diagrams, photographs or artwork that are discussed in the main text. Images included purely for decorative purposes do not need to be included in the References section; however, copyright and licensing conditions must still be respected, and the source should be acknowledged in a caption where appropriate.

Maps and other artwork may have little accompanying information and lack a title. In such cases students should give as much information as possible in the description, including the organisation responsible, scale, coordinates (if relevant) and the date of publication or access.

	Example end-text reference	Example in-text reference
Map	Harvey. 2011. British mountain map: Lake District. 1:40 000 or 2.5cm to 1km. Doune: Harvey.	... can be seen (Harvey 2011).
Map with no author	Vantaa pyöräily kartta. 2012. 1:35 000. Accessed 24 October 2012. http://www.ulkoilukartta.fi	(Vantaa pyöräily kartta 2012)
Online map	Google maps. 2012. Helsinki. Coordinates: 60.170699, 24.938744. Accessed 24 October 2012. http://maps.google.fi/maps?hl=fi&tab=wl	(Google maps 2012)
	Coordinates should always be included if relevant. For continuously updated services such as Google Maps, the year refers to the year the map was accessed.	
Diagram, figure, image from a book	Pinker, S. 2011. The angels of our better nature: a history of violence and humanity. London: Penguin.	Pinker provides a map (2011, 112) showing the variations in the annual homicide rate in the US.
	When reproducing or referring to an image from a book or other printed source, the book itself is listed in the References. The individual image is not listed separately.	

	Example end-text reference	Example in-text reference
Stock mage or photo from an agency or website	Manchester libraries. n.d. Chester Street, Hulme, 1898. [photograph]. Flikr. Accessed 24 October 2012. https://live.stat-icflickr.com/6135/6024705883_4804049ea5.jpg	(Manchester libraries n.d.)
	Where possible, give the name of the photographer or the organisation responsible. If the image is hosted on a platform (e.g. Flickr), this may also be included. Students should ensure that online images are obtained from reliable and lawful sources, and that usage rights permit academic reproduction.	
Artwork in a book	Magritte, R. circa 1935. The key of dreams. [painting]. In: Berger, J. Ways of seeing. 1972. London: British Broadcasting Company.	...in his painting, The Key of Dreams (Magritte circa 1935).
	If artwork is reproduced from a book, the book is listed in the References. If accessed online, the website hosting the image should be included.	
Artwork on the web	Magritte, R. circa 1935. The key of dreams. [image]. Accessed 24 October 2012. https://www.moma.org/	(Magritte circa 1935)
	If the exact date is not known, circa (abbreviated c.) may be used before the year. Where possible try to use museum sources.	

4.2.7 Theses, dissertations, lectures, and schoolwork

References to theses and dissertations must include:

- The level of the degree
- The field or programme (if relevant)
- The awarding institution
- Access information (if consulted online)

The format of the version actually consulted (online or printed) should be referenced.

If accessed online, the thesis is treated as an electronic source and includes the access date and URL. If unpublished and not publicly available, it must be marked as Unpublished.

	Example end-text reference	Example in-text reference
Doctoral dissertation/thesis online	Zotzmann, K. 2006. Educating for the future: a critical discourse analysis of the academic field of intercultural business communication. PhD thesis. Lancaster University. Accessed 3 September 2021. http://eprints.soton.ac.uk/id/eprint/179439	Zotzmann (2006) explores...
Master's dissertation/thesis online	Halttunen, J. 2012. Improving the process for mail delivery services. MSc thesis. Industrial management. Metropolia University of Applied Sciences. Accessed 3 September 2021. http://urn.fi/URN:NBN:fi:amk-2012060812306	...was described by Halttunen (2012, 45).
Bachelor's dissertation/thesis online	Lenger, X. 2012. A feasibility study of market expansion for company X. BBA thesis. Business management. Laurea University of Applied Sciences. Accessed 9 November 2012. http://urn.fi/URN:NBN:fi:amk-201204104237	According to Lenger (2012, 68), ...
Dissertation/thesis unpublished	Jones, L. 2018. Factors affecting car purchasing decision making. BBA. Business Management. University of Hull. Unpublished.	(Jones 2018)
Lecture	Bradshaw, M. 2012. Pitching 101. [lecture]. Held on 4 October. Laurea University of Applied Sciences. *References to lectures or lecture materials should include the date of the lecture, the institution, and the format of the material where relevant. If accessed via an online learning environment (e.g. Canvas), the access date and URL should be included. If the material is restricted access, this may be indicated.*	... (Bradshaw 2012).
Lecture handout/notes	Halvorson, M. 2012. Creative confusion. [lecture handout]. Held on 11 May 2012. Laurea University of Applied Sciences.	In Halvorson's opinion (2012), ...

	Example end-text reference	Example in-text reference
Lecture slides/notes from Canvas	Koivu, M. 2009. The Finnish judicial system. [online lecture notes]. From the Canvas workspace Business Processes. Accessed 13 August 2021. https://canvas.laurea.fi	...mentioned by Koivu (2009).
	The reference can also give information concerning the course or study unit where the source originated, as well as indicating the type of media.	
Student coursework	Suomalainen, S. 2008. Business communication skills. Assignment 2. Laurea University of Applied Sciences. Unpublished.	...was described by the author in an earlier assignment (Suomalainen 2008).
	It is very unusual to cite unpublished work written by oneself, but if this is necessary then it should also be marked as ***unpublished***.	

4.2.8 Personal communications

Personal communications may include emails, letters, phone calls, SMS messages, meetings or interviews conducted by a writer in the process of gathering data for their research. Since such communications are unpublished, they cannot be verified by the reader. For this reason, in standard referencing systems they are often not listed in the references section.

In Laurea reports, however, the list of references section is divided into sub-sections which include a section for Unpublished sources. Personal communications must therefore be listed in this section and referenced in the main text in a similar way to other sources.

The main difference is that the in-text reference must indicate that the source is a personal communication. This is done by including the words “Personal communication” or the abbreviation “Pers. Com.” in the in-text reference (see examples below).[8]

Although personal communications may be used extensively in some research projects, particularly at master’s level, writers must ensure that they follow appropriate **ethical guidelines** whenever using such information. **It is essential to obtain permission from any individual whose name will be included in the report.** Likewise, the writer must also ensure that the information is accurate.

If several individuals are interviewed or surveyed for the purposes of acquiring a dataset, it is standard practice to **use pseudonyms** when attributing quotations or statements. In such

[8] Note that the Finnish guidelines at Laurea recommend that personal communications be referred to in the text in the same way as other in-text references, without using the words ‘Pers. com.’ or ‘Personal communication’.

cases, interviewees are not listed individually in the References section; instead, the research methodology is described elsewhere in the report.

In the examples below:

- The end-text reference specifies the type of communication and the date.
- The in-text reference includes “Personal communication” or “Pers. com.”.
- Titles of emails or messages are not italicised.
- Personal communications are listed under the Unpublished sources subsection of the References.

	Example end-text reference	Example in-text reference
Email or letter	Smith, R. 2026. Communications officer. Sunshine PR. Email to the author. 20 August 2026. Personal communication.	... as stated in an email to the author (Smith 2026. Personal communication.)
SMS message	Smith, R. 2026. Communications officer. Sunshine PR. Text message to the author. 20 August 2026. Personal communication.	..which was confirmed by Smith (2026. Pers. com.)
Private conversation	Griffin, M. 2026. Personnel Manager. PigTech. Conversation with the author. 14 April 2026. Personal communication.	(Griffin 2026. Pers. com.)
Private telephone conversation	Read, K. 2003. Mountain Guide. Lakeland Trust. Telephone conversation with the author. 14 January 2009. Personal communication.	...was described to the author by K. Read (2003. Pers. com.)
Private interview	Mäkinen, J. Managing Director. Digital Equipment Corporation Oy. Interview with the author. 4 October 2007. Helsinki. Personal communication.	(Mäkinen 2007. Personal communication.)

Qualitative research often includes data collected through recorded and structured interviews. In such cases:

- Interviewees are usually anonymised.
- Individual interviewees are not listed in the References section.
- The methodology section explains how the interviews were conducted, recorded and analysed.

- Citations within the text typically use pseudonyms or identifiers (e.g., Interviewee A, Participant 3).

For example:

According to Interviewee A, customer trust was the primary competitive factor.

No reference list entry is required when interviewees are anonymised and described methodologically.

Bibliography and links to more tools

There are many guides and resources with further information about source referencing and academic writing, some of which are listed in this bibliography[9].

Unfortunately, due to the wide range of formats and variations within individual formats, the recommendations given online, and in the sources below, will differ from those presented in this guide. However, the reader will be able to find more examples of different cases that have not been covered.

Particularly helpful are the online citation managers and tools such as Citation Machine (see below) which generate references for books, journals, and websites. These can be useful in identifying authors, years, places of publication and publishers, as well as providing a ready-made reference, which with a little modification can be used in the list of references.

Software tools and applications can also generate reference from bar codes which are scanned with a webcam or tablet camera.

Textbooks and manuals

Bailey, S. 2011. Academic writing: a handbook for international students. 3rd edition. London: Routledge.

Bell, J. 2005. Doing your research project: a guide for first-time researchers in education, health, and social science. 4th edition. Maidenhead: Open University Press. Book from ebrary. Accessed 12 November 2012. http://site.ebrary.com/lib/laurea/

Biggam, J. 2008. Succeeding with your masters dissertation: a practical step-by-step handbook. Buckingham: Open University Press. Book from ebrary. Accessed 12 November 2012. http://site.ebrary.com/lib/laurea/

Creme, P. & Lea, M. 2008. Writing at university: a guide for students. Buckingham: Open University Press.

[9] Note that in Laurea student theses and reports the term **References** is used. This section, however, provides information and links to other sources not mentioned in the main text and so the term **Bibliography** is used.

Garson, G. 2002. Guide to writing empirical papers, theses and dissertations. New York: Marcel Dekker.

Neville, C. 2010. The complete guide to referencing and avoiding plagiarism. 2nd edition. Maidenhead: Open University Press. Book from ebrary. Accessed 12 November 2012. http://site.ebrary.com/lib/laurea/

Pears, R. & Shields, G. 2010. Cite them right: the essential referencing guide. 8th edition. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Swales, J. & Feak, C.2012. Academic writing for graduate students. 3rd edition. Ann Arbour: University of Michigan Press.

Useful links and tools

Citation machine. 2020. Citation generator. https://www.citationmachine.net/apa

Et plagieringseventyr. 2010. The University of Bergen. Accessed 28 September 2021. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mwbw9KF-ACY

Imagine Easy Solutions. 2012. EasyBib. [application]. iPad. Imagine Easy Solutions LLC.

Laurea University of Applied Sciences. 2026. Lähdeviitteet ja lähteiden merkintätavat Laureassa.

Laurea LibGuides. 2026. Laurea University of Applied Sciences. Accessed 20 February 2026. https://libguides.laurea.fi/reference_management

Monash University. 2026. Citing and referencing. Accessed 20 February 2026. https://www.monash.edu/library/help/citing-and-referencing

Purdue Online Writing Lab. n.d. Research and citation sources. Accessed 28 September 2021. https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/resources.html

University of Leeds. 2012. Referencing. Accessed 12 November 2012. http://library.leeds.ac.uk/skills-referencing

WorldCat.org: The World's Largest Library Catalog. 2026. Accessed 17 February 2026. https://www.worldcat.org/

Zotero. Your personal research assistant. n.d. Accessed 17 February 2026. https://www.zotero.org/.