Assignment Guidelines and Criteria for Written Work

- This guide is the document referred to in The Dundalk Institute of Technology Student Handbook and it is meant to support you in submitting academic work, in whatever form, to Dundalk Institute of Technology.
- It will help you to overcome some of the challenges often associated with academic writing.
- In particular, it will help you follow the Institute’s Policy on Academic Honesty and Integrity as adopted by the Academic Council in June 2004.
- This document is in force in all the Institute’s departments unless your tutor or lecturer advises you otherwise.

This guide has three sections.

Part 1.0 outlines the assignment presentation guidelines.

Part 2.0 offers guidance on academic writing.

Part 3.0 describes the referencing guidelines adopted under the Dundalk Institute of Technology Policy on Academic Integrity and Honesty.

The Institute and its departments will monitor the operation of these guidelines and will notify students of any substantial changes.

Good luck with your studies and writing!¹

¹ Written by J P Clinton, DkIT, February 2005, based on material from the Department of Nursing and Health Care Studies, Institute of Technology, Tralee, Co Kerry. (Used with permission). Future versions will include a wider selection of applications/examples, based on suggestions from users. Suggestions please by E-mail to AcQualSC@dkit.ie.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## 1.0 Assignment Presentation Guidelines

## 2.0 Guidance on Academic Writing

## 3.0 Referencing Guidelines

### 3.1 INTRODUCTION
- 3.1.1 The reference list
- 3.1.2 Plagiarism
- 3.1.3 Bibliography
- 3.1.4 Referencing system in use

### 3.2 REFERENCING WITHIN THE TEXT
- 3.2.1 Citing one author
- 3.2.2 Citing two authors
- 3.2.3 Citing three or more authors
- 3.2.4 Citing several sources
- 3.2.5 Citing a public body
- 3.2.6 Citing authors with the same surname and publication date
- 3.2.7 Citing authors with more than one publication in the same year
- 3.2.8 Citing direct quotations
- 3.2.9 Citing secondary sources

### 3.3 THE REFERENCE LIST
- 3.3.1 Presentation / Arrangement of references
- 3.3.2 Referencing a book
- 3.3.3 Referencing a chapter in an edited book
- 3.3.4 Referencing a journal article
- 3.3.5 Referencing a newspaper article
- 3.3.6 Referencing secondary sources
- 3.3.7 Government publications
- 3.3.8 Acts of government
- 3.3.9 Official reports
- 3.3.10 Theses and dissertations
- 3.3.11 Conferences
3.3.12 Video / DVD
3.3.13 CD Rom / Databases
3.3.14 Internet
3.3.15 Full text articles
3.3.16 Referencing a legal case

3.4 BIBLIOGRAPHY

APPENDIX 1 ASSIGNMENT FEEDBACK SHEET.

APPENDIX 2 APPLICATION FOR EXTENSION APPROVAL / ASSESSMENT ABSENCE
1.0 ASSIGNMENT PRESENTATION GUIDELINES.

1.1 Assignments must be typed, using double spacing on one side of white A4 paper. Please use font 'Times New Roman' with font size 12 and regular font style. Allow uniform margins on all sides. 2.5 cm is the standard.

1.2 You may be required by your lecturer or tutor to submit your work in an electronic version. Your work should always include a fully completed and signed copy of the form shown as Appendix I of this document. You must retain, and make available on request, an electronic version of your work in the form in which you have submitted it.

1.3 The use of headings within the text depends on the specific assignment - refer to your lecturer or tutor.

1.4 The front page must clearly specify the module name and number, the assignment title, the student name, the lecturer's name, the actual word count and the date of submission. Do not include inappropriate clip art or similar design on the front cover as this may detract from your academic work. Students submitting a research proposal at degree level, or master's dissertation, may be given specific guidelines for submission and should adhere to these.

1.5 Pages should be numbered accordingly. The page number is inserted in number format and centered at the bottom of the page. Do not number the title page.

1.6 Please staple assignments at the top left hand corner. If absolutely necessary a light plastic slipcover may be used.

1.7 Submit one copy of the assignment only, unless directed otherwise by your lecturer or tutor. However, you are required to retain a hard copy, which you may be required to produce at a later stage. Assignments will be returned at the end of the examination process for that specific year.

1.8 Assignment length should be within 10% of the recommended word limit otherwise marks will be deducted (up to 10%).

1.9 In the event that an assignment deadline cannot be met, the student must ask for an extension, in writing, from the lecturer who has set the assignment. Extension forms are available from the department secretary or from your lecturer/tutor. (See sample copy attached as Appendix 2). An extension is granted only in extenuating circumstances. Absences arising from planned holidays or other such personal trips
will not usually be regarded as extenuating circumstances. A record of the extension will be forwarded to the student's file for reference at the end of the examination process for that year. Work not submitted on time without the prior approval of the module lecturer will be failed and a maximum of 40% awarded for the resubmission.

1.10 All students must adhere to the modified Harvard referencing system as it is used according to the guidance provided by the Institute library and its staff. (Refer to Part 3.0 of this guide). Errors in referencing may reduce your marks by up to 10%.

1.11 Plagiarism (the submission in whole or part of work not originating from the student) will be dealt with through the formal Institute disciplinary procedures. (See § 3.1.2 of this guide). If a case of plagiarism occurs and the student is permitted to resubmit, a maximum of 40% will be awarded.

1.12 Submitted work should in all cases be accompanied by a fully completed and signed copy of the form that is shown as Appendix I of this document and you are required to retain, and make available on request, an electronic version of the work as submitted.

2.0 GUIDANCE ON ACADEMIC WRITING

2.1 Depending on the programme you are undertaking, and the stage you are at within that programme, the expectations of your writing style will vary. Each course within the department has a marking scheme, which sets out the criteria, which a student must fulfill in order to reach a particular grade. Refer to individual Tutors or lecturers for further details.

2.2 The areas considered when marking a piece of academic work include:

- Knowledge
- Comprehension
- Structure
- Application
- Analysis
- Synthesis
- Evaluation
- Language
- Referencing

2.3 Always refer to the assignment guidelines given and contact the lecturer or supervisor for assistance if required. The articles/works listed below may provide you
with further guidance in preparing a piece of academic work.

Turabian, K.L., A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations 

Web-sites of relevance:
http://sites.uws.edu.au/learning/health/mod5 b.htm

3.0 REFERENCING GUIDELINES

3.1 INTRODUCTION

3.1.1 The reference list

A reference list identifies the source of all material, both published and unpublished, which a writer refers to (cites) within a piece of academic work, and acts as evidence for particular claims or conclusions. This material can include written work, electronic sources and conference proceedings. A reference list enables the reader to:
- Assess how appropriately particular sources have been used
- Check the origin and accuracy of sources
- Locate the original material if required
- Be confident that the reader has not plagiarised other work (Gopee, 1999).

3.1.2 Plagiarism

If you include other people's ideas in your work, without acknowledging the source, then you are plagiarising. Plagiarism is the intentional presentation of someone else's work - published or unpublished, either written or in some other form - as if it were your own. Copying from an unacknowledged source, even if the original wording has been changed, constitutes plagiarism. Where a verbatim quotation or paraphrase is included, it is not sufficient to include at the end of your assignment a general list of works consulted. In accordance with good academic practice, the source of each quotation or paraphrase must be used (RCN Institute, 2000).

If your work is accurately referenced then accidental plagiarism is avoidable. Lecturers are advised to be vigilant in detecting possible cases of plagiarism. Any suspected cases will be channeled through the formal Institute procedures. If a student is found guilty of plagiarism serious penalties can occur. If you have any concern as to what constitutes plagiarism please consult with your module leader.
3.1.3 Bibliography

A bibliography differs from a reference list in so far as it lists material, which may have been consulted but is not referred to in the final assignment (Gopee, 1999). A bibliography is only required when the lecturer, supervisor or tutor requests it.

3.1.4 Referencing system in use

The Harvard referencing system is used. Material is referenced using an author-date method. Many organisations adapt the Harvard system with minor variations, for use at local level (Gopee, 1999). You are required to use the Harvard referencing system as it is modified within the Dundalk Institute of Technology.

The remainder of this guide will outline how to reference within the assignment text and how to construct the reference list. It may not be possible to address all eventualities. In cases of uncertainty refer to your tutor or lecturer. Key considerations in compiling your reference list are consistency and clarity. It is wise to keep a list of resources consulted as you prepare an assignment to avoid difficulties in locating the reference sometime later!

3.2 REFERENCING WITHIN THE TEXT

Whenever an author's work is referred to in an assignment, the author's surname and the year of publication is mentioned. There are several ways of citing this information:

3.2.1 Citing one author

Nursing research can be defined as the systematic and rigorous collection and analysis of data on the organisation, delivery, uses and outcomes of nursing care for the purpose of enhancing clients' health (Parahoo, 1997).

Or

Parahoo (1997) defines nursing research as the systematic...

Or

According to Parahoo (1997) nursing research is defined as the systematic...

Or

In defining research Parahoo (1997) refers to the systematic...

3.2.2 Citing two authors

Both authors are named:

A study undertaken by Cleary and Treacy (1997) outlines...

Or

Cleary and Treacy (1997) show that...

Or

There is much debate regarding different approaches to health promotion...
3.2.3 **Citing three or more authors**

Only the first author is named in the assignment, followed by 'et al'. An article by Bayliss, Salter and Locke (2003) would be referenced as follows:

Bayliss et al. (2003) state that... ... However, all the authors should be listed in the reference list.

3.2.4 **Citing several sources**

When using several sources to support the same statement, the author(s) of each source is listed in chronological order with the earlier publication date first separated by semicolons:

Consequently, a number of authors have described caring as an ethic (Carper, 1979; Fry, 1988; Kelly, 1988; Harrison, 1990; Kurtz and Wang, 1991) indicating that there is a moral component to caring.

3.2.5 **Citing authors with the same surname and publication date**

The author's initials are used in the text to differentiate publications:

Taylor, L. (1999) states that the profession....
Caring is a... (Taylor, R., 1999).

3.2.6 **Citing authors with more than one publication in the same year**

The publications are differentiated by adding a, b, c, etc to the date in the text

An Bord Altranais (2000a) outlines the standards of professional conduct... An Bord Altranais (2000b) outlines the key features... .

3.2.7 **Citing a public body**

Sometimes there is no individual named as author, but an organisation or corporate body. In this case, use the name of the organisation as the author:

Recent research suggests... (An Bord Altranais, 1999).

3.2.8 **Citing direct quotations**

It is preferable to paraphrase another author's work in your own words as opposed to an
endless number of quotations. However, when quoting directly from a specific source, a short quotation is presented within single inverted commas. The surname, the year of publication and the exact page number(s) are also included:

As Bayliss et al. (2003) state 'overall the audit of assessing continence and providing an equitable quality of care for the patients' (p. 863).

Quotations of three lines or longer are indented and italicised with a free line above and below:

'Overall the audit indicates that continence advisers who responded felt that care pathways were an effective method of assessing continence and providing an equitable quality of care for the patients' (Bayliss et al., 2003, p. 863).

3.2.9 Citing secondary sources

It is always best to consult the original source and not to use a secondary source as it may present a distorted view of the original work. There may be times when it is not possible to consult the original work (known as the primary source) but you may have read about it in someone else's work. In this instance you are using a secondary source.

All secondary sources are acknowledged as follows:

Strauss and Corbin (1990) describe how it is possible for sociologists, psychologists or philosophers to use perspectives from their own disciplines to study phenomena using the grounded theory method.

If you have not read this book itself, but have read about it in the book written by Parahoo in 1997, and you want to refer to Strauss and Corbin's views in an assignment, you should cite the reference in the following way:

It is possible for sociologists, psychologists (Strauss and Corbin, 1990, cited in Parahoo, 1997).

3.3 THE REFERENCE LIST

3.3.1 Arrangement of references

The reference list appears at the end of an assignment on a separate page and is titled "references". Any appendices are included after the reference list. The references are typed as a single list incorporating all material cited within the text. Individual references within the reference list are single spaced with double spacing between each reference. The standard assignment presentation guidelines apply. (Refer to section 2.0 of this guide). No indentation is required. The title of a book/journal/publication is in italics but where this is not possible, e.g. handwritten work, underlining is used. Use a capital letter at the beginning of a title and for any proper nouns. It is acceptable to reference material as it is published with regard to use of capital letters.

The list is arranged alphabetically in accordance with the author's surname. References are not numbered.
If there is more than one reference by the same author list them in chronological order with the earlier publication date first:


If there are a number of publications by the same author in the same year they are differentiated by, adding a, b, c, etc to the date both in the text and the reference list:


3.3.2 **Referencing a book**

Author(s) surname, followed by initial(s). (Year of publication) *Title*, (edition), Place of Publication: Publisher:  
There is no need to note the edition unless one later than the first is used. A reprinting is not a new edition:  

3.3.3 **Referencing a chapter in an edited book**

Author(s) of chapter, followed by initial(s). (Year) Chapter Title, cited in editor(s) surname, followed by initial(s). (editor), *Title* (edition), Place of Publication: Publisher, page numbers of chapter.  

3.3.4 **Referencing a journal article**

Author(s), Initial(s). (Year) Title of article, *Name of Journal*, Volume number (issue number where applicable), page numbers.  
3.3.5 **Referencing a newspaper article**

Author(s), Initial(s). (Year) Title of article. *Name of newspaper*, date, page numbers.


3.3.6 **Referencing secondary sources**

Author(s) of original text, followed by initial(s). (Year) *Title*, Place of Publication: Publisher, cited in Author(s), followed by initial(s). (Year) *Title* (edition), Place of Publication: Publisher.

As previously noted secondary sources should only be referenced if it is not possible to access the original work. In the reference list the secondary source noted earlier in this guide would be referenced as follows:


3.3.7 **Government publications**

Many government publications credit a department or a body as the author. This is referred to as corporate authorship. You will need to get this information from the document:


Note that government departments can change their name. It is important to reference the author as it appears on the actual document.

3.3.8 **Acts of government**


3.3.9 **Official reports**

The author of official reports is generally a public body as opposed to a specific author:


3.3.10 **Theses and dissertations**

For the purpose of referencing these are generally treated like books. However, as they are unpublished work the educational establishment and its location replace the publication details.

3.3.11 **Conferences**

Paper from published conference proceedings:

3.3.12 **Video / DVD**

A similar format to referencing books is applied but it is important to note the type of medium - video or DVD. If no author is available use the title of the video as the first part of the citation.

3.3.13 **CD Rom/Databases**

A similar format is used to that of a journal article. The date should be that of the CD ROM issue and not that of the article:

3.3.14 **Internet**

It is important to exercise caution when referencing from the Internet as all material may not be evidence based, or from a reputable source. When referencing an item sourced from the Internet it is important to include the full website address and the date on which it was accessed:

3.3.15 **Full text articles**

When referencing a full text article from an online source the article is referenced as per standard journal articles but the full website address and the date of access are also included:

3.3.16 **Referencing a legal case**

A particular referencing format is applied to legal cases. If reference is made to a number of cases, they may be included as a table of cases at the end of your work. This
is more relevant in post-graduate studies. Alternatively, if you only make reference to one or two cases they can be included within the reference list. The Tony Bland case would be referenced as follows:

*Within the text:*

The legal issues surrounding withdrawal of treatment are articulated in Airedale NHS Trust v Bland (1993)

*In the reference list:

It is important to include the full citation for the case, which is generally available at the source:

Airedale NHS Trust v Bland [1993] 1 All ER 821.

### 3.4 Bibliography: SOURCES USED IN COMPILING THIS GUIDE


Royal College of Nursing Institute (2000) *Referencing guidelines for all students and staff of the RCN Institute*, London: RCN.


Assignment Submission/Feedback Sheet

This section is to be completed by the student before submission. Use block capitals.

Student's Name:..............................................................................................................................

Student I D No:.................................

Module Code and Title: ..............................................................................................................

Assignment Title:......................................................................................................................

................................................................................................................................................

Date of submission:.......................................................................................................................

I confirm that the work submitted has been produced through my own efforts.

Student's Signature: .............................................................

Conditions:

- There will be automatic deductions of 10% for work, which is 10% over or under the word limit.

- Errors in referencing will result in up to 10% deduction of marks.

- Plagiarism will be dealt with through the formal institute disciplinary procedures. If permitted to resubmit, a maximum of 40% will be awarded.

- Work not submitted on time without prior approval will be failed and a maximum mark of 40% awarded for the resubmission.

This Section may be used by tutor/lecturer for General Comments or Feedback on Assignment (continue overleaf if required):

Lecturer's Signature:.................................................................Mark:......................... Date:............................

Any mark indicated here is provisional until after the meeting of the board of examiners.
APPENDIX 2

APPLICATION FOR EXTENSION APPROVAL / ASSESSMENT or ABSENCE

In the event that an assignment deadline/assessment date cannot be met, the student must ask for an extension or approval of absence from the lecturer who has set the assignment/assessment. An extension or approval of absence is granted only in extenuating circumstances. Absences arising from planned holiday or other such personal trips will not usually be regarded as extenuating circumstances. The absence record will be forwarded to the student's file. Work not submitted on time without prior approval will be failed and a maximum of 40% awarded for the resubmission.

It is the responsibility of the student to complete this form and discuss the request with the relevant lecturer in advance of the assignment due date/assessment date.

Completion of this form does not guarantee that requests will be met. Approval is at the discretion of academic staff.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STUDENT:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>COURSE TITLE / YEAR:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MODULE TITLE:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RELEVANT LECTURER:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASSIGNMENT DEADLINE / ASSESSMENT DATE:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REASON FOR EXTENSION / ABSENCE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACTION PLAN:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STUDENT SIGNATURE:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LECTURER SIGNATURE:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Copies of this form are available from Department offices.

The Lecturer should return completed forms to the Department Secretary.