

# Communication Studies Style Guide

Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences  
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This guide sets out the basic conventions for the presentation of written material in Communication Studies. Following these guidelines will not only help you to demonstrate your research and writing skills in Communication Studies assessments, they will also assist you in developing these skills to a professional level.

## Formatting

- Use double spacing for text and footnotes.
- Use only one font for text.
- Denote new paragraphs by indenting the first line with the tab key.
- Do not leave line spaces between paragraphs.
- Leave one space after full-stops (between sentences).
- Use page numbers to ensure that your work stays in order.

## Language and Writing Style

Assignments should clearly communicate your ideas to the reader. Here are some simple suggestions to improve your writing:

- Make the connections between the parts of your assignment evident to the reader. Each sentence should follow logically from the previous sentence, and each paragraph should also develop or build upon points raised in the last paragraph. Don't assume these connections are obvious - you have to make them so.
- Each sentence should be grammatically correct, as well as understandable. Read your writing aloud to check for sense and clarity. See chapter eight in Hay *et al* (2002) for detailed information on constructing sentences.
- Set your spell-checking system to English (AUS) or English (UK). Remember that spell-checking will not catch all mistakes, so proof read through with your own eyes. You may find this easier to do with a hard copy rather than on the computer screen.
- Make sure that your word choice is appropriate. If in doubt, use simple words to ensure clarity.

## Abbreviations and Contractions

- its / it's: The ONLY time you need an apostrophe is when you are writing a contraction of 'it is'. Since you should avoid contractions in formal assignments anyway, it is probable that you will not need to use 'it's' in an essay.
- The use of abbreviated titles should always be preceded by an explanation of that abbreviation. For example, the first time you mention the Australian Labour Party write it as Australian Labour Party (ALP), then use ALP only after that, and similarly, *The Lord of the Rings* (*LotR*). While abbreviations can be useful, do not use them at the expense of clarity and style.

- Full stops should be used when the abbreviation is in lower case or only the initial letter is in upper case as in Mon., Jan., e.g., i.e. Abbreviations such as WHO and PhD, which have more than one capital letter or all capitals, have no full stops.
- Contractions (which are distinguished from abbreviations by the presence of the final letter) do not require full-stops (e.g. 'Dr', 'Mr').

## Apostrophes

- Use (s') for plural nouns (eg, the peacocks' noises) and ('s) for singular nouns (the peacock's noises) unless the 's' sound is already pronounced (eg. for goodness' sake).

## Dates

- Use the form 19 September 1972, with no comma between the month and the year. If the day of the week is given, then a comma should be inserted after it (e.g. Friday, 6 June 1997).
- Use 1990-1995 rather than 1990-95. Use 1978/9 for a financial year.
- When referring to decades, an apostrophe is not needed (e.g. 1980s, not 1980's)
- Spell out nineteenth century, twelfth century etc. Hyphenate where used as an adjective (e.g. a nineteenth-century innovation).

## Numbers

- Generally, spell out numbers between 'zero' and 'ninety-nine' and use figures for 100 and above. Any size number used to open a sentence should be in words.
- Don't use commas in numbers of four or fewer digits. Numbers of five or more digits should include a space where a comma was formerly used (e.g. 3 800 000, or 39 000).

## Quotations

When using the exact words from another person's work, you need to indicate that this is a quotation. Be sure to check that you are quoting accurately.

Quotations of fewer than thirty words in length should run in the text and be enclosed within single quotation marks. Double quotation marks should be used for quotations within quotations.

Quoted passages which exceed thirty words in length should be separated from the main body of the text by the space of a line above and below (i.e. between the quoted passage and the paragraph containing the quotation), and should be indented. The quotation should not be enclosed in single quotation marks, but double quotation marks should be used for quotations within the quoted passage.

- When incorporating quoted material into a sentence of your own, make sure that the sentence makes grammatical sense.
- If you need to leave out some words of the original quotation, use an ellipsis (three dots only, e.g. ...). Do not use an ellipsis at the beginning or end of a quotation - they should only be used to indicate that you have left out some words in the middle.
- If you need to make slight changes to a word or words in the original quotation, enclose the altered material in square brackets.
- Square brackets should also be used for interpolations within quotations.
- In quotations, the spelling of the original should normally be kept. To avoid unnecessary queries, the marking '[sic]' should be placed immediately after any unusual spelling.

Example (also demonstrates citation and footnoting):

Machin argues that '[h]istories of research into media effects usually take the form of a narrative which describes a progression from primitive to sophisticated.' (2002, p.67) This approach to media research often parallels narratives of the media forms themselves, in which their development from a point of origin to the present is presented as a linear, upward movement.<sup>1</sup> Therefore, any analysis that is 'grounded in an historical survey' needs to be aware of this tendency, and its effects on that analysis. (Stokes, 2003, p. 95)

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<sup>1</sup>For example, see an account of film history (Orr, 2000) that assumes early, and archaic, styles of film were quickly improved by technological innovation, and an opposing account that highlights the similarities between early and contemporary film (Gunning, 1995).

## Citations

### In-text Referencing

Direct references to sources within the body of the text (whether through quoting, paraphrasing, or as a substantial influence) require an in-text citation. These citations provide the details that will allow the reader to trace your sources, should they wish to know more. It also demonstrates your research skills and ability to follow good academic practice. Communication Studies uses a modified version of the Harvard Referencing System.

As you can see in the example above, the in-text citation is placed after the information it refers to, often at the end of the sentence and before the full stop (or other punctuation). Designated by brackets, the citation concisely communicates all the required information: author, dates of publication and page number(s). Where some of the information usually found in the in-text citation is given in the body of the essay, that information can be omitted from the citation.

Forms for in-text citations:

- Single author (Author surname, year of publication, p. page number)  
(Dovey, 2000, p. 82)
- Two authors (First author surname and Second author surname, year of publication, p. page number)  
(Walker and Taylor, 1998, pp. 45-53)
- More than two authors: (First author surname *et al.*, year of publication, p. page number)  
(Balnaves *et al.*, 2004, p. 197)

When citing page numbers, p. should be used where one page is cited, while pp. is used for more than one page. Numerals should be cited in full, e.g. pp. 215-218 (not 215-8 or 215-18), and an ampersand is used when referring to non-consecutive pages in footnotes, e.g. pp.245, 249 & 253. In some sources such as films or websites, page numbers may not be available or appropriate. In these cases omit page numbers or use a substitute, such as paragraph numbers within web pages.

## Footnotes

Due to the in-text referencing system used in Communication Studies, footnotes will not be required as frequently as in the referencing styles used in some other disciplines. However, footnotes can be used to expand upon points raised in the body of the text. This material should be relevant to the discussion but should not be vital to the argument. For example, you might list a number of publications in order to give a sense of current scholarship in an area under discussion, or might indicate a line of future research that would build on the material under discussion.

- Footnotes should be footnotes rather than endnotes (i.e., they go at the bottom of each page rather than after the body of the essay).
- They should be numbered consecutively throughout the essay.
- Footnote reference numbers are usually placed at the end of the relevant sentence or paragraph, after the full stop or other punctuation mark.

## Reference List

The full bibliographical details of any sources cited within the text need to be listed here, along with any other sources that have influenced your thinking about the assignment. This list goes after the body of the essay, and is arranged in alphabetical order by authors' surname.

Please note that significant words in the title and subtitle should be capitalised (except for prepositions and conjunctions). Always capitalise the first letter of the subtitle, even if it is an article, preposition or conjunction. Use a colon to separate the title from the subtitle.

For example: *The Cyborg Experiments: The Extensions of the Body in the Media Age*

Titles of other works cited within a title should be italicised, or where the full title is already italicised, the cited title should be unitalicised.

For example: "Not to Be Toyed With": Drug, Addiction, Bullying and Self-empowerment in *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*.'

Where there is more than one author, list the first author's name in the form Surname, First Name and Second Author First Name Surname (Walker, Janice and Todd Taylor). For more than two authors, list the first author surname first, other authors in First Name Surname form, separated by commas, with 'and' before the final cited author. If there are more than five authors, stop after five names and write *et al*. If there is more than one editor, list all the editors and change (ed.) to (eds).

Some sources you use may not have a specific individual author; rather they will be produced by a group such as a company, collective, or government department. In these cases, the name of the group is used as the author (this is known as a corporate author).

You should also be aware of the common abbreviations used in referencing:

ed. – editor	dir. - director
eds – editors	prod. - producer
trans. – translator	

Familiarise yourself with the information required to cite different types of sources. Make sure to record all these details when you are researching and note-taking – it will make life considerably easier!

## Print Sources

### Books

Author surname, Author first name (year of publication) *Title*. Place of publication: Publisher.

Dovey, Jon (2000) *Freakshow: First Person Media and Factual Television*. London: Pluto Press.

A more complicated version (you won't use all these details at once):

First author surname, First author first name and Second author first name surname, ed./eds (year of publication) *Title*. Translator first name Translator surname (trans.) Edition. Place of publication: Publisher. [original year of publication]

Anderson, Benedict (1991) *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. Revised and extended edition. London and New York: Verso.

Baudrillard, Jean (2002) *Screened Out*. Chris Turner (trans.) London and New York: Verso.  
Cunningham, Stuart and Graeme Turner, eds (2006) *The Media and Communications in Australia*. Second edition. Crows Nest, NSW: Allen & Unwin.  
McLuhan, Marshall (1994) *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press. [1964]

## Articles

(in edited collections)

Author surname, Author first name (year of publication) 'Title', in Editor first name Editor surname, ed./eds, *Title*. Place of publication: Publisher, pp. range of pages for article.

Beaune, Jean-Claude (1989) 'The Classical Age of Automata: An Impressionistic Survey from the Sixteenth to the Nineteenth Century' in Feher, Michel (ed.), *Fragments for a History of the Human Body: Part One*. New York: Zone, 430-480.

(in journals)

Author surname, Author first name (year of publication) Title, *Journal Title* volume (number), pp. range of pages for article.

Balnaves, Mark, Debra Mayrhofer and Brian Shoesmith (2004) 'Media Professions and the New Humanism.' *Continuum: Journal and Media and Cultural Studies*. 18 (2), pp. 191-203.

If you are using an electronic copy of an article from a print journal, use the form above, then add the url and access date.

Balnaves, Mark, Debra Mayrhofer and Brian Shoesmith (2004) 'Media Professions and the New Humanism.' *Continuum: Journal and Media and Cultural Studies*. 18 (2), pp. 191-203, <http://search.informit.com.au/fullText;dn=200405692;res=APAFT> (accessed 11 November 2005)

## Newspaper and Magazine

Author surname, Author first name (year of publication) 'Title of article'. Newspaper/Magazine, date of publication, page number(s).

Pennells, Steve (2005) 'Bomb Plans Found on the Internet.' *West Australian*, 19 November 2005, 7.

Pittman, Patrick (2003) 'Wide Open Roads'. *Scoop*, Spring 2003, 42-45.

## Policy Document

Author (year) *Title of Policy Document*. Place: Publisher.

Department of Culture and the Arts (2003) *Cultural Signposts -Directions for Arts and Culture in Regional Western Australia*. Perth: Department of Culture and the Arts.

## Electronic and Non-Print Sources

### Film

*Title* (date), dir. Director's name, prod. Producer's name.

*Blade Runner* (1982), dir. Ridley Scott, prod. Michael Deeley.

## Television/Radio Programme

Title of programme or presenter (date of broadcast), channel.

The 7.30 Report (25 June 2005), ABC.

Eoin Cameron (14 October 2005), 720 ABC Perth.

## DVD

DVD releases of films and television shows often have key differences or contain extra information that you may refer to in your discussion of the source. For this reason, it is important to identify the specific version you are using. In some cases, you may need insert additional information not listed in the examples below – use commonsense to work out what information is necessary and useful.

### (films)

Title (extra information, such as director's cut or extended edition) (date), [format of recording – usually DVD] (date), dir. Director's name, prod. Producer's name.

*Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring* (extended edition) (2001) [DVD] dir. Peter Jackson, prod. Peter Jackson, Barrie M Osborne, Tim Sanders and Fran Walsh.

### (television series: episodes)

'Episode Title' season.episode number (copyright date of title) in *Title from which episode was accessed* [format] (copyright date of title), company that copyrights that release.

'This Year's Girl' 4.15 (2000) in *Buffy the Vampire Slayer: Season 4 Collector's Edition* [DVD] Twentieth Century Fox.

### (extras)

'Title of extra.' (year of extra copyright) dir. Director of extra (if appropriate) in *Title from which extra was accessed* [format] (copyright date of title), company that copyrights that release.

'The Quest Fulfilled: A Director's Vision.' (2003) dir. Dan Arden in *The Lord of the Rings: Return of the King* (theatrical release, Disc Two) [DVD] (2004), New Line.

'Restless' 4.22, Commentary: Joss Whedon' (2002) in *Buffy the Vampire Slayer: Season 4 Collector's Edition* [DVD] Twentieth Century Fox.

## CD-ROM

Author (date), CD-ROM Title (CD-ROM). Place: Publisher.

Informit (1995) *Australian Feature Films* (CD-ROM). Melbourne: Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology & The Australian Catalogue of New Films and Video.

## Computer Games/Program

Author (date) *Title of program/game*, version, Place: Publisher.

Electronic Arts (2005) *The Sims 2 (Nightlife Expansion Pack)*, Electronic Arts Inc.

Adobe (2002) *Adobe Photoshop 7.0*, v. 7.0.1, San Jose, California: Adobe Systems Inc

## Online Sources

If discussing a website as a whole, then the title of the site should be italicised. The titles of files and individual pages are not italicised; instead you should use quotation marks as for articles. Corporate authors and pseudonyms may need to be used rather than the name of a specific individual author.

### Websites

Author (date) 'Title' or *Title*. url (access date)

Underwood, Mike (2003) 'Memes.' <http://www.cultsoc.ndirect.co.uk/MUHome/cshtml/> (accessed 11 November 2005)

If discussing an entire website:

Comixpedia (2005) *Comixpedia*. [http://www.comixpedia.org/index.php/Main\\_Page](http://www.comixpedia.org/index.php/Main_Page) (accessed 11 November 2005)

### Articles in online journals

Author surname, Author first name (year of publication) 'Title' Journal Title. Volume (number), url (access date).

Varma, Sandeep. 'Quantum *Bhangra*: *Bhangra* Music and Identity in the South Asian Diaspora' *Limina: A Journal of Historical and Cultural Studies* 11, [http://www.limina.arts.uwa.edu.au/current\\_volume?f=79241](http://www.limina.arts.uwa.edu.au/current_volume?f=79241) (accessed 11 November 2005).

### Graphic, Audio or Video File (including podcasts)

Artist/Composer/Director (year) 'Title of Piece/File Name' [graphic/video/audio file] (date of creation) *Site Title*. url (access date)

Lem (2005) 'Warm Fuzzies' [graphic file] (10 November 2005) *Bunny – The Book of Random* <http://www.frozenreality.co.uk/comic/bunny/strips/101105.gif> (accessed 11 November 2005)

Steckler, Scott (2005) [audio file] *The i-10 Witness Project*. <http://i10witness.org/audio/steckler.mov> (accessed 11 November 2005)

### Email, Discussion Lists and Newsgroups

Note that the access date can be omitted if it is the same as the message date.

Personal email:

Author (year) Subject line. [personal email] (message date) (access date).

Bourgault, Chantal (2005) Communication Policy in WA [personal email] (17 September 2005) (accessed 3 January 2006)

Discussion List/Listserv:

Author (year) Subject Line. Name of List. list address (message date) (access date).

NoisyBird (2005) Re: when tech goes splat. New Medeites. [newmedeites@yahoo.com](mailto:newmedeites@yahoo.com) (21 October 2005).

Bulletin Board/Newsgroup:

Author (message date) Subject line. Name of board/group. url (access date).

St Remy (2005) Recent Sackhoff interview. *Battlestar Galactica* (2004) <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0407362/board/nest/29180620> (5 November 2005) (accessed 11 November 2005).

## Blogs

Make sure you use the exact web address for the relevant specific entry rather than the address for the blog as a whole.

Author (year) 'Title of Entry' (date of entry) *Blog Name*. url (access date)

Leaver, Tama (2005) 'The Day the Music ... Changed' (8 November 2005) *Ponderance*. <http://www.ponderance.blogspot.com/2005/11/day-music-changed.html> (accessed 11 November 2005)

## For further information:

On Referencing Methods:

Walker, Janice and Todd Taylor (1998) *The Columbia Guide to Online Style*. New York: Columbia University Press.

This book is a detailed and incredibly comprehensive guide to citing digital material. It shows both humanities and scientific styles of citation.

On the Harvard Citation System:

University of Western Australia Library (2005) 'Citing Your Sources – Harvard Style.' <http://www.library.uwa.edu.au/guides/citingsources/harvard.html> (accessed 18 November 2005).

On Research, Writing and Referencing:

Hay, Iain, Dianne Bochner and Carol Dungey (2002) *Making the Grade: A Guide to Successful Communication and Study*. Second Edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

On Writing and Essay Construction:

White, Fred and Simone Billings (2005) *The Well-Crafted Argument: A Guide and Reader*. Second Edition. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company.

On Punctuation:

Truss, Lynne (2003) *Eats, Shoots and Leaves: The Zero Tolerance Guide to Punctuation*. London: Profile Books.

On plagiarism and academic misconduct:

Faculty policy available at [http://www.faculty.arts.uwa.edu.au/enrolled\\_students/policies/plagiarism](http://www.faculty.arts.uwa.edu.au/enrolled_students/policies/plagiarism)

Language, Learning and Research Skills is a section of Student Services that aims to assist student in succeeding at university. They have a range of useful resources, run study skills workshops and generally provide support. You can contact them via:

Email: [learning.skills@admin.uwa.edu.au](mailto:learning.skills@admin.uwa.edu.au)

Phone: (08) 6488 2423

Website: [http://www.studentservices.uwa.edu.au/information\\_for/student/learning](http://www.studentservices.uwa.edu.au/information_for/student/learning)