



Guidelines for writing academic papers at the bachelor, master and continuing higher education.

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1 Introduction

“All researchers and students are obliged to follow good citation practice. This is a prerequisite for critical examination and important for enabling further research” (The National Research Ethics Committee for the Social Sciences and the Humanities [NESH], 2016).

This document provides formal guidelines for the writing of papers in compliance with the requirements for academic presentation.

The requirements relating to quotations, references and lists of references or literature remain the same, irrespective of the scope of the work. These guidelines apply to the presentation of major works, such as bachelor’s, master’s and specialization theses. The guidelines are formal in the sense that they do not refer to the content and structure of student papers, for example regarding adherence to the IMRaD structure.

All papers and theses must have a front page (title sheet) that contains some formal information. You can find more information [here](#).

Article-based master’s theses must follow the instructions regarding references and literature lists that have been provided by the editors of the journals for which the articles were written. However, the introduction, which is prepared in addition to the articles, must comply with the guidelines in this document.

2 Text processing and formatting

Mandatory assignments are primarily submitted in electronic format. If the assignment is submitted on paper, the paper format should be A4 and the binding should make the assignment easy to handle. If you have questions concerning the submission of bachelor's, master's or specialization theses you can contact the faculty administration or the Studies Office.

2.1 Page format

Page format refers to layout.

Page numbering: All pages must be numbered or paginated. The page numbering starts on page 1 and continues through the reference list. The page number should not be displayed on the front page.

Font and line spacing: The paper should be written in Calibri, font size 12, with 1.5 line spacing.

Margins: Should be 2.5 cm wide. This is the default setting in most text processing systems.

The text should be left-aligned. This is the default setting in most text processing systems.

3 Table of contents

The table of contents can be an aid in structuring the content of the text. It should also help the reader to quickly establish an overview of the academic text presented.

3.1 Chapters and sub-chapters

Chapters and sub-chapters are arranged consecutively from the introduction to the conclusion. In large assignments such as bachelor's, master's and specialization theses, each chapter begins on a new page. The table of contents and the preface should not be included in the table of contents. The reference list and any appendices should be included in the table of contents, but should not form part of a hierarchy. It is recommended not to use more than three levels.

3.2 Examples of chapter and sub-chapter headings

1 This is a level 1 heading

The paper's main points should be set out under a level 1 heading. The first digit shall correspond to the chapter number. Lowercase letters are used. In large assignments such as bachelor's, master's and specialization theses, each chapter begins on a new page. No full stop after the digit in level 1 headings.

1.1 This is a level 2 heading

A chapter's main points should be set out under a level 2 heading. The first digit shall correspond to the chapter number. Lowercase letters are used.

1.1.1 This is a level 3 heading

Points that are subordinate to main points should be set out under a level 3 heading. Lowercase letters are used.

3.3 Scope of the assignment

The stated limits for the scope of assignment must be observed.

The number of words must be stated on the front page. The word count is provided as a standard functionality in most text processing systems.

The students must estimate the scope of the assignment themselves. When estimating scope, do not include the front page, preface, table of contents, abstract/summary, list of references and appendices, if any. Take note that VID's new, common guidelines for bachelor's thesis include a requirement for an abstract or summary. There may be a need for a postscript, which is placed before the reference list and should not be included in the word count.

Note that the title of bachelor's and master's theses will be reproduced on the degree certificate.

3.4 The APA style template

APA, or the author-date method, is a system in which the references are entered in parentheses in the text. The parentheses contain the author's surname, the year of publication and the page number, if appropriate. The list of references states the complete reference. Some examples are provided in these guidelines, but this document must be supplemented with the *APA Citation Compass*.

Books/articles with an author. This is how to reference a complete book or journal article:
(Dalland, 2017)

Book with no author or editor. If the publication has no personal author or editor, you can reference an institution or a publisher.

Example: (Fellesorganisasjonen, 2014, p. 20)

Chapter in an anthology/collection of articles: If an author has written a chapter in an anthology or a collection of articles, you must enter a reference to the author of the chapter or article in the text and in the reference list.

Abbreviations. In the text, you may use the abbreviated version of the names of institutions and organizations if these are generally known, such as the EU or the UN. On the other hand, if you refer to institutions and organizations that are not generally known, such as the Norwegian Union of Social Educators and Social Workers or the Norwegian Nurses Organization, you must write their names in full. Remember to use the same form in the reference in the text as in the reference list.

Example of generally known abbreviations:

The UN is an organization that seeks to contribute to world peace.

Example of abbreviations that are not generally known:

The Norwegian Union of Social Educators and Social Workers (FO) has a large membership of social workers and social educators (Fellesorganisasjonen, 2012).

No information on year or publisher:

If the **year of publication** is missing, you replace it with n.d. for 'no date'.

If the **publisher** is missing, you replace it with s.n. (sine nomine).

4 Quotes and references in continuous text

In all types of papers, an account must be given of the sources of the material used. Inadequate references and/or improper reference practices are incompatible with the requirements for academic presentation. Students may also be accused of plagiarism or cheating, cf. Section 30 in the *Regulations on admission, studies, examinations and degrees at VID university college* and the *Guidelines for addressing examination offences or attempted examination offences at VID university college*.

You must **always** refer to any source you are actually using. All sources used in the work must be referenced. The college follows the APA style template and the Chicago footnotes system.

4.1 Direct quotes

When the quote is 40 words or longer, it is recommended to indent it, preceded and followed by a blank line.

Example of an indented direct quote in a text:

Many may perceive adapting to such formalities as a straitjacket when writing, and may want to write their paper in a unique format. Refrain from doing so unless you have made sure that it will be accepted. (Dalland, 2017, p. 241)

Quotes shorter than 40 words are placed in the continuous text. The full stop must come after the parentheses. For direct quotes, you must **always state the page number**.

Example of a direct quote in continuous text:

The author says the following about writing style: «Keep an eye out for good examples from practical work and life in general that may help expand on or illustrate the questions addressed» (Dalland, 2017, p. 242).

Sometimes you may wish to leave out something from a quotation without breaking it up. For this purpose you use an ellipsis ...

Example:

«Keep an eye out for good examples ... that may help expand on or illustrate the questions addressed» (Dalland, 2017, p. 242).

If the author's name is used in the text, the publication year and the page reference can be put in parentheses next to the author's name. If you refer continuously to the same book or source and have made this explicitly clear, you can just refer to the page numbers in the parentheses.

Books or journal articles with three or more authors: Only the first author's name followed by *et al.*

References by the same author (or by the same two or more authors in the same order) **with the same publication date** are arranged alphabetically by title (excluding A or The).
(Repstad, 2007a, p. 43) (Repstad, 2007b, p. 78)

4.2 Indirect quotes

An indirect quote means that you rephrase in your own words what someone else has written. Although not quoting directly, you need to take great care to state the source of your material, and a page reference is preferable. When referring to broad features of an author's work you may refer to relevant pages from where you have drawn your material. In some cases you write in light of a certain interpretational framework that can be traced back to specific books, and in your text you may then instead provide an account of the importance of these books for your own work. You may, for example, do so in the introduction or in the presentation of your theoretical framework, depending on where this information naturally belongs. By doing so, this literature is highlighted in your paper and gains its rightful place in the reference list.

Example:

Lie (2012, pp. 27-28) describes what it means to improvise in academic texts.

Or:

The author describes what it means to improvise in academic texts (Lie, 2012, pp. 27-28).

Multiple sources quoted in the same place in the text: These are listed in alphabetical order as shown here:

(Bergland, 2004, p. 51; Martinsen, 1995, p. 11; Olsen, 1998, p. 30)

Example:

In the social sciences, a number of theoreticians have addressed the concept of social class (Bourdieu, 1979, p. 211; Marx, 1861, p. 270-279; Weber, 1899, p. 311).

If the author's name is stated in the text, it will be sufficient to state the year of publication and page reference in parentheses. If you refer continuously to the same book or source and have made this explicitly clear, you may refer only to page numbers in parentheses.

Chapters in anthologies/collections of articles: If you reference an author who has written a chapter or article in an anthology, you can do this in the text by providing the author's name and the year of publication, like this: (Oterholm, 2008).

You can also reference it like this: (Oterholm, 2008, p. 31)

4.3 Primary and secondary sources

As far as possible, the original source – the primary source – should be used. Occasionally, however, the works of some authors are not readily available and tend to be read in publications edited by others. In such cases, these serve as secondary literature or secondary sources. If you use a direct quote from a secondary source, this is the source you need to refer to. In the parentheses, you first refer to the original source of the quote, then to the secondary source that you have used in your paper.

Example:

In 1898, Freud (quoted in Karterud, 2010, p. 51) claimed that dreams were ...

The reference list should include only Karterud's work.

Example:

«By rendering humans responsible for their actions, Christianity also recognizes human freedom» (Dostoyevsky, quoted in Svendsen, 2013, p. 35).

In the reference list you only include Svendsen's work.

4.4 References to government publications and legislation

Government publications have no authors' names that you can refer to. For examples, see below, and the *APA Citation Compass*.

Example of a source:

NOU 2009: 8. (2009). *Kompetanseutvikling i barnevernet: Kvalifisering til arbeid i barnevernet gjennom praksisnær og forskningsbasert utdanning*. Barne- og likestillingsdepartementet.

In the continuous text you may do as shown here: (NOU 2009: 8, p. 39).

Example of a source:

Ministry of Finance. (2017). *Long-term perspectives on the Norwegian Economy 2017 - a summary of main points*. (Meld. St. 29 (2016-2017)).

In continuous text you may do as shown here (Ministry of Finance, 2017, p. 10).

Legislative acts

When referring to legislative acts, you enter the short title of the law in place of the author's name. You can find the short title in *Lovdata*. The short titles of Norwegian legislative acts in English translation are capitalized. Similarly, the Constitution is also always capitalized.

For example, the Act relating to municipal health and care services etc. has the short name Health and Care Services Act.

In the continuous text you use the short title:

The Health and Care Services Act (2011) sets the framework for prevention, treatment and facilitation of coping with illness in the municipalities.

Or if you place the reference at the end of the phrase:

The objective of the Act is described in Chapter 1, which says that its purposes include contributing to patient safety and enhancing the quality of the health and care services (Health and Care Services Act, 2011).

4.5 References to electronic journals and web pages

Electronic journals

References in the text should include the author's surname, the publication year and the page number, if available (or just the year and page number, if the author's name has already been stated in the text). However, electronic versions of journals will not always provide page numbers and they are then omitted.

In other words, references in the text should only include the author and publication year. The DOI or URL shall **not** be included in the continuous text.

Example:

(Kvamme, 2007)

Other electronic documents and web pages

The references in the text should include the author's surname, year (last update) of publication and page number, if available (or only the year and page number, if the author's name has already been stated in the text). Referring to an institution or similar may be relevant if the author's identity is not stated.

Example of a web page:

(VID, 2017)

4.6 Use of fiction and/or other works of art

In research and teaching it is permitted to reproduce works of art and photography without paying royalties.

There **must** be a connection between the work of art and the text produced. According to the Copyright Act, a work of art (poem, photograph, artwork etc.) cannot be reproduced as an ornament or cover picture on a book, unless this is of clear relevance to the text (Section 49 of the Copyright Act).

4.7 Use of your earlier student works

It is not permitted to submit a paper that has previously been submitted for examination purposes to this or any other university or university college in Norway or abroad. This ban on resubmission does not prevent students from elaborating on ideas conceived in earlier works.

Note that this rule applies irrespective of whether the previous assignment was submitted to VID or to any other institution in Norway or abroad. Violations of this provision may be deemed to constitute an examination offence (academic misconduct/cheating). It is permitted, however, to use/quote previously published works. In this case, the same referencing rules apply as for other sources.

5 Reference list

The reference list is an overview of the literature that *has been quoted or used for reference* in the paper or assignment. If you have done this correctly, all literature quoted directly or indirectly in the text will be included in the list of references, and all the literature itemised in the list of references is retrievable within the text.

In the reference list, all the different sources such as books, reports, journal articles and government documents shall be listed in alphabetical order according to the author's surname and placed after the text, but before the appendices. A number of specific information items must be included in the reference list. When drawing up the list, consistency is essential.

The main idea is to remain consistent and include all the information needed for others to identify the sources that have been used. Additional information about the reference must always come at the end, after the other information.

Some examples are provided in these guidelines, but this document must be supplemented by the *APA Citation Compass*.

5.1 Books

Author. (year). *Title*. Publisher.

The author's or editor's surname is given first, then the initials of their first name (so-called inverted or reverse order). If the author has a double surname, you place the last one first, except when the two surnames are hyphenated. A middle name, if any, is entered after the first name. The author's name is followed by the publication year in parentheses. Then follows the *book title*, which is *italicized*. Next comes publisher. A book may come in several editions, and this must be reflected in the reference list. A book may also come in several printings, but this information should not appear in the reference list.

Example:

Askeland, G. A., & Molven, O. (2010). *Dokument i klientarbeid: Journalar, sosialrapportar og saksframstillingar i sosialt arbeid* (6th ed.). Gyldendal akademisk.

If the publication has 3-20 authors, you enter them all in the reference list, in the same order as listed in the publication. Before the last author's name you replace the comma with &. If the publication has 21 or more authors or editors, you state the first 19 authors in the reference list, followed by ... then the last author.

You can find further examples in the *APA Citation Compass*.

Sometimes you may wish to state the year when a book was **first published**.

Example:

Marx, K. (1867/2005). *Capital: A critique of political economy*. Palgrave.

References by the same author and the same publication year are arranged alphabetically by title.

Example:

Repstad, P. (2007a). *Between closeness and distance*. Universitetsforlaget.

Repstad, P. (2007b). *What is sociology*. Universitetsforlaget.

5.1.1 E-books

As a rule, these are referenced in the same way as printed books, but you need to take care in showing from where you have retrieved the material, in case it is **not available** in a permanent digital format, for example as a PDF. **Note** that if the book has a DOI, this must be used.

If the book has no DOI or is not available in a permanent digital format, you must use the Internet address/URL. For examples see the *APA Citation Compass*.

5.1.2 Other formats

Films and audio (books), such as DVDs and CDs, are treated as books, with the format stated at the end of the reference.

For examples see the *APA Citation Compass*.

5.2 Chapters in books

When the author has written a chapter in a book of which another is editor, you refer to the author of the chapter, the year and the title of the chapter. This is followed by *In* and the name(s) of the editor(s) (not inverted), *the title of the book*, and the publisher.

Example:

Oterholm, I. (2008). Barneverntjenestens arbeid med ettervern. In E. Bakketeig & E. Backe-Hansen (Eds.). *Forskningkunnskap om ettervern* (pp. 161-209). NOVA.

Note: In the text, you refer to the name of the author and the year, like this: (Oterholm, 2008, p. 194).

For further examples see the *APA Citation Compass*.

5.3 Government publications and legislative acts

Government publications. When listing government publications, the publication series takes the place of the author's name. If you retrieve the documents electronically, from stortinget.no or regjeringen.no, you do not need to state the URL in the reference list.

For examples see the *APA Citation Compass*.

Legislative acts. When listing legislative acts, you use the short name of the act in place of the author's name. You can find the short title in [Lovdata](http://lovdata.no). If you retrieve the acts electronically from Lovdata you do not need to state the URL in the reference list.

For examples see the *APA Citation Compass*.

5.4 Journal articles

When listing journal articles, you do it this way:

Author. (year). Title. *Journal title in italics*, volume(issue), pages.

For examples see the [APA Citation Compass](#).

DOI. In Internet references, and articles in particular, a so-called DOI (Digital Object Identifier) number is provided instead of a URL. In contrast to a URL, this is a **permanent** address that directs you to the article in question. Therefore you need not state the URL or date of retrieval if the document is provided with a DOI. Read more about [the DOI system](#).

Example:

Steyaert, J., & Gould, N. (2009). Social work and the changing face of the digital divide. *British Journal of Social Work*, 39(4), 740-753. <https://doi.org/10.1093/bjsw/bcp022>

If you use an electronic source from a database that has no DOI numbers, you can refer to the database name by writing, for example, «Retrieved from CINAHL».

Example:

Hansen, A. R., Ekholm, O., & Kjøller, M. (2008). Health behaviour among non-Western immigrants with Danish citizenship. *Scandinavian journal of public health*, 36(2), 205-210.
Retrieved from CINAHL.

5.4.1 Summary (abstract)

If you have not read the entire journal article you may refer to a summary or abstract.

Examples:

Fredriksson, L., & Eriksson, K. (2003). The ethics of the caring conversation. *Nursing Ethics*, 10(2), 138-148. Abstract retrieved from CINAHL.

5.5 Newspaper articles

When listing newspaper articles, names are entered in the same way as described above. The dating must be precise and include the day, month and year. Then follows the title of the article before the newspaper's name and the page. For examples, see the *APA Citation Compass*.

5.6 Dissertations or theses

Drange, I. D. (2012). *Empowerment, myndiggjøring, empoderamiento* (Master's thesis in diaconia, Diakonhjemmet University College). <http://hdl.handle.net/11250/98094>

5.7 Unpublished sources

When referring to a lecturer, but with no written documentation, this should be made clear in a description of the reference in the text. If a source is not available in printed form or has not been otherwise duplicated, and thus in principle is inaccessible to the reader, it should **not** be entered in the reference list.

Lecture manuscripts, PowerPoint presentations and speeches. In some cases, the lecturer hands out notes, PowerPoint presentations or manuscripts in association with his or her teaching. If the material handed out contains names, years or titles, it will normally be possible to quote from it. Such manuscripts are often works in progress, and it is therefore best to ask the lecturer for permission to quote from them. If the formalities are clear, this may be done as shown below. It is desirable, however, to restrict references to this type of material and use published sources instead.

Example:

Kristoffersen, M. (2009). *Sykepleieprosessens metode, inklusive sykepleieplaner*. Unpublished manuscript. Quoted with permission from the author.

5.8 Compendia – collections of photocopies

If you use material from photocopied compendia, you must refer to the original source, which you also enter in your reference list. If you read a copy of a chapter in a book or a journal article, you should enter your references according to the rules in Chapters 5.2 and 5.4 of these guidelines.

For examples see the *APA Citation Compass*.

5.9 References from the Internet

There are formal rules for how you enter references taken from the Internet. You must enter the *entire* URL or document address.

If the page does not state a personal author, you can use the institution in place of the author, as shown in the example below.

You need to include the following information:

Author. (year). *Title*. URL.

Here, the year/date refers to the publication time/date for the last update. The reading date is entered only for web pages that are frequently changed/updated, such as wikis or blogs. If there is no date or year of publication a reading date is required. In this case, you state:

Retrieved 10 April 2017 from <http://>

Example of electronic documents:

Folkehelseinstituttet. (2013). *Vaksiner og vaksinasjon*. <https://www.fhi.no/sv/vaksine/>

VID. (n.d.). *Front page*. Retrieved 5th April 2017 from <https://www.vid.no/>

6 Example of a reference list

Askeland, G. A., & Molven, O. (2010). *Dokument i klientarbeid: Journalar, sosialrapportar og saksframstillingar i sosialt arbeid* (6th ed.). Gyldendal akademisk.

The copyright act. (1961). *Act No. 2 of 12 May 1961 relating to copyright in literary, scientific and artistic works, etc.*

Dalland, O. (2017). *Metode og oppgaveskriving* (6th ed.). Gyldendal akademisk.

Folkehelseinstitutt. (2013). *Vaksiner og vaksinasjon*. <https://www.fhi.no/sv/vaksine/>

Forskningsetiske komiteer. (2016). *Forskningsetiske retningslinjer for samfunnsvitenskap, humaniora, juss og teologi* (4th ed.). Forskningsetiske komiteer.

Kirkevold, M., Nortvedt, F., & Alvsvåg, H. (Eds.). (1993). *Klokskap og kyndighet: Kari Martinsens innflytelse på norsk og dansk sykepleie*. Ad Notam Gyldendal.

Kolata, G. (2017, March 22). A scholarly sting operation shines a light on 'predatory' journals. *New York Times*. <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/03/22/science/open-access-journals.html?emc=eta1>

NOU 2009: 8. (2009). *Kompetanseutvikling i barnevernet: Kvalifisering til arbeid i barnevernet gjennom praksisnær og forskningsbasert utdanning*. Barne- og likestillingsdepartementet.

Ogden, T. (1995). Kompetanse – Et bidrag til tverretattlig begrepsutvikling. *Norges barnevern*, 72(4), 4-9.

Robsahm, T. (Producer), & Olin, M. (Director). (1998). *The House of Angels*. [DVD]. Speranza Film.

Oterholm, I. (2008). Barneverntjenestens arbeid med ettervern. In E. Bakketeig & E. Backe-Hansen (Eds.). *Forskningkunnskap om ettervern* (pp. 161-209). NOVA.

Repstad, P. (2007a). *Between closeness and distance*. Universitetsforlaget.

Repstad, P. (2007b). *What is Sociology*. Universitetsforlaget.

Statistics Norway. (2006). *Økonomisk sosialhjelp, endelege tal, 2005*. Statistisk sentralbyrå. <http://www.ssb.no/soshjelpk/arkiv/art-2006-08-17-01.html>

VID. (n.d.). *Front page*. Retrieved 5th April 2017 from <https://www.vid.no/>