

Referencing using OSCOLA

Section 2

The basic principles

Principles

- OSCOLA is based on principles of:
 - Consistency.
 - Consideration for the reader.
 - A minimum of punctuation.
- When citing materials not specifically mentioned in OSCOLA, use its general principles as a guide.

Footnotes

- OSCOLA is based on the use of footnotes – if you don't know how to insert a footnote in Word, you can find instructions in the online OSCOLA tutorial (in the FAQ section).
- Place the footnote marker at the end of the sentence, unless it needs to be next to a specific word or phrase for the sake of clarity.

Citing the law

Citing the law

Case law

Activity: Which report do I cite?

Example

Legislation

EC legislation

Activity: Ordering a citation

Citing other sources

Activity: When to cite?

Footnotes

Example

Books

Chapter in an edited book

Journal articles

Electronic journal article

Government publications

Hansard

Newspaper articles

Websites

Activity: Putting it all together

FAQs and Notes

The following pages will show you how to:

- cite cases and legislation, i.e. the 'primary' sources of law, in the accepted way
- refer to 'secondary' sources such as books, journals and government reports in your work
- cite using OSCOLA, the Oxford Standard for Citation of Legal Authorities.

View the pages in order using the arrow below or jump directly to a page using the links in the panel on the left.

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Next →

Footnote, creating in Word

To create a footnote in Word 2003

- Click in the text to indicate where the footnote marker should be inserted (for example after the full stop at the end of the sentence).
- From the Insert menu in Word, choose Reference, and from the Reference sub-menu choose Footnote.
- Ensure that the dialog box options are set to Footnotes at Bottom of page, Number format 1, 2, 3 □, Numbering Continuous and apply to Whole Document. Click Insert.
- You will be prompted to type in the text of your footnote. Remember to end your footnote with a full stop.
- Click in your text to continue typing.

You can speed up the process by using the Word shortcut instead, pressing the Ctrl, Alt and F keys together.

To delete a footnote completely, delete its footnote marker in the text.

[Close](#)

What do you do if you cite the same source several times?

- There is no need to repeat all the information each time (although it is OK to do so)
- In a subsequent footnote you can give just the author's name and refer back to the footnote where you gave the full information.

Example

- If in footnote 3, you refer to J Bloggs, *OSCOLA Made Easy* (20th edn, Sanity Press 2011)
- and you refer to it again in footnote 25, you only need to put:

Bloggs (n 3)

Use of ibid

- If the subsequent footnote *immediately* follows the one where the full citation is given, you can use the Latin term ibid.
- This is short for ibidem, which means 'in the same place'.

Quotations

- Quotations of up to three lines are incorporated in the text, with single quotation marks.
- Quotations of over three lines are indented, with no quotation marks. A line space is left before and after the indented paragraph.

Authors' names

- Give the names as they appear in the publication: sometimes this will be a full name, other times just initials.
- If there is no individual author, but an institution or organisation is identified, give that as the author.

Punctuation

- OSCOLA uses very little punctuation. It is only used where it is essential to avoid confusion.
- Therefore, an author will be given as AC Smith, not A.C. Smith.