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INTERVIEWER: Hello, and welcome to the Student Hub Library freshers event. This is to welcome new students to the Open University, and it's the chance for current students to be part of an academic community, share your ideas and advice, and generally have a good old get together, pick up some skills, and see what's happening in the world of academia.

Now we've got a really jam packed programme today, and this is our library hour where we're going to take a look at referencing and false news. Some very important issues for students for a variety of reasons. But if you're new, let me just explain briefly how it all works.

There's a watch and engage button from the website, which is the best way to watch. Now, you log in using your student details, and then you can engage in a chat. You can ask questions. You can talk about what you've had for breakfast, and you can also vote using our interactive tools. And you'll see some of those coming up on the screen.

So we'd like to know where you are, how you're feeling right now, which level you're studying, which area you're studying in, and if you've been to one of these events beforehand. If you found those, then you can just open the widget, select the item that applies to you, and then close it and those results will submit. And when you submit them, you'll see what other people have put in. If however, there's a word cloud and we say how are you feeling right now, and there's only two things you might be feeling instead of three, just put a full stop for that third one so that the results can submit.

Now this is all about a live interactive event, and it's all about your voice. So our audience are fed through into our studio. We will attempt to answer any questions, and if we can't answer them, we will get back to you.

And the people feeding that in are sitting on our hot desk, and today we have Sophie and HJ at the start of the session. Welcome both. How are you?

HJ: Good, thank you.

Yes,

SOPHIE: All good. All ready for today. Definitely. We'll round up from yesterday and the quiz.

HJ: And the quiz. Yes.

SOPHIE: So hopefully, a nice chilled one today.

INTERVIEWER: And I'm very pleased to see you have a colour coordinated effect going on there, the pair of you. Evaghn will be joining us at times as well. Now, you're both students. HJ, you must be looking forward to the politic session this afternoon.

HJ: Oh, yes. Definitely. I'm absolutely bursting for this one, and a few people in the chat are as well. And I think we're all excited and ready to go.

Kate and Angel says hello, librarians. So that's hello from them. But yes, raring to go for that one.

INTERVIEWER: And Sophie, what are you most looking forward to? I bet it's the math session.

SOPHIE: I am a little bit, yes. Although actually, I am interested in the politics one. I think that will be really fun and a good debate going on, I hope. So I'm also looking forward to that one as well.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah, we've got loads on today. I'm going to be talking to lots of different people about areas like keeping yourself cared for during your studies. We've got some really nice tutor sessions as well, so about managing your tutor effectively and making them work the best that they can for you. Tutor Q&A sessions this evening.

We're doing politics and religion as well. So there's lots and lots on, and you can find out all about those sessions on the website. If you miss anything or need to nip out, you can watch it on the catch up and it'll be available shortly after.

But now, let's take a look at referencing. And I'm joined by Katherine Moore and Wendy Chalmers. Thank you for coming along. Now referencing is a subject that all students often comment as the main source of anxiety and something that they often need help with. It's a fundamental academic skill, and I'm told that you're here to sort it out for once and for all.

WENDY CHALMERS: That's right. We like to have a look at some of the referencing myths, and talk about the why, the when, and the how to reference, and hopefully provide some clarification. So can I start with asking Katherine for her first referencing myth? Katherine's our librarian, and she has been a librarian for many years.

INTERVIEWER: You're not pulling it off very well.

KATHERINE MOORE: Oh, come on. Right. I'll do the voice, too. Only students reference. There's little point to it. I only help with it to break the monotony of shelving. Humph.

WENDY CHALMERS: Well, Katherine, I think we need to discuss why you should reference. There's probably three main reasons you should reference. First of all, you must acknowledge the work of others you use in your assignments. You can always do work to avoid plagiarism, and that's passing off the work of others without acknowledging the source. So that's the main point.

I think the second point is giving details of the sources you use actually provides support to the arguments in your writing. An expert opinion will emphasise the points you make in your arguments. And finally, giving details of the sources you use enables your tutor to follow it up, to look up the source. And other readers and colleagues may want to investigate the topic further, and they can find that source from the reference.

So there's three main reasons you should reference. And you did mention it's only in academic work. Now, that's not actually the case, as I think you're probably aware.

KATHERINE MOORE: So, yes. Obviously in your day to day life, and if you're-- any sort of job that you're in that you need to write reports for, you are going to need to back up your points with other things rather than just your opinion. So it's not just the-- so the skill of referencing kind of goes throughout everything, really. And indeed, picking up on other people's references, making sure you're reading credible things is really important in this strange post-truth world we live in.

WENDY CHALMERS: You mentioned reports which you might want to write in the workplace. Wikipedia, for example, will always have references, and if the articles aren't properly referenced, they may well be removed or flagged as inadequate. If you're writing a blog, social media, and you're using someone else's work, you should reference that source.

News articles-- a credible news article which may refer to a research report-- fat's bad for you. Fat's good for you. That research is often published in a journal, and a credible news article will reference that source. Similarly with any statistics that you cite it should be referenced.

So do you have another referencing myth for us, Katherine?

KATHERINE Referencing is the be all and end all. Everything you write must, must, must have a reference.

MOORE:

WENDY

CHALMERS:

Right. This brings us to when to reference. No, you don't have to reference everything you write. If you use the work of others-- ideas, quotations, statistics-- you should provide a reference to that material. But, for example, you don't need to reference your own ideas, your own experience, or what we refer to as common knowledge.

KATHERINE

MOORE:

So I suppose maybe explaining common knowledge is probably a good thing to do here. So things that you find normally within your module textbooks, and especially if you're starting off at level one-- that's really what you're going to be reading-- if you find things in your module textbooks that don't have references within them, then those aren't going to need a reference because it's considered common knowledge within your subject.

So sort of obvious examples would be the world is round does not require a reference. It's just not needed.

WENDY

CHALMERS:

Or perhaps Usain Bolt holds the world record for 100 metres. The dates of the Second World War is the type of information that you expect most people would know, or could find in a general encyclopaedia rather than a specialised encyclopaedia. And I think it's also subject specific. Perhaps not so much at level one.

But as you progress through your studies and perhaps get to a level two, level three, what might be common knowledge in environmental science might not be common knowledge to other people. So you do also need to think about your audience when you think-- deciding what's common knowledge. But if in doubt, provide a reference--

KATHERINE

MOORE:

Absolutely.

WENDY

CHALMERS:

--I would say.

KATHERINE

MOORE:

Yes. Or indeed, if you are having problems working out what's common knowledge within your subjects, then your tutors will be invaluable at that point. But, sorry. Moving on to third.

WENDY

CHALMERS:

Another myth from Katherine.

KATHERINE MOORE: Right. I have created this huge guide that I expect every single student to know by heart and to recite when asked.

WENDY CHALMERS: Oh, yes. The OU Harvard Guide. This--

INTERVIEWER: That's double printed, as well.

KATHERINE MOORE: Yeah, yeah. It's double-sided. Oh, yeah.

And I mean, and understandably students do get a bit like, oh, my god. It's huge, and I have to know all of it. Oh, that's horrible.

And I mean, it would be horrible if we expected you to know all of it, but we don't. I mean, we don't know all of it ourselves and aren't expected to. The important thing about it is that you know how to find the parts of it you need, and that's the parts you read.

WENDY CHALMERS: So it really helps with the how to reference.

KATHERINE MOORE: Yes.

WENDY CHALMERS: So there are different referencing styles, and the OU Harvard Guide is one of the styles. And most modules at the Open University use the OU Harvard style. So when producing an academic assignment or even a reference in the world, you will need to provide an in text citation.

KATHERINE MOORE: Which we do have, slightly [INAUDIBLE] style. Sorry, guys.

WENDY CHALMERS: But this is an example of an in text citation, and it refers to a page in this book. So here we have the author, the date, and the page number, and this is because this particular student has referred to some information about ice fish in this book on page 75. So if Katherine turns over, we will see an example of the reference, the detail which you would put at the end of your assignment.

So the in text citation goes in at the point where you're referring to that particular material, and

at the end of the list you will have-- end of your assignment, you will have an alphabetical list with the details of the reference. So you have the author, the date, the book title, and the publication, so a reader or a tutor should be able to go and look at the source from that information.

And you would find that information from this book. And in most cases if we open the page, you will find the publication and the date and who the publisher is. So that's looking at how you reference.

So when I was a student, when I was an undergraduate student, which was some time ago, life was quite simple. I mainly used journal articles and books. Education, teaching is a lot richer. There's a huge range of sources which were used in teaching. And that's partly why the OU Harvard Guide citing references is so large. There's so many different examples of referencing, and you will find the examples in there.

**KATHERINE
MOORE:**

Yeah. So the point about the size is not to get hung up on it, it's to treat it like you would a dictionary or an encyclopaedia. You'd expect it to be big, because it covers a lot. But you wouldn't expect to start at entry A and read to entry Z. That would be craziness.

So you're unlikely to need every single referencing type in an assignment, but in one assignment you may really need the help on referencing blogs. And in another assignment, actually much more standard-- all your referencing is articles, so you only follow one section.

And, yeah. The section that we don't know by heart, but every single librarian will tell you-- referencing module materials is section 7 of the OU Harvard Guide. Because that's the one we use all the time, and it's absolutely very, very helpful to students. Would recommend having that printed out or at least favorited.

INTERVIEWER:

--The main thing that students are using, isn't it? The module material reference.

**KATHERINE
MOORE:**

Yes.

INTERVIEWER:

So either the books or they multimedia material in a lot of cases.

**WENDY
CHALMERS:**

Particularly at level one. I think as students get to level two, level three, they will be going out and do some more independent research and having to reference different types of sources.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

KATHERINE MOORE: Yes, which is, yes, why it's large. But yes, level one, section 7, and you're probably done.

WENDY CHALMERS: And what do you do if the reference-- if a type of source isn't actually in there, Katherine?

CHALMERS: Because we have had some interesting inquiries on the help-desk from students. For example, we wanted to reference a gravestone.

KATHERINE MOORE: Yes. Despite being vast, the OU Harvard Guide doesn't quite manage to cover everything, but it does cover the main sources. Yes, if you find something that isn't in the OU Harvard guide, the good news is you have carte blanche to make it up, which can scare some students. But we do have on the library websites in the Help and Support section a page that says what to do if your reference type isn't in the OU Harvard Guide, and it goes through the main things that you need to think about.

So normally what the thing you're looking at is, a, the type of thing, so have gravestone in there somewhere in this case, a title for it, and for something like a physical object that you're visiting-- so it meant like maybe a gravestone or a painting-- where it is, and when you found it. But it does go through all those things that you might need to think about.

And so long as you have enough information that your tutor, who ever is reading your assignment can find it, that's the important thing. Nothing else really matters at that point, especially for stuff that isn't in the OU Harvard Guide. So it's definitely not a reason to panic if it's not in the OU Harvard Guide. It's, ooh, I get to have fun with this one.

WENDY CHALMERS: Make it up. Make it up--

KATHERINE MOORE: Yes, exactly.

WENDY CHALMERS: --but use the format or an example in the guide.

KATHERINE MOORE: I mean, and if that is concerning you, then call the library help-desk, because there's almost nothing we like more than a really-- wow, I've never referenced this before question.

WENDY OK, Katherine.

CHALMERS:

KATHERINE Yes, sorry.

MOORE:

WENDY Do you have another myth for us?

CHALMERS:

KATHERINE I do have some more myths. Right. Oh, dear. We've possibly already debunked this one, but
MOORE: never mind.

The most important thing ever is how your reference looks. If you haven't quadruple checked the type of bracket you're using, you will be instantly accused of plagiarism. Humph.

WENDY Well, Katherine. I think putting references in is much more important than the actual format. So
CHALMERS: the most important thing about referencing is acknowledging your source. I think regarding the detail-- again, the most important thing is can someone else find that information, find that source from the information you provide, so if you provide as much information as possible.

Most modules recommend a particular style. And I do think you should make an effort to follow the format of that style but don't get overanxious about commas and full stops. They're not hugely important. And as you reference, you won't need to check. You won't need to keep checking.

KATHERINE No, no. You do naturally get a feel for it, but it is really easy to get hung up on this stuff, which
MOORE: is why we're bothering including it as a myths, because students do phone us in absolute panics. And you just go, no, no, really. It's OK.

And also, I think it is worth just mentioning plagiarism here, because it is something that doesn't necessarily worry students. So if you have been incredibly naughty and gone to the internet and bought your answer from a site or another student, then you will be accused of plagiarism. And that is a great big no no. And, obviously, the OU has to go, don't do that.

If you get so worried about referencing that you just don't put any references in, and say this is all my own work because I just got too scared to reference, then that is also technically a plagiarism. But will be treated differently and you will be assisted to help you get through the assignment and make sure you reference.

If you use the wrong type of bracket or forget to put the publisher's name in, or you couldn't find the place of publication, or you couldn't find an author, that is not plagiarism. That's just accidentally making a mistake, and that's fine. And again, because it's the end of assignments, students can get very stressed about-- but what if I don't get every single mark for referencing?

Well, actually, there are not that many marks available for referencing in all honesty. And normally, if you have done everything else with your references, IE you've put them all in and there's enough information for you tutor to find it, you will get all the marks available for referencing, especially at level one. Because really, at level one, the important thing is well done. You realise you needed to reference.

WENDY CHALMERS: And the tutors will be giving you some support. They'll be providing feedback on your first assignment to assist you.

INTERVIEWER: So when tutors are maybe correcting errors and commas and brackets, people shouldn't really interpret that as that they've done it all wrong. It's maybe the tutor just trying to guide them just to get the right conventions in place early on, isn't it?

WENDY CHALMERS: Teaching them, really providing assistance.

KATHERINE MOORE: Yes. Yes. It's not a, you're in trouble. You've done this wrong. It's very much a help.

INTERVIEWER: But there is a point sometimes in modules where if you don't put any references in, it does cap the marks that you can really generate, which is why it's so important.

WENDY CHALMERS: --to make an effort to provide as much information as you have, and that's why it's so important as you're writing your assignment, junior research, to record the sources that you find so you don't get to that point the evening before you submit, and you think, where did I find that? So it is really important to be organised about it and record that information.

INTERVIEWER: Some of my very organised students use post-it notes and just chuck the reference on it so that then they can remember where it came from. I like that idea.

KATHERINE That's good.

MOORE:

WENDY One way of doing it.

CHALMERS:

KATHERINE I like that.

MOORE:

WENDY Do we have time for another myth?

CHALMERS:

INTERVIEWER: We certainly do. Yes.

KATHERINE Ooh, yay. OK, right. OK, so I whole-heartedly disapprove of any referencing software. It

MOORE: always gives perfect references, and frankly, it's cheating. Humph.

WENDY Well, referencing management software-- there are various tools available, free tools, and you

CHALMERS: can use these to store your references as you're doing your research, manage them, and they will output the references in a particular style. So they won't output in the OU Harvard style.

You will have to tweak them to fit the style.

So they can be useful tools. I would recommend them for level three post-graduate students.

At level one, you're probably not using enough references to warrant the use of the tools, but some students like to do them. Some students like to use them in their everyday life. So there are options, and you don't have to use them.

For example, Library Search, which is the library's main searching tool, it has a bookshelf so you can store references there or keep record of the sources that you're using.

KATHERINE And Library Search will also, if you've found an item there, will also if you go into the options
MOORE: will give you a reference for it. Now as we said with using a reference management tool, you're guaranteed to sort of tweak it a tiny bit, but actually all the information you have will already be there and that can just be pasted into your assignment documents. If you find that easiest, but it really is up to you.

WENDY So where would students find out more about the reference management tools?

CHALMERS:

KATHERINE Absolutely. So on the library website, again, within the Help and Support section of the library

MOORE: website, there is a page called Bibliographic Management which does talk about the main referencing tools available, both free and paid, and gives you sorts of little summaries. Now whilst the library specifically doesn't say, use this referencing tool. It's brilliant. Because each student's referencing needs are different.

So as a way of helping, what we do is we, a, have that page which describes when you might find these tools useful, but we also run a OU live training session, an online training session, for students to help them choose which reference management tool they might like to use. And indeed, if they do really want to use one.

So that session is run regularly, and there is a recording of it. If you do want to attend that session, if you go to the Training and Events tab on the library website you will see when that session is coming up. You'll also see all the other sessions that the OU Library gives. The next one is on the 4th of February at--

WENDY CHALMERS: Well remembered.

KATHERINE MOORE: I probably should be remembering it, as I'm giving it. And I will remember that I'm working on a Saturday. I really will. So at 10 o'clock, 4th of February for an introduction to the library. But then obviously, there are all the other sessions we run on that page.

WENDY CHALMERS: And there's also Being Digital. These are the collection, the bite-sized activities covering a range of topics. Finding information, but also referencing, so there is information on why to reference and also some information on the reference management tools there.

KATHERINE MOORE: Yeah. And Being Digital is great for level one students, because it really is bite-sized fun activities on lots of library things, but does have sort of a section called referencing, so it's really easy to find. And Being Digital you can access via the library website, but to be honest I find it 100% easier just to go to Google and type Being Digital and access it that way. You'll get exactly the same content. Yes, OK. Fine.

WENDY CHALMERS: OK.

KATHERINE MOORE: The students will type faster than me. OK.

WENDY Do you have a last myth for us, Katherine?

CHALMERS:

KATHERINE I do have one last myth. OK, so we insist that students use on some modules referencing styles other than the OU Harvard Guide just to irritate students on the open degree programme.

MOORE:

WENDY I think that's a myth which we can probably dispel now. Undergraduate modules, there has been a push for all modules to use the Open University Harvard style, and for that reason, to make it simpler for students. At postgraduate levels, for example, some modules may use the - psychology will use American Psychological Association, and arts modules will use their own specific styles.

CHALMERS:

KATHERINE And there is really good reason that they do that. That's because within those academic disciplines those are standard styles, and the OU would be really missing the mark if it taught a postdoc graduate degree in that subject without introducing those styles. And it's sort of on the odd occasion that you will find different referencing styles creeping into undergraduate study. It's for exactly the same reason. It's because the referencing style is essential for the subject that's being taught.

MOORE:

And whilst I can understand it would be really daunting if you were an open degree student all of a sudden to be faced with a different referencing style, it isn't just to be mean. It really is because it's sort of essential to what we teach. But if you are finding that you're just going, oh, I've never used this referencing style before, and it's hideous. There is always help.

I mean, a, on your module website in the assessment guidance, what style you are following should be really, really, really clear from there. But also, the library help-desk-- we mentioned them before-- they are always happy to help. I mean, we're always happy to help full stop, but we are always happy to help with referencing and do understand that if, all of a sudden, you're faced with a different referencing style, it can be quite--

WENDY And always consult your tutors as well. The tutors are more than happy to help. So Katherine, I hope I've dispelled some of your myths, or you dispelled some of your own myths about reference. And it's a little bit clearer about why you should reference, when you should reference, and how to reference.

CHALMERS:

And as Katherine mentioned, we do have a lot of support in place. Our guide, the library help-

desk, and module websites. So Kath--

INTERVIEWER: Thank you, both. That's been a very comprehensive guide. I'm very impressed with how much you've managed to fit in, so thank you.

And it's such an important thing, and I think you've identified the really key things. Your tutor's there help you. The library are there to help.

It's important to get the hang of it, and it's important not only to get the conventions right, but also to be able to cite your sources so that you're acknowledging they're not your own views, which people should be doing most of the time because they're mainly writing about the module material, aren't they? Especially at level one. So thank you. I really do appreciate you coming along.

Well, there's information on the Resources page, but before we end this session to go to another library session, I'd just like to take a trip to the hot-desk. HJ and Sophie, are there any outstanding questions, or have we covered us all?

SOPHIE: Well, we have been having a few problems in the chat, so apologies there. If we have missed anything at all, please drop us an email-- studenthub@open.ac.uk, or you can tweet us as well and we will try and get on that as soon as possible.

I know that when I was-- obviously, I do maths, so I do that for the specific reason of not having to reference. But I know when I did, it was actually gauging what sort of was what. Document was what, things like that. So if you do have any questions, I'm sure the library team would be more than happy to help. But like you said, if you did miss us, please tweet us or email us, studenthub@open.ac.uk.

INTERVIEWER: Have you got anything to say, HJ? You seem very quiet. I think referencing has terrified you in the past.

HJ: No, but I think a lot of people found this session hopeful. We were talking about-- there's a few people doing their TMAs at the moment and trying to get their referencing just right, so I'm sure this will be very helpful. And as Kate said, by the time she got level two, it's just about practise, and it finally clicked and that she got into the habit of knowing where to find things and the different resources to help her with referencing. So we're good.

INTERVIEWER: And if you're ever really stuck, some of my students will just email me and say, is this right, this

paragraph? Have I done it right? And I say, yes, or you need to cite this source here. And if they don't do it right, it's all a learning process, isn't it?

WENDY It is.

CHALMERS:

INTERVIEWER: Some aspects are a little bit questionable about how many times you should maybe cite the same author in a paragraph, et cetera, but have a go, isn't it? And your tutor will help you.

WENDY And don't panic.

CHALMERS:

KATHERINE Yes. Yeah, referencing isn't about trying to trip you up. It really is about trying to help.

MOORE:

INTERVIEWER: No, absolutely. All right, well, we're going to show you a few videos on our break before we're back with some more library stuff. So we're going to show you some library videos in this break. We're going to talk about a Bob video, and then some additional content there as well.

And then we're going to be talking about fake news, a very topical subject. Because the library don't just do things like help you with referencing and help you find literature. They also do a lot of digital literacy, which is another important aspect. So we're going to come back and talk about that in five minutes. We'll see you soon.

[MUSIC PLAYING]