WRITING REFERENCES ACCORDING TO THE APA-STYLE

About referencing in academic writing in social work

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Preface

Referencing in a unified and correct way is one of the central aspects of academic texts. References are important for a text to be “transparent”, i.e. that it shall be clear what the students base their statements and ideas on. They shall be easy to find if anyone should want to read the same book or article the author has read. For this reason a few different but very strict referencing styles have been developed, for example APA, Harvard, Oxford and Vancouver, for how references are to be written. Included in these referencing styles are a lot of details, for example where full stops and commas are to be placed.

Here we have chosen to briefly describe the basic guidelines for referencing in academic writing according to APA style. The APA style has been developed by the American Psychological Association (APA) and is used worldwide in academic journals, primarily in psychology and various disciplines within the social sciences, to which social work belongs.

The APA style contains not only a referencing system but also a number of other recommendations for how a scientific report should be written. These instructions, which apply to all forms of academic writing in Social Work, are based primarily on the sixth edition (2009) of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association. However, it does not encompass all possible considerations, but a number of central aspects that are considered to create a sufficiently good basis for the student’s academic writing. The student must ensure that references to literature and other material are included in both the running text and in the reference list at the end of the essay. In principle the student is to avoid the use of notes or footnotes. If the type of reference the student wishes to cite is not included in the following instructions s/he will have to consult the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association and/or the links under the section entitled More reading tips about the APA style, in which there are continual updates, and that there are answers and tips concerning various questions about referencing. Please observe that the supporting books and sources mentioned do not replace these instructions, and if exemplifications in these instructions are lacking, the supporting books and sources mentioned may be used.

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# Innehåll

1. REFERENCING IN RUNNING TEXT ................................................................. 1
   1.1. In a work by one author ...................................................................... 1
   1.2. In several works by the same author .................................................. 1
   1.3. In works with two or more authors .................................................... 2
   1.4. In several works that have shown the same thing ............................. 2
   1.5. In groups as writers ......................................................................... 3
   1.6. In laws, regulations or similar .......................................................... 3
   1.7. In secondary sources ....................................................................... 4
   1.8. In personal communication ............................................................. 4

2. DEALING WITH QUOTATIONS IN RUNNING TEXT ................................. 4

3. DEALING WITH NUMBERS IN RUNNING TEXT ......................................... 5

4. DEALING WITH TABLES, FIGURES, DIAGRAMS OR SIMILAR ................ 5

5. WRITING A REFERENCE LIST .................................................................... 6
   5.1. Monographs ...................................................................................... 6
   5.2. Anthologies ...................................................................................... 7
   5.3. Journal articles .................................................................................. 8
   5.4. Newspaper articles .......................................................................... 9
   5.5. Encyclopaedias, dictionaries, word books or similar ..................... 10
   5.6. Laws, regulations, government reports or similar ......................... 11
   5.7. Audiovisual sources ........................................................................ 12
   5.8. Other electronic sources .................................................................. 12
   5.9. Further advice when writing a reference list ................................... 13

6. MORE READING TIPS FOR THE APA STYLE ............................................. 13

REFERENCES ................................................................................................. 14
1. Referencing in running text

1.1. In a work by one author

In the running text the author’s name, the year and page references, if any, are stated in brackets according to the following:

Brunnberg (2003) is of the opinion that...

... as Hellertz (1999) shows in her thesis...

... with the new research into learning strategies (Hellertz, 1999), it is a question of...

If the student/author wishes to state page references, which is sometimes relevant to do, it can be done in this way:

... with the new research into learning strategies (Hellertz, 1999, p. 32), it is a question of...

If the student/author wishes to refer to a chapter instead:

... with the new research into learning strategies (Hellertz, 1999, ch. 7), it is a question of...

If it is a chapter in an anthology the student/author is referring to in the running text, the student/author is to write in the same way as in monographs, i.e. the family name of the author and the year:

Kullberg (2007) asserts that there are dilemmas for men who find themselves on...

But the chapter in question is dealt with in a certain way in a reference list where necessary information about the chapter and the anthology is stated (see below for how chapters in anthologies are dealt with in a reference list).

1.2. In several works by the same author

In the case of several works by the same author during the same year, this is indicated by giving the works a supplementary letter (Aytar, 2015a, 2015b, 2015c).
In the case of several works by the same author, the years are placed in chronological order (Aytar, 2014, 2015).

1.3. **In works with two or more authors**

If there are only two authors both their names shall always be stated in the running text.

If there are three, four or five authors all their names shall be cited the first time they are referred to.

It can look like this:

Niia, Almqvist, Brunnberg and Granlund (2014) are of the opinion that...

Or like this:

According to a study (Niia, Almqvist, Brunnberg & Granlund, 2014)...

On the second occasion when the student/author refers in the text to the same authors and the same work, the citation is written thus:

Niia et al. (2002) or ... (Niia et al., 2002).

When citing the same work in one and the same paragraph, the year is stated the first time in the paragraph and subsequently the author’s name is stated without any year.

If there are six or more authors the citation has the following structure:

The first author's name followed by “et al.” for texts in English. For texts in other languages, the corresponding abbreviations should be used.

1.4. **In several works that have shown the same thing**

In the case of several works that have shown the same thing and that the student/author cites at the same time, the citations are written within brackets in alphabetical order, with a semicolon between the works:

One of the “religious behaviours” that has been shown to be related to health and well-being is prayer (Finney & Maloney, 1985; McCullough, 1995; Paloma & Pendleton, 1991).

...confirmed by several studies (Dellgran & Höjer, 1999; Hellertz, 1999; Sjöström, 1980).
1.5. In groups as writers

In works where organisations, institutions and groups are named as “authors”, these works are cited according to the following example:

If the organisation in question is not known by its abbreviation or is lacking one, the citation in running text looks like this:

The Swedish National Board of Health and Welfare (2001) requires that...

According to current requirements (the Swedish National Board of Health and Welfare, 2001)...

If the organization in question is known even by its abbreviation, the citation in running text looks like this:

The European Union (EU, 2009) decided to... (at the first citation)

According to the previously mentioned decision from the EU (2009) ... (at the second and subsequent citations in the same text)

Or the citation can look like this:

According to new requirements for the candidate countries (European Union [EU], 2009)... (at the first citation)

But candidate countries are critical to new requirements (EU, 2009) which are considered to be... (for all subsequent citations in the text)

1.6. In laws, regulations or similar

References to laws, regulations or similar in running text depends upon where they are obtained.

If the law text is retrieved from a database (for example from the Government’s database), the citation to the Social Services Act (2001:453) in the running text is to be written according to the following example:

According to Chapter 1, Section 1 of the Social Services Act (2001:453), the Social Services...

For entering this source in a reference list see section 4.6 about laws, regulations or similar.

When referring to the Social Services Act (2001:453), which for example is included in Norström and Thunved (2010), the student/author is to write the reference in running text as in the following example:
According to Chapter 1, Section 1 of the Social Services Act (2001:453) (Norström & Thunved, 2010), the Social Services shall…

For entering this source in a reference list see section about laws, regulations or similar.

1.7. In secondary sources

In principle the student is to use original source in references. In cases when a secondary source despite this has to be used, the reference can be written as in the following:

Henry Sidgwik’s formulation of utilitarianism (cited in Rawls, 1999) …

1.8. In personal communication

Private letters, memos, emails, telephone conversations and similar, which are regarded as personal communications, can be referenced in running text. These sources are not to be written in a reference list but only in running text as in the following example:

According to Å. Lundqvist (personal communication, 13 February, 2015) …

One of the conference participants (Å. Lundqvist, personal communication, 13 February, 2015) has suggested that...

2. Dealing with quotations in running text

Quotations should have the following appearance if the quote contains 40 words or more. The quotation may be highlighted by indenting the text (1 cm) and using a smaller text size (Times New Roman, 10p):

Hellertz (2007) is of the opinion that since social work became a scientific discipline in 1977 the:

controversy between scientific training and the preparatory steps towards the profession has been observed in discussions and investigations. This controversy, however, is not solely paradigmatic. The paradigm steers the way of educating and of assessing learning, the choice of teaching methods, and the choice of research questions and of scientific methods (p. 168).

If the student/author wishes to enter a quotation shorter than 40 words, this can be done in the running text:
Hellertz (2007) carries on a discussion about a paradigmatic controversy which “steers the way of educating and of assessing learning, the choice of teaching methods, and the choice of research questions and of scientific methods” (Hellertz, 2007, p. 168).

If the quotation is shorter than 40 words, the student/author can also do this:

She is of the opinion that “the paradigm steers the way of educating and of assessing learning, the choice of teaching methods, and the choice of research questions and of scientific methods” (Hellertz, 2007, p. 168).

In Sweden “girls and boys with disabilities, 15–16 years of age, report a significantly higher rate of sexual debut than adolescents with no disabilities” (Brännberg, Lindén Boström, & Berglund, 2009, p. 139).

3. Dealing with numbers in running text

The general rule is that the number 10 and above is expressed in numbers, whereas text is used to express numbers below 10 – one, two, three etc.

Never, however, begin a sentence with numbers.

Do NOT write like this:

...the first time it happened was in 2008. 75 people came, each carrying their own pot...

Write like this instead:

...the first time it happened was in 2008. Seventy-five people came, each carrying their own pot...

4. Dealing with tables, figures, diagrams or similar

According to the APA style, headings are to be written above tables, figures, and diagrams or similar. The actual form of these visual presentations may vary depending on the ways chosen to do these. The student/author may use both predesigned templates and adapt the templates to their own text. If these visual presentations are taken from other sources, the source must be placed under them along these lines: “Source: Reference (the same as references in running text depending on the type of source)”. Short explanations to these visual presentations must also be placed under the presentations. The important point here is that the student/author is consistent in the use of headings, formats and references to
5. Writing a reference list

The reference list is placed after the text, on a new page. Each reference has hanging-indented format (typically 1.25 cm for theses at HVV but can vary by up to 0.5 cm) except for the first line. Italics are used in the references as in the examples below. Note that the references are placed in alphabetical order, starting with the first author’s family name, and this applies to all the references. The reference list is not to be divided up separately into monographs, anthologies etc. The categorization below is only for the purpose of providing examples of the various types of references.

References have the same appearance in principle whether they are in printed or electronic form. What must be stated in the first instance is the author and year. If there is no information about the author, the authority’s or organization’s name is used as the “author”, or the title of the publication. For online versions of references the date of retrieval of the reference is also stated as well as the link to the reference along the lines of “Retrieved xx (day) xxxx (month) xxxx (year) from http://www ... (link to the reference)”. Example: Retrieved 14 September 2011 from http://www.dn.se/debatt/sveriges-klimatutslapp-ar-storre-an-regeringen-sager  Note that the link does not end with a full stop since a full stop can be interpreted as belonging to the link in question.

For references written in another language than the main text, you can provide a translation of titles within brackets “[...]”. For example a Swedish reference might look like this in an English reference list.


5.1. Monographs

Monographs are entered in a reference list as in the example below. Note that the name of the monograph is to be italicised.

Family name, Initials, & Family name, Initials (Publication year within brackets). Title (italicised). Place of publication: Publisher.

It may occur that a monograph has no person but an authority or organization as the “author”, in other words groups as authors. For example a report from the Children’s Ombudsman (Barnombudsmannen) that is accessible on the internet is referenced as in the following example:


5.2. Anthologies

References to chapters in anthologies are written as in the example below. Note that it is the title of the book that is to be italicized and that the editor’s given name (with initials) is placed before the family name.

Family name, Initials, & Family name, Initials (Publication year within brackets). Title of chapter (not italicised). In Given name (with initials) Family name (Ed.) Title of book (italicised). Place of publication: Publisher.


If the student/author wishes to refer to an anthology as a whole, this is written as in the following example:

5.3. Journal articles

Journal articles that are accessible on the internet shall, according to the APA style, be written in a reference list in different ways depending on whether they have a DOI number (*Digital Object Identifier*), or lack a DOI number. In these instructions for academic texts in Social Work an exception is made for DOI numbers, in that the date is stated for all references.

The student/author shall write references for journal articles (regardless of whether they are retrieved from scientific, popular science or specialist journals) as in the examples below. Note that the journal’s name is italicised.

**Articles in scientific journals**

For articles taken from scientific journals (all articles are proofread by at least two external assessors who are experts within their respective fields), references are written as in the examples below:

Family name, Initials, & Family name, Initials (Publication year within brackets). Title of article (not italicised). Name of journal (italicised), volume/year, and issue number within brackets, between which pages.


If the same article is an online version, the reference is written as in the following example:


Note that the article has the same page numbering as in the printed version since the format of the article is the same as in the printed version.

An article retrieved from MDH’s databases is written in the reference list according to the following example:

Note that links to articles retrieved from MDH’s databases work on condition that the student/author uses either MDH’s computers or their own login details to access the article in question. This limitation does not apply to articles accessible to everyone on some website.

**Articles in specialist publications**

For articles taken from popular science journals, membership journals, monthly and weekly journals and similar (with no fundamental requirements of proofreading by at least two external assessors who are experts within their respective fields), references are written as in the examples below:

Family name, Initials, & Family name, Initials (Publication year, month within brackets). Title of article (not italicised). Name of journal (italicised), volume/year, and issue number within brackets, alternatively only the issue number without any brackets if volume/year is lacking, between which pages.


If the same article is an online version, it is written as in the example below:


Note that there is page numbering when the article is in printed form (paper version or copy of this). When published online there are often no page numbers.

**5.4. Newspaper articles**

References for newspaper articles in printed versions are written as in the examples below.

Note that the newspaper’s name is italicised.

Family name, Initials, & Family name, Initials (Publication year, day month within brackets). Title of article (not italicised). Name of newspaper (italicised), between which pages.

If the same article is an online version, the reference is written as in the example below:


Note that the page numbering disappears when the article is not in printed form (paper version) even though the contents are the same.

5.5. Encyclopaedias, dictionaries, word books or similar

Referencing for encyclopaedias, dictionaries, word books or similar are the same as for monographs and anthologies. If there are authors of the term, word or name that the student/author wishes to refer to, the reference is written as in the following example:


Referencing this source in running text is written as in the following example:

Schmid (1998) defines a social group ...

References to terms with authors, but without years in the web version of the Nationalencyklopedin are written in the reference list as in the following example:


Referencing this source in running text is written as in the following example:

According to Hessle’s definition of social work in the Nationalencyklopedin ...

References to terms without named authors and years in the web version of the Nationalencyklopedin are written in the reference list as in the following example:


Referencing this source in running text is written as in the following example:

Empathy is defined in the Nationalencyklopedin ...
According to the APA style, “n.d.” (abbreviation of “no date”) is written within brackets when a term has no specific year. However, in these instructions exceptions are made to this and references are written as above (examples about “social work” and “empathy”), without any year.

5.6. **Laws, regulations, government reports or similar**

References to laws, regulations, government reports or similar are written as in the following example:


If the same law is referred to from a printed publication which includes a number of law and regulation texts, the referencing looks different. It shall be as follows:


Statliga offentliga utredningar [SOU, Government reports], Departementsserie [Ds, Ministry reports], Regeringsproposition [Prop., Government proposition] or similar official publications should be referenced as follows:

If authors’ names are on the front page the reference should be written as for a regular monograph or anthology (See previous instructions for monographs and anthologies.)

With authors’ names:


Referencing this source in running text is done as for monographs.

If authors’ names are not on the front page, the reference should be as follows:

Without authors’ names:


Referencing this source in running text is done as in the following example:
In a Swedish ministry report (Ds 2004:49) you can find many perspectives about ...

5.7. Audiovisual sources

The American Psychological Association (2012) provides detailed descriptions of the various kinds of audiovisual sources, from moving pictures and streaming video to different types of social media. Here are examples of interviews on television and radio.

Family name of interviewee, Initials. (year, month, day interviewed). Title of interview (italicized) (Initials. Family name of interviewer, Interviewer). Retrieved ... from http://xxxx

A radio interview can be cited as in the following example:


Referencing this source in running text is done as in the following example:

In a radio interview Aytar (2013) talks about immigrants’ role ...

5.8. Other electronic sources

As mentioned above, internet sources are cited in the same way as citations for printed sources. One of the problems is that not all the information that is accessible and can be used on the internet has an author. For example there are some facts and statistics on websites without any author being stated.

If the student/author for example refers to a presentation text on the Children’s Ombudsman website to write about what the Children’s Ombudsman is, this can be written in the running text as in the following example:

The Children’s Ombudsman has the duty of representing children’s and young persons’ rights based on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and act now so an action plan will be drawn up "to strengthen the protection of unaccompanied children" (Barnombudsmannen, 2015).

In the reference list the source is stated according to the following:

5.9. Further advice when writing a reference list

It is extremely important that the student/author remembers this advice when writing a reference list:

- Alphabetical order in the reference list
- Avoid word-splitting in internet addresses. If this has to be done, do it between the main parts of the address, not in the middle of it.
- No sorting according to monographs, anthologies etc.
- Publications by the same author are sorted chronologically according to year of publication.
- Publications by the same author and with the same year of publication are distinguished by the use of a supplementary letter: 2015a, 2015b, 2015c.
- Publications in which the author has a co-author are placed in the reference list after publications as a sole author.
- All the initials of the given names and complete family names of the authors are to be stated, when these are mentioned.

6. More reading tips for the APA style


In addition to the latest edition (6) of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, the student/author can also find information about the APA style on the internet: http://www.apastyle.org/
References
