

**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH  
MOUNT ROYAL UNIVERSITY**

## **STANDARD OF REFERENCING**

Plagiarism consists of using other people's words or ideas without adequately acknowledging the source of those words or ideas. Plagiarism can take many forms: stealing an entire essay and submitting it as one's own work; quoting parts of a source without acknowledging that source; quoting parts of a source without quotation marks (even if the source is included in the list of sources); failing to use in-text citations after summaries or paraphrases; too few in-text citations compared to the amount of information used; incorrect, incomplete, or missing documentation elements.

Every writer must be familiar with standards of referencing. Therefore, writing in university English courses is evaluated for correctness in referencing, as well as for content, development, organization, grammatical correctness, and clarity.

The Standard of Referencing outlines the standards of correct documentation that students must meet in all single and multi-section English courses.

### **IDENTIFIED REFERENCING ERRORS**

Deliberate plagiarism, its definition and the process by which it is handled, is covered in The Code of Student Conduct (available on the Internet at <http://mtroyal.ca/codeofstudentconduct/index.htm>). Questions and clarifications of this policy are handled by the Office of Student Conduct. The Department of English draws a distinction between deliberate and careless plagiarism. This document covers instances of careless plagiarism. If the instructor deems the plagiarism as deliberate, this document will not apply.

The MRU Library provides some material to clarify plagiarism issues. Visit the Library's site at <http://www.mtroyal.ca/Library/HowDoICiteSources.htm>.

For all courses, the Standard of Referencing applies to errors of the following types:

- confusing, inaccurate, or poorly handled quotations, paraphrases, or summaries
- incorrect, incomplete, or missing in-text citations
- incorrect, incomplete, or missing list of sources
- use of another documentation system or systems than the one or ones the instructor requires

These errors have been divided into two categories: *Major Referencing Errors* and *Minor Referencing Errors*.

### **FOR 0200-LEVEL ENGLISH COURSES**

An assignment containing any or all of these errors is unsatisfactory and may receive a grade of D+ at the discretion of the individual instructor. Students may receive no higher than a D+ grade on any instructor-designated assignment if they have ONE MAJOR REFERENCING ERROR, MORE THAN FIVE MINOR REFERENCING ERRORS PER ASSIGNMENT, or MORE THAN ONE MINOR REFERENCING ERROR PER 250 WORDS.

### **FOR 1000, 2000, 3000, 4000 & 5000-LEVEL ENGLISH COURSES**

An assignment containing any or all of these errors is unsatisfactory and may receive a grade of D+, D, F or zero at the discretion of the individual instructor. Students may receive no higher than a D+ grade *on any assignment*, if they have ONE MAJOR REFERENCING ERROR, MORE THAN THREE MINOR REFERENCING ERRORS PER ASSIGNMENT, or MORE THAN ONE MINOR REFERENCING ERROR PER 100 WORDS.

# CLARIFICATION OF STANDARD OF REFERENCING (MLA Reference System)

Most listings employ an example to help clarify the error. Here is the sample text and citation, on which the examples are based:

The foundation is already being laid for the hydrogen economy. In the next few years, the computer-and-telecommunications revolution is going to fuse with the new hydrogen-energy revolution, making for a powerful mix that could fundamentally reconfigure human relationships in the 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> centuries. Since hydrogen is found everywhere and is inexhaustible if properly harnessed, every human being on Earth could be “empowered,” making hydrogen energy the first truly democratic energy regime in history. (Rifkin 8)

The citation for this text is as follows:

Rifkin, Jeremy. *The Hydrogen Economy*. New York: Tarcher Putnam, 2002. Print.

## Minor Referencing Errors

### 1. Confusing, inaccurate, or poorly handled quotations, paraphrases, or summaries

#### a) Misused quotation marks

X	“The North American economy will be built around hydrogen as a fuel” (Rifkin 8).	✓	The North American economy will be built around hydrogen as a fuel (Rifkin 8).
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#### b) Un-integrated quotations

X	Hydrogen is the first element in the Periodic Table. “The foundation is already being laid for the hydrogen economy” (Rifkin 8).	✓	As Rifkin notes, the initial requirements for economic change are in place now: “The foundation is already being laid for the hydrogen economy” (8).
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### 2. Problems with In-Text Citations

#### a) Incorrect in-text citation information

X	The initial requirements for economic change are in place now: “The foundation is already being laid for the hydrogen economy” (Rilke 8).	✓	The initial requirements for economic change are in place now: “The foundation is already being laid for the hydrogen economy” (Rifkin 8).
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#### b) Incomplete in-text citation

X	The initial requirements for economic change are in place now: “The foundation is already being laid for the hydrogen economy” (8).	✓	The initial requirements for economic change are in place now: “The foundation is already being laid for the hydrogen economy” (Rifkin 8).
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#### c) Too few in-text citations.

There must be one in-text citation for every section paraphrased, or summarized, and for each discrete fact used from a particular source.

#### d) Unclear in-text citation [the in-text citation doesn’t clearly point to a Works Cited listing]

If the paper, in this example, cited from two of Rifkin’s works – the book used so far in the examples and another of his books – then the citation needs to point clearly to the particular source used.

X	The initial requirements for economic change are in place now: “The foundation is already being laid for the hydrogen economy” (Rifkin 8).	✓	The initial requirements for economic change are in place now: “The foundation is already being laid for the hydrogen economy” (Rifkin, <i>Hydrogen Economy</i> 8).
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### 3. Problems with the Works Cited List

#### a) Incorrect or improperly ordered Works Cited information

X	Rifkin, Jeremy. 2002. <i>The Hydrogen Economy</i> . New York: Tarcher Putnam. Print.
✓	Rifkin, Jeremy. <i>The Hydrogen Economy</i> . New York: Tarcher Putnam, 2002. Print.

#### b) Incomplete Works Cited information

X	Rifkin, Jeremy. <i>The Hydrogen Economy</i> . Print.
✓	Rifkin, Jeremy. <i>The Hydrogen Economy</i> . New York: Tarcher Putnam, 2002. Print.

## Major Referencing Errors

### 1. Problems with In-Text Citations

#### a) Missing in-text citations

X	The beginnings of a market, based on a different energy source, are already here. That market base, once joined with the technological revolution, will drastically alter society in the coming years.	✓	The beginnings of a market, based on a different energy source, are already here. That market base, once joined with the technological revolution, will drastically alter society in the coming years (Rifkin 8).
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#### b) Missing quotation marks (with an in-text citation present)

X	The foundation is already being laid for the hydrogen economy (Rifkin 8).	✓	Even now, “the foundation is already being laid for the hydrogen economy” (Rifkin 8).
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#### c) Paraphrases too close to the original wordings

X	The foundation is already made for the hydrogen economy. In the future, the technology revolution is going to join with the new hydrogen revolution, making for a powerful mix that could fundamentally change human relationships in the 21 <sup>st</sup> and 22 <sup>nd</sup> centuries (Rifkin 8).	✓	The beginnings of a market, based on a different energy source, are already here. That market base, once joined with the technological revolution, will drastically alter society in the coming years (Rifkin 8).
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### 2. Problems with the Works Cited List

#### a) Missing Works Cited listing

If a paper cites a source in its text, using an in-text citation, but the Works Cited list does not carry a corresponding listing of that source, the omission is considered an error.

#### b) Listed Works Cited sources that do not have any corresponding in-text citation

If a paper names a source in the Works Cited list, but does not use any in-text references that refer to that listed source, the incident is considered an error.

### 3. Use of documentation information or systems other than ones specified by the appropriate documentation system.

#### a) Use of documentation systems other than ones specified as appropriate by the instructor

If an instructor requests that papers are to be written using a particular referencing system, like MLA for example, it is an error to hand in a paper that employs another referencing system.

#### b) Use of alternative information or formats other than what the MLA referencing system demands

The MLA referencing system places specific demands on the way information is arranged and presented. To ignore its demands, or to alter those demands, constitutes a documentation error.