



OSCOLA (Oxford Standard for the Citation of Legal Authorities) – quick guide

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QG LAW024 [<https://www.abdn.ac.uk/library/documents/guides/qglaw024.pdf>]

Consistency and accuracy are two of the most important rules to follow in the citation of legal authorities. To help you achieve these, you are required by the School of Law to use a form of legal citation called OSCOLA.

This guide shows you how to cite some of the most important UK and international primary and secondary legal sources in your footnotes and bibliographies using the OSCOLA rules. However, this guide is not comprehensive so, when citing UK legal materials, you should also refer to the Oxford University guide to OSCOLA (4th edn, Hart Publishers) and, for international legal materials, *OSCOLA 2006: citing international law*. **Both guides are found online at** <https://www.law.ox.ac.uk/research-subject-groups/publications/oscola>

All citations appear in footnotes and again at the end of your work.

The following information is derived from [OSCOLA \(4th edn, Hart 2012\)](#) and [OSCOLA 2006: Citing International Law Sources](#)

Citing sources in footnotes and bibliographies (general notes)

	Footnotes	Bibliographies
Citing author details	Write forename(s) before surname: e.g. Christopher H W Gane	Write surname followed by initial(s) with no punctuation between them. A comma is placed after the final initial, e.g. Gane CHW,
	Write forenames exactly as cited in the source document – in full, initials only or a mix of both, e.g. Christopher Kee or Christopher H W Gane or ADM Forte	Use only initials, e.g. Kee C or Gane CHW or Forte ADM
Unattributed (anonymous) works	If no person, organisation or institution claims editorial responsibility, begin the citation with the title	Title should be preceded by a double em-dash (— —). List at the beginning of the bibliography in alphabetical order of the first major word in the title
Order of sources	When citing more than one source of the same kind for a single proposition: put the sources in chronological order, oldest first, e.g. <i>Brent v Haddon</i> (1619) Cro jac 555, 79 ER 476; <i>Broder v Saillard</i> (1876) 2 CH D 692 (Ch). When citing legislation and case law in the same footnote: put legislation before cases When citing primary and secondary sources in the same footnote: put primary sources before secondary	The sources at the end of your work are arranged in: Tables of primary legal sources (cases, legislation, treaties etc.) followed by A bibliography containing separate lists of references to secondary materials, e.g. journal articles list, books list, conference papers list, reports list, web pages list etc. arranged in A-Z order by author family name
Latin ‘gadgets’	Avoid the use of <i>supra</i> , <i>infra</i> , <i>ante</i> , <i>id, op cit</i> , <i>loc cit</i> and <i>contra</i> <i>ibid.</i> can be used to repeat a citation in the immediately preceding footnote. It means strictly ‘in the very same place’. <i>ibid</i> 345. means ‘in the same work but this time at page 345’. When there is more than one citation in the immediately preceding footnote only use ‘ <i>ibid</i> ’ if you are referring to all the citations in that footnote.	A full citation for each reference should be supplied either in tables of primary legal materials or in a bibliography comprising individual lists of secondary materials by reference type (books, journal articles, conference papers etc.) at the end of your work

Primary sources

Legislation	
<p>General Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For longer pieces of work include tables of primary sources at the end beginning with a table of cases, followed by a table of legislation then other tables such as treaties and conventions, UN documents, official papers and policy documents (see page 11 in the Oxford University OSCOLA guide). See page 4 in the Oxford University OSCOLA guide for more information on citing legislation in footnotes; pages 23-28 for full details on citing UK sources (including Scotland); and pages 28-31 on citing EU sources. <p>Citing in Footnotes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A citation for a piece of legislation is not required in a footnote if the source, the short title of the act, is written in full in your text. If you do not include the name of the act or relevant section in your text, the information must be provided in a footnote. <p>Citing in Table of Legislation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Cite in the same format as in the footnotes but omit the full stop.</u> List every statute cited in the work, with the entry for each statute being sub-divided to show which parts of the statute (sections, sub-sections and so on) are cited where. 	
UK primary legislation	
<p><u>Citing in Footnotes</u> Shipping and Trading Interests (Protection) Act 1995.</p>	<p><u>Citing in Table of Legislation</u> Shipping and Trading Interests (Protection) Act 1995</p>
Scottish primary legislation	
<p><u>Citing in Footnotes</u> Crofting Reform etc Act 2007 (asp 7).</p>	<p><u>Citing in Table of Legislation</u> Crofting Reform etc Act 2007 (asp 7)</p>
UK secondary legislation (statutory instruments)	
<p><u>Citing in Footnotes</u> Penalties for Disorderly Behaviour (Amendment of Minimum Age) Order 2004, SI 2004/3166.</p>	<p><u>Citing in Table of Legislation</u> Penalties for Disorderly Behaviour (Amendment of Minimum Age) Order 2004, SI 2004/3166</p>
Scottish secondary legislation	
<p><u>Citing in Footnotes</u> Breeding of Dogs (Licensing Records) (Scotland) Regulations 1999, SSI 1999/176.</p>	<p><u>Citing in Table of Legislation</u> Breeding of Dogs (Licensing Records) (Scotland) Regulations 1999, SSI 1999/176</p>
EU legislation	
<p>When citing treaties and protocols: give the title of the legislation (including amendments), year of publication, the OJ series, issue and page numbers.</p>	
<p><u>Citing in Footnotes</u> Protocol to the Agreement on the Member States that do not fully apply to the Schengen acquis – Joint Declarations [2007] OJ L129/35. Consolidated Version of the Treaty on European Union [2008] OJ C115/13.</p>	<p><u>Citing in Table of Legislation</u> Protocol to the Agreement on the Member States that do not fully apply to the Schengen acquis – Joint Declarations [2007] OJ L129/35 Consolidated Version of the Treaty on European Union [2008] OJ C115/13</p>

<p>International legislation</p> <p>Cite legislation from other jurisdictions as it is cited in its own jurisdiction, but without any punctuation (full stops) in abbreviations.</p> <p>Give the jurisdiction if necessary.</p>	
<p><u>Citing in Footnotes</u></p> <p>Accident Compensation Act 1972 (NZ).</p> <p>1976 Standard Terms Act (Gesetz über Allgemeine Geschäftsbedingungen) (FRG).</p> <p>loi n° 75-1349 du 31 décembre 1975 relative à l'emploi de la langue française.</p>	<p><u>Citing in Table of Legislation</u></p> <p>Accident Compensation Act 1972 (NZ)</p> <p>1976 Standard Terms Act (Gesetz über Allgemeine Geschäftsbedingungen) (FRG)</p> <p>loi n° 75-1349 du 31 décembre 1975 relative à l'emploi de la langue française</p>

<p>Cases</p>	
<p>General Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give the name of the case, the neutral citation (if appropriate), volume and first page of the relevant law report and, where necessary, the court. It is acceptable to include the full case reference in footnotes. • The titles of case reports are abbreviated - do not use punctuation in abbreviations, e.g. AC rather than A.C. • In a table of cases at the end of your work: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ case names are not italicised ○ case names are listed in alphabetical order of first significant word, e.g. <i>Re Farquar's Estate</i> should read 'Farquar's Estate, Re' ○ there should be separate sections for different jurisdictions (unless there are very few cases) <p>See pages 3-4 in the Oxford University <i>OSCOLA</i> guide for more information on citing cases in footnotes and pages 13-23 for full details; for subsequent citations of cases in your text follow guidance on page 5 of the guide.</p> <p>Citing in Table of Cases:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case names are not italicised and should be listed in alphabetical order of first significant word. 	
<p>UK cases</p> <p>Where the year is essential to identify the volume, give the year in square brackets.</p> <p>Enclose the year of judgment (not publication) in round brackets when a case is found in a law report series that has volume numbers.</p>	
<p><u>Citing in Footnotes</u></p> <p><i>Barrett v Enfield LBC</i> (1999) 49 BMLR 1 (HL).</p> <p><i>Corr v IBC Vehicles Ltd</i> [2008] UKHL 13, [2008] 1 AC 884.</p> <p><i>R v Monopolies and Mergers Commission, ex p South Yorkshire Transport Ltd</i> [1992] 1 WLR 291 (CA).</p>	<p><u>Citing in Table of Cases</u></p> <p>Barrett v Enfield LBC (1999) 49 BMLR 1 (HL)</p> <p>Corr v IBC Vehicles Ltd [2008] UKHL 13, [2008] 1 AC 884</p> <p>NB List full names (unless works on criminal law when 'R' is dropped):</p> <p>Monopolies and Mergers Commission, ex p South Yorkshire Transport Ltd [1992] 1 WLR 291 (CA)</p>
<p>Scottish cases</p> <p>If the volumes of the report series are not independently numbered, the year is not put in brackets. If the volumes of the report series are independently numbered, the year is put in round brackets. The only punctuation used is a comma to separate page numbers and to separate a neutral citation from a law report citation.</p>	
<p><u>Citing in Footnotes</u></p> <p><i>Dodds v HM Advocate</i> 2003 JC 8.</p> <p><i>Crofters Commission v Scottish Ministers</i> 2002 SLT (Land Ct) 19, 25.</p> <p><i>Hislop v Durham</i> (1842) 4 D 1168.</p> <p><i>Davidson v Scottish Ministers</i> [2005] UKHL 74, 2006 SC (HL) [41].</p>	<p><u>Citing in Table of Cases</u></p> <p>Dodds v HM Advocate 2003 JC 8</p> <p>Crofters Commission v Scottish Ministers 2002 SLT (Land Ct) 19, 25</p> <p>Hislop v Durham (1842) 4 D 1168</p> <p>Davidson v Scottish Ministers [2005] UKHL 74, 2006 SC (HL) [41]</p>

<p>International cases and decisions (ICJ) Cite International Court of Justice (ICJ) reports if available, otherwise cite to the website giving dates of access. Cite case names as they appear in the ICJ Report.</p>	
<p><u>Citing in Footnotes</u></p> <p><i>Corfu Channel Case (UK v Albania)</i> (Merits) [1949] ICJ Rep 4.</p> <p><i>Land, Island and Maritime Frontier Case (El Salvador/Honduras, Nicaragua intervening)</i> (Application for Intervention) [1990] ICJ Rep 92.</p>	<p><u>Citing in Table of Cases</u></p> <p>Corfu Channel Case (UK v Albania) (Merits) [1949] ICJ Rep 4</p> <p>Land, Island and Maritime Frontier Case (El Salvador/Honduras, Nicaragua intervening) (Application for Intervention) [1990] ICJ Rep 92</p>
<p>Cases from other jurisdictions Cite cases as they are cited in their own jurisdiction, but without punctuation (full stops) in abbreviations. Give the identity of the court at the end of the citation if the name of the law report series cited does not itself indicate the court.</p>	
<p><u>Citing in Footnotes</u></p> <p><i>Henningsen v Bloomfield Motors Inc</i> 161 A 2d 69 (NJ 1960).</p> <p><i>Michael v Johnson</i> 426 US 346 (1976).</p> <p>Cass civ (1) 21 January 2003, D 2003, 693.</p> <p>CA Colmar 25 January 1963, Gaz Pal 1963.I.277.</p>	<p><u>Citing in Table of Cases</u></p> <p>Henningsen v Bloomfield Motors Inc 161 A 2d 69 (NJ 1960)</p> <p>Michael v Johnson 426 US 346 (1976)</p> <p>Cass civ (1) 21 January 2003, D 2003, 693</p> <p>CA Colmar 25 January 1963, Gaz Pal 1963.I.277</p>
<p>Treaties</p>	
<p>General notes: see pages 25-28 in OSCOLA 2006: citing international law sources</p> <p>Citing international treaties:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If parties can accede to a treaty (as in most multilateral treaties), cite the full date on which the treaty was opened for signature. Otherwise state the date it was signed or adopted. • Give the date it entered into force (if available). • Cite the date of adoption followed by the date on which the treaty opened for signature • Parties in a bilateral treaty should be included in parentheses immediately after the title, with the names of the parties separated by an en-dash (-). <p>Citing regional treaties:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include both the formal and informal or shortened names of the treaty in the first reference to a treaty. • Cite the protocols to treaties by their names, preceded by the name of the treaty to which they are appended. <p>Dates are not generally given for European treaties because they may have been amended several times. Include the year if it appears in the standard title of the treaty or if it helps to provide clarity.</p>	
<p>United Nations Treaty Series</p>	
<p><u>Citing in Footnotes</u></p> <p>Universal Declaration of Human Rights (adopted 10 December 1948 UNGA Res 217 A(III)) (UDHR) art 5.</p>	<p><u>Citing in Table of Treaties</u></p> <p>Universal Declaration of Human Rights (adopted 10 December 1948 UNGA Res 217 A(III)) (UDHR) art 5</p>
<p>Bi-lateral treaties</p>	
<p><u>Citing in Footnotes</u></p> <p>Rehabilitation and Development Co-Operation Agreement (Australia–Nauru) (5 May 1994) ATS 1994 15.</p>	<p><u>Citing in Table of Treaties</u></p> <p>Rehabilitation and Development Co-Operation Agreement (Australia–Nauru) (5 May 1994) ATS 1994 15</p>

Regional treaties	
<u>Citing in Footnotes</u> Treaty on European Union (Maastricht Treaty) art G5. Act of Accession 1985 (Spain and Portugal) Protocol 34. EC Treaty (Treaty of Rome, as amended) art 3b.	<u>Citing in Table of Treaties</u> Treaty on European Union (Maastricht Treaty) art G5 Act of Accession 1985 (Spain and Portugal) Protocol 34 EC Treaty (Treaty of Rome, as amended) art 3b

Secondary sources

<p>General Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When there are more than 3 authors, give the first author followed by the phrase 'and others'. • Where no individual author is named but an organisation or institution claims editorial responsibility – cite it as the author. • Where a book or journal publication is available online and in hard copy – cite the hard copy version (do not mention the online source). • For online only sources such as e-journals and websites – in addition to usual details give the URL (web address) in angle brackets (< >) and date accessed. • If a source has an ISBN, cite it like a book. See page 39 in the OSCOLA user manual. • If a source does not have an ISBN, write in a similar way <i>except</i> the title should be written in roman script (not in <i>italics</i>) and enclosed within single quotation marks, see page 39 in the OSCOLA user manual. • Journal titles are commonly abbreviated. Do not punctuate abbreviations, e.g. PL not P.L. To find journal abbreviations (or full titles) see the <i>Cardiff Index to Legal Abbreviations</i> at http://www.legalabbrevs.cardiff.ac.uk/ <p>See general principles of citing secondary sources on pages 33-34 in the Oxford University OSCOLA guide; full details of how to cite individual resource types are on pages 34-43.</p> <p>Citing in footnotes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give the author's name exactly as given in the publication, omitting post-nominals such as QC. <p>Citing in the bibliography</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cite alphabetically by author surname and arrange in separate sections for books, journal articles, conference papers, websites etc. • Give an individual author's surname followed by initials (no punctuation), e.g. Forte ADM, ... 	
Whole book	
<u>Citing in Footnotes</u> Elizabeth Fisher, <i>Risk Regulation and Administrative Constitutionalism</i> (Hart Publishing 2007).	<u>Citing in the Bibliography</u> Fisher E, <i>Risk Regulation and Administrative Constitutionalism</i> (Hart Publishing 2007)
Chapter in an edited book	
<u>Citing in Footnotes</u> Justine Pila, 'The Value of Authorship in the Digital Environment' in William H Dutton and Paul W Jeffreys (eds), <i>World Wide Research: Reshaping the Sciences and Humanities in the Century of Information</i> (MIT Press 2010).	<u>Citing in the Bibliography</u> Dutton WH and Jeffreys PW (eds), <i>World Wide Research: Reshaping the Sciences and Humanities in the Century of Information</i> (MIT Press 2010)
Encyclopedia	
<u>Citing in Footnotes</u> <i>Halsbury's Laws</i> (5 th edn, 2010) vol 57, para 53. CJ Friedrich, 'Constitutions and Constitutionalism', <i>International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences III</i> (1968) 319. Lesley Green, 'Legal Positivism', <i>The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy</i> (Fall edn, 2009) < http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2009/entries/legal-positivism > accessed 08 April 2016.	<u>Citing in the Bibliography</u> <i>Halsbury's Laws</i> (5 th edn, 2010) vol 57, para 53 Friedrich CJ, 'Constitutions and Constitutionalism', <i>International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences III</i> (1968) Green L, 'Legal Positivism', <i>The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy</i> (Fall edn, 2009) < http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2009/entries/legal-positivism > accessed 08 April 2016

Journal article	
<u>Citing in Footnotes</u> Paul Craig, 'Theory, "Pure Theory" and Values in Public Law' [2005] PL 440.	<u>Citing in the Bibliography</u> Craig P, 'Theory, "Pure Theory" and Values in Public Law' [2005] PL 440
Parliamentary publications	
Scottish Parliament: SPICe publications <u>Citing in Footnotes</u> The Water Industry SM DA21, 21 December 1999 3.	<u>Citing in the Bibliography</u> The Water Industry SM DA21, 21 December 1999
Scottish Parliament papers <u>Citing in Footnotes</u> Audit Committee 6 th report, 2000, 'The New Scottish Parliament Building' (SPP 227) para 27.	<u>Citing in the Bibliography</u> Audit Committee 6 th report, 2000, 'The New Scottish Parliament Building' (SPP 227)
Command Papers <u>Citing in Footnotes</u> Home Office, <i>Report of the Royal Commission on Capital Punishment</i> (Cmd 8932, 1953) para 53.	<u>Citing in the Bibliography</u> Home Office, <i>Report of the Royal Commission on Capital Punishment</i> (Cmd 8932, 1953)
Web page	
<u>Citing in Footnotes</u> Sarah Cole, 'Virtual Friend Fires Employee' (Naked Law, 1 May 2009) < http://www.nakedlaw.com/2009/05/index.html > accessed 08 April 2016.	<u>Citing in the Bibliography</u> Cole S, 'Virtual Friend Fires Employee' (Naked Law, 1 May 2009) < http://www.nakedlaw.com/2009/05/index.html > accessed 08 April 2016
Other secondary sources, e.g. reports of commissions of inquiry, conference keynote addresses	
<u>Citing in Footnotes</u> Document with ISBN: University of Oxford, <i>Report of Inquiry</i> (OUP 1966) vol 1, ch 3 (Franks Report). Document without ISBN: Simon Whittaker, 'La Protection du Consommateur Contre les Clauses Abusives en Grande Bretagne' (Commission des Clauses Abusives 2009) < http://www.clauses-abusives.fr/colloque/swhittaker.htm > accessed 19 November 2015.	<u>Citing in the Bibliography</u> Document with ISBN: University of Oxford, <i>Report of Inquiry</i> (OUP 1966) vol 1, ch 3 (Franks Report) Document without ISBN: Whittaker S, 'La Protection du Consommateur Contre les Clauses Abusives en Grande Bretagne' (Commission des Clauses Abusives 2009) < http://www.clauses-abusives.fr/colloque/swhittaker.htm > accessed 19 November 2015

Useful sources of information:

Cardiff Index to Legal Abbreviations at <http://www.legalabbrevs.cardiff.ac.uk/>

Derek French, *How to Cite Legal Authorities* (Blackstone 1996). In Taylor Library at **Law Gen Ref 340.072 Fre**.

Abbreviations of international instruments in Malcolm D Evans, *Blackstone's International Law Documents* (13th edn, OUP 2017). In Taylor Library at **Law 341.026 EVA**.

Citing US legal materials: *The Bluebook: A Uniform System of Citation* (19th edn, Harvard Law Review Association 2010). In Taylor Library at **Law 340.072 BLU**.

Other jurisdictions: Oxford University OSCOLA guide 4th edn at https://www.law.ox.ac.uk/sites/files/oxlaw/oscola_4th_edn_hart_2012.pdf, pages 49-50.

OSCOLA FAQs, including guidelines still under discussion: <https://www.law.ox.ac.uk/oscola-faqs>

Library information guide: UG LAW006: [Common Legal Abbreviations](#)

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