

How to acknowledge intranet content;  
internal documents used by an organisation;  
information from formal interviews  
and similar information sources,  
using Swinburne Harvard Style



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TECHNOLOGY

If you have obtained information directly from a person or organisation through:

- A personal letter/email or document (for example, you emailed an advertising company asking them how they developed their strategy to advertise and sell a new type of sports shoe);
- A formal interview (for example, interviewing an employee of an engineering company about how a particular bridge was built);
- An informal conversation, or informal telephone call, or text message;
- or by attending a public lecture/speech (not a regular lecture for a Swinburne unit of study);

then this information source should be acknowledged in your work, using an in-text reference.

These information sources are part of a large group of information sources called **Personal Communications**.

Unlike other information sources, this type of information source does not require a corresponding reference list entry, except when your work is based mainly on such sources - in which case it is appropriate to list them. Check with your unit convenor or thesis supervisor first, before you do this.

The in-text reference involves you actually writing the supporting information about where the information comes from and when it was published naturally into the sentence, so it becomes a part of it.

Here is an example of how to refer in-text to information from an email:

eg.

...better embankments to prevent flooding. Currently, the height for a levee or protective embankment is 2.1m, however in an email from 11 August 2020, DEWLP Chief Engineer Cara Samedi recommended the height should be 3.2m, to take into account climate change's effects on intensifying storm surges. My modelling therefore includes this same height, with rammed earth reinforced by recycled crushed bricks from building site demolitions...

Here are two examples of how using information collected via a formal interview with a video game enthusiast can look in your assignment (when this interview is not a main source of information for an assignment:

eg.1.

The player must have one eye on the arcade screen whilst the other remains on the mini-map. This is important to not only determine whom to support, but also to watch for fast-moving scouts. In an interview with player Nick Pavlovski (2013, 19 November), he claimed that scouts are the primary threat, with the main force a secondary threat. From watching player in-game videos online, there are plenty of examples...

eg. 2.

The player must have one eye on the arcade screen whilst the other remains on the mini-map. This is important to not only determine whom to support, but also to watch for fastmoving scouts. "Scouts are the main threat to artillery tank players like me, with the main tank groups a secondary prob (sic)", one player stated in an interview (N Pavlovski 2013, 19 November). Certainly, from in-game video footage this seems...

Some organisations will allow students to use their internal, private information, provided that the student does not share that information with others (apart from their unit convenor or thesis supervisor). Students may be allowed to refer to information only found on an organisation's intranet, such as text and/or embedded Word or PDF or Excel files.

Those internal documents and intranet pages belonging to an organisation or person are a type of information source called an **Unpublished Work**. They are not meant to be available for the public to access or use (they have not been formally written and published for everyone to read). Some examples include: detailed laboratory testing notes of a new type of medicine; specific details of a trade deal with a company located overseas; instructions to organisation members on how to handle intruders on its premises; a person's diary entries.

You should always obtain written permission from an organisation to use their information, and to make a copy of the information you use. You should retain both a printed copy of the information and a printed copy of the written permission, and be able to produce them upon unit convenor or supervisor request.

This is different to how documents in print and intended to be available to the public from an organisation or individual are referenced - those are referenced using the guidelines for **Leaflet/Booklet**. Some examples of such documents include: an advertising brochure for a car company's new models; instructions for patients attending a hospital for a day procedure; a visitor's guide to a wildlife sanctuary that is handed out when you buy your ticket at the entrance. **Leaflet/Booklet** information sources are treated using standard Swinburne Harvard Style guidelines – an in-text reference is provided, as is a reference list entry.

**Unpublished Works** are treated in similar ways to **Personal Communications**...usually with all the in-text citation information written directly into the sentence, and no corresponding reference list entry.

An example of in-text referencing for an internal policy document from Telstra:

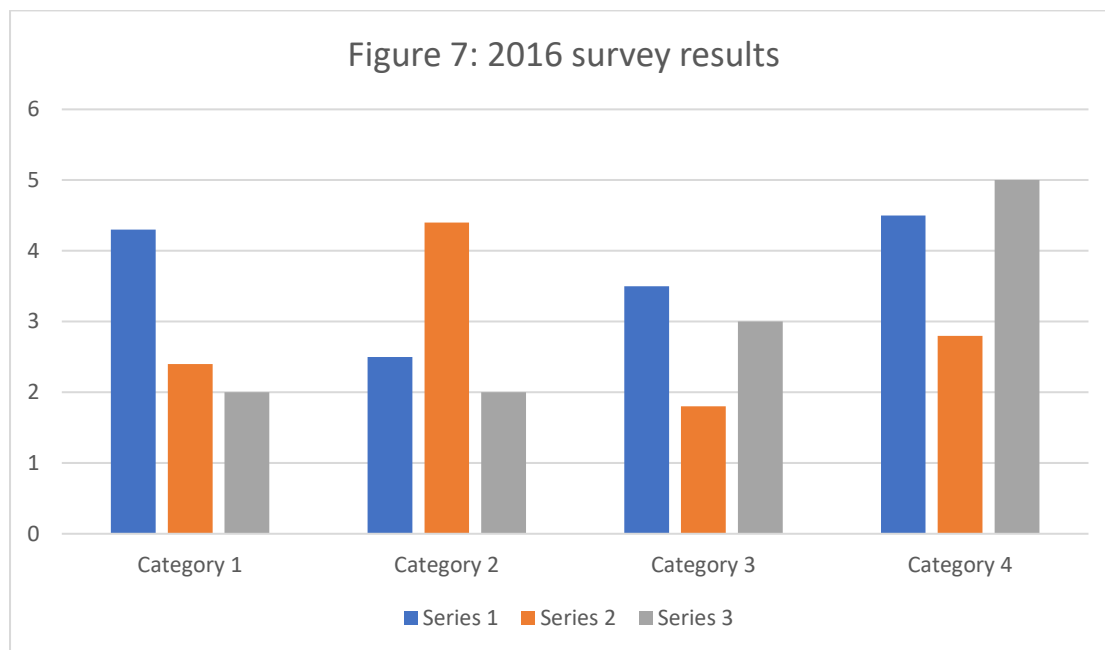
eg.

The Telstra policy and procedures for staff document from 1999 for handling hazardous electronic waste indicates that riggers' gloves, a facemask, non-static bodysuit and...

If you are expected to be able to produce copies of the internal documents you are using (Masters by Research and PhD students are expected to by default; other students as per the unit convenor's or thesis supervisor's recommendation), then you can add extra detail to the sentence to state you have copies – an example in-text :

eg.

...conflicting data from overseas, where different techniques are used. Results of surveys from T4 of 2016 in the Department for Health, Science, Education and Social Services have a unique hierarchical structure; as you can see here in Figure 7:



- these surveys are kept as internal documents accessible to this author. Data shows that student engagement is highest overall for Category 1, which is when they are able to....

A company or organisation may give you permission to use their internal content/documents, but then ask that their specific organisation name was not mentioned. To provide anonymity for that organisation, you can briefly describe the organisation's location and main function instead. For example, if you didn't want to specifically identify Swinburne University of Technology from an interview with a member of Swinburne's staff, you could do something like this:

eg. 1.

Advice received about referencing from a librarian at a university in Victoria on 18 September, 2020, was completely useless, and contradictory to the referencing practices of other Australian universities and universities overseas, which means that...

To use the Telstra example from earlier,

eg. 2.

The 1999 version of the Policy and Procedures document from an Australian telecommunications provider for handling hazardous electronic waste indicates that riggers' gloves, a facemask, non-static bodysuit and...

Unfortunately, you cannot provide reference list entries for organisations wishing to remain anonymous, even if they are major sources of information – which means the guideline from earlier, “This type of source is usually not referred to again in a reference list, except when your work is based mainly on such sources, in which case it is appropriate to list them”, cannot apply to sources that remain anonymous. This may affect their credibility and academic value as a source - check with your unit convenor or thesis supervisor before you decide to use anonymised information sources.

### When an unpublished source or sources is a main information source for your work:

If your information sources are mainly comprised of these unpublished works, then you will need to provide corresponding reference list entries for each work. Try to include the following bibliographic details:

**Author, Initial/s Year of publication, 'Title of information source', Publisher, Place of Publication, Brief description of information source, Location of information source (if an electronic item; otherwise omit Location information).**

Here's an example of how to do it with Swinburne intranet content (statistics from the Swinburne Library in-house surveys):

eg. 1.

Swinburne Library 2012, 'What was the main reason you came to the library today 19-25 March 2012', Swinburne Library, Victoria, survey statistics, Swinburne University of Technology intranet.

Here's how to do it with a printed copy of the Swinburne Library book acquisitions procedure, which was for staff only:

eg. 2.

Swinburne Library 2005, 'Acquisitions procedures – Books in print', Swinburne Library, Victoria, work procedures.

Note that for that heavily-referenced unpublished work or works, you change the way they are treated in-text, and instead provide a standard Swinburne Harvard Style in-text reference for it/them. Other lightly- or singly-referenced published works are treated as before, by writing the supporting information about where the information comes from and when it was published naturally into the sentence.

Emails, SMS text messages, personal messages sent via social media, if major sources of information for you work, have some specific rules:

- You are strongly advised to obtain written permission from an author who has communicated with you personally before you use any of their information, and if an email, seek permission to acknowledge their email address in your reference list entry.
- You should never acknowledge an email address without the permission of the owner of the address.
- You should make printouts/hardcopies of emails, SMS and personal messages, and be able to present them if asked.

An email or SMS reference list entry should include the following bibliographic details:

**Author, Initial/s Year of publication, email/SMS/private message, Day Month, email address if permission from author obtained.**

Include the time also, in AM/PM format, if you wish to use more than one email or text message received on the same day (egs. 9:01 AM; 10:59 PM).

Here's an example of a reference list entry for an email, with permission obtained to acknowledge the email address:

eg. 1.

Wallis, R 2009, email, 24 April, rwallis@swin.edu.au.

And an example without permission to acknowledge the email address:

eg. 2.

Wilson, JE 2013, email, 16 January.

And an example of an SMS, where time has also been included:

eg. 3.

Yunupingu, D 2019, SMS, 26 May, 2:17 PM.

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The Library's Swinburne Harvard Style guide can be accessed at  
**[www.swinburne.edu.au/library/referencing/harvard-style-guide/](http://www.swinburne.edu.au/library/referencing/harvard-style-guide/)**

Need more help with Harvard style?

Visit us at a campus library, or contact us:

Email: [library@swin.edu.au](mailto:library@swin.edu.au)

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