

# Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)

## Source Citation and Referencing Protocol

This SOP details the **source citation and referencing protocol** to ensure proper acknowledgment of all information sources. It covers guidelines for identifying credible sources, applying consistent citation styles, managing in-text citations and reference lists, avoiding plagiarism, and maintaining academic integrity. The protocol aims to standardize referencing practices across documents, enhance the credibility of the work, and facilitate easy verification of sourced information.

### 1. Purpose

To provide standardized procedures for citing and referencing all sources used in the creation of documents, thereby ensuring transparency, academic integrity, and verifiability.

### 2. Scope

This protocol applies to all staff, students, and collaborators preparing written documents, reports, articles, or presentations for *[Your Organization/Department]*.

### 3. Guiding Principles

- **Credibility:** Use only authoritative, up-to-date, and reliable sources.
- **Consistency:** Apply a uniform citation and referencing style throughout all documents.
- **Transparency:** Clearly attribute all sourced information.
- **Integrity:** Uphold ethical research and reporting standards.

### 4. Procedure

1. **Identification of Sources**
  - Prefer peer-reviewed journals, books by recognized experts, and reputable institutional sources.
  - Avoid user-generated content unless directly relevant and corroborated.
2. **Citation Style**
  - Use *[specify preferred style, e.g., APA, MLA, Chicago, Harvard]*.
  - Ensure all team members are familiar with the requirements of the chosen style.
3. **In-text Citations**
  - Insert citations immediately after referenced information.
  - Follow the syntax and formatting rules of the preferred citation style.
4. **Reference List/Bibliography**
  - Include a complete, alphabetized list of all sources cited within the document.
  - Ensure full and correct details for each entry; follow formatting as per chosen style.
5. **Plagiarism Prevention**
  - Check all documents with a standard plagiarism detection tool before submission.
  - Paraphrase appropriately and cite sources even for paraphrased ideas or data.

### 5. Roles and Responsibilities

- **Authors:** Ensure all sources are cited and referenced correctly.
- **Editors/Reviewers:** Verify the accuracy and consistency of all references.
- **Supervisors/Managers:** Oversee adherence to this SOP.

### 6. Maintenance & Review

The protocol will be reviewed annually or as citation standards evolve.

### 7. References

[Insert references or links to official guides for the stipulated citation style]

### 8. Appendix

#### Example Citation (APA):

In-text: (Smith, 2020)

Reference List: Smith, J. (2020). *Title of book*. Publisher.