Reach Programme

Written Assignment Handbook

(S5 and S6)



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# WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT

Each pupil taking part in Reach will be asked to submit an essay on the subject in which they are interested. Most pupils will complete this in their s5 year however some may do it in s6 if they join the programme late. The topics for the essays have been set by each of the four professional schools and can be found on pages 17-23. The mark and feedback you receive on your essay will form part of your overall Reach profile which can support your application to Dentistry, Law, Medicine or Veterinary Medicine at the University of Glasgow. To encourage independent study, we expect you to do some of the work towards the essay outside of the classroom (S6 pupils will have to complete the entire essay in their own time). More information on how you are assessed throughout the programme, including the written assignment, is provided in the course handbook.

The written assignment is designed to assess your ability to produce a coherent argument based on different kinds of evidence. As both a student and a practising dentist, doctor, vet or solicitor, you will routinely have to determine the right course of action for a given patient, client or situation. To do this properly, you will need to justify your decisions with reasoned, evidence-based arguments.

Your final written submission should between 1200 - 1500 words in length and should include references. For instructions on how to include references see pages 8-17.

**How to submit your written assignment**

1. Complete your assignment in a software package such as Microsoft Word and make sure it is saved before moving on to step 2.
2. Follow the links to the webform on the Moodle page. Complete the form, including your Student ID, and then copy and paste your essay into the appropriate text boxes. We have allowed for two text boxes for your essay and one for your reference list. The word limit for each of these boxes is approx. 690 so you will likely have to paste your essay over the three boxes provided – don’t worry about this, it will be reformatted when we download it from the form.

**Please note** - Due to formatting limitations you should ONLY use the Harvard referencing system as outlined in the booklet. You should also avoid using special formatting, such as tables, bold type, italics, or underlining because these are incompatible with the submission form.

If you have any problems sending your written assignment please get in touch via e-mail on [reach@glasgow.ac.uk](mailto:reach@glasgow.ac.uk).

# Referencing and Plagiarism

1. **Referencing**

“When writing an essay, report or dissertation, it is usual to make reference to, or cite, the sources that you used, referred to, or took quotes from. These references might be from journal or newspaper articles, books or book chapters, government reports, internet publications etc. Citing accurate references is important for the following reasons:

* To give credit to other author’s concepts & ideas
* To provide the reader with evidence of the extent of your reading
* To allow the reader to locate the cited references easily
* More seriously, it is vital to avoid being accused of plagiarism

When you refer to, or directly quote from, someone else’s work you must refer to the author / editor in the text and provide a full reference to the source in the reference list or bibliography.” (University of Glasgow, n.d.).

1. **Plagiarism**

Without referencing, you might be accused of plagiarism. “Many people think of plagiarism as copying another's work or borrowing someone else's original ideas. But terms like "copying" and "borrowing" can disguise the seriousness of the offense. According to the Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary, to "plagiarise" means:

* to steal and pass off (the ideas or words of another) as one's own
* to use (another's production) without crediting the source
* to commit literary theft
* to present an idea or product derived from an existing source as new and original.

In other words, plagiarism is an act of fraud. It involves both stealing someone else's work and lying about it afterward” (Plagiarism.org, 2014).

Plagiarism is serious, and the best way to avoid it is by making sure you always reference any sources you use in your work.

1. **How to construct a reference**

There are a number of methods you can use to construct a reference. For Reach, we’d like you to use the Harvard method which looks like this:

(Author, Year of Publication)

Each time you use a source in your essay, you should insert this set of brackets with the name of the author (or the source) and the year it was published at the end of the sentence you’ve used the source in. At the end of the essay, you would then create a list of references that give more details about each source you’ve used.

For more information on the Harvard system of referencing, see Anglia Ruskin University Library’s pages on referencing here: <http://libweb.anglia.ac.uk/referencing/harvard.htm>

1. **Online references**

Every time you use a source you must insert a reference so that it is clear when and where you have used it.

For the essay you are going to write for Reach most of the sources you will be looking at are from the internet. Referencing online sources can be hard because you need to decide if a website is trustworthy.

* What websites do you know of that aren’t trustworthy or that you shouldn’t use in your work?
* Why shouldn’t you use them?

Look at the following websites and online sources (Example Sources on pages 6-7) and find out:

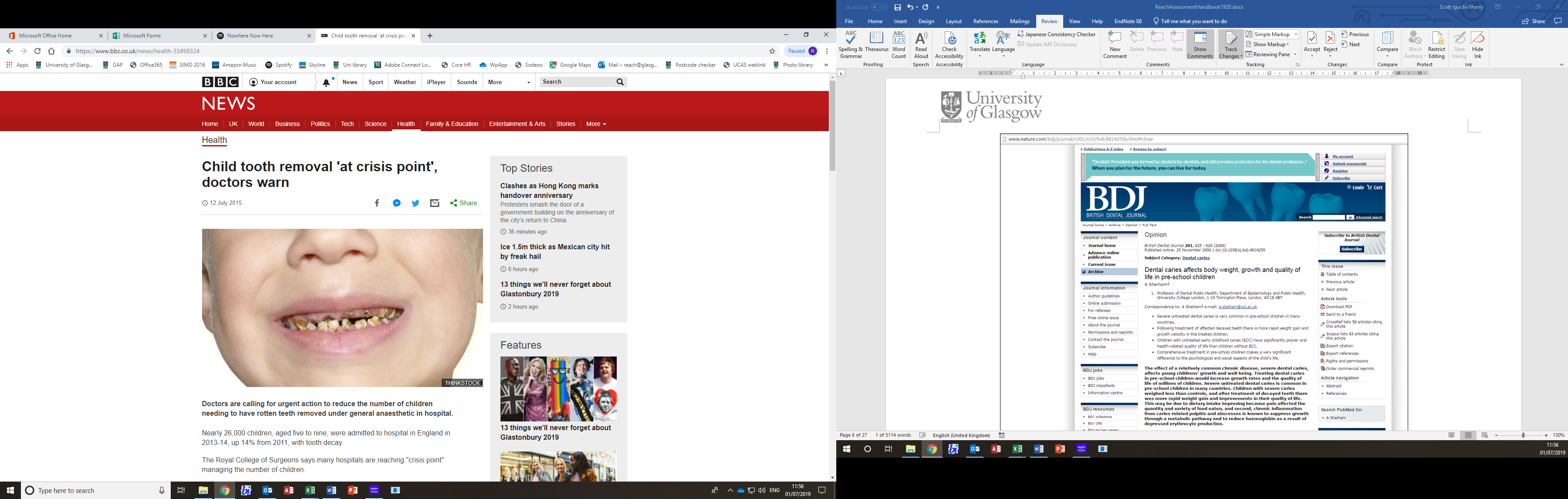
* Who is the author?
* What is the year of publication?

Fill in the table below to write references for each of them making sure to use the right punctuation. Remember, articles and webpages might not always have authors, you may have to use a company or organisation name instead (for instance, ‘BBC’ or ‘NHS’). Also, there may not always be a date of publication. When this happens, you can use ‘n.d.’, which stands for ‘no date’.

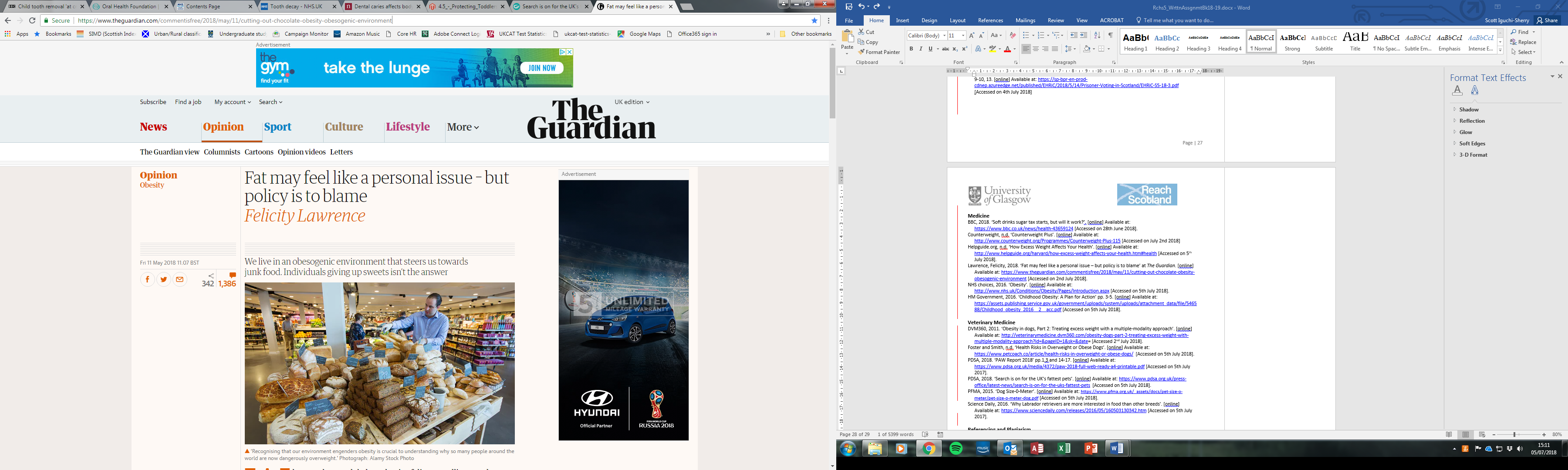
|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **(Author,** | **Year of Publication).** |
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**Example Sources**

https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-43659124

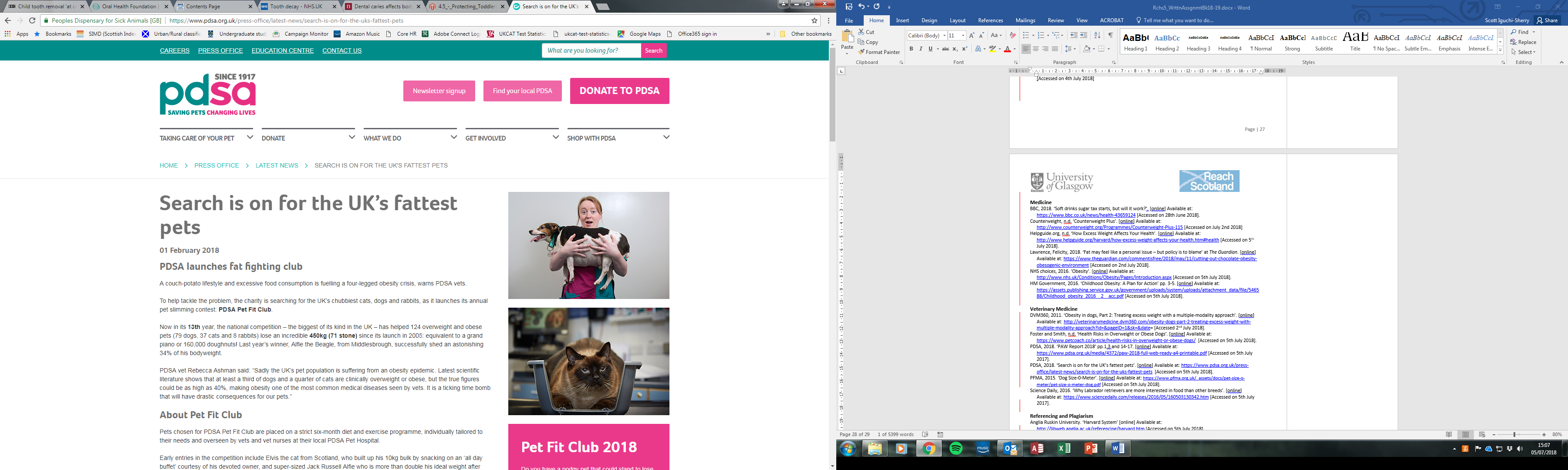


https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/may/11/cutting-out-chocolate-obesity-obesogenic-environment

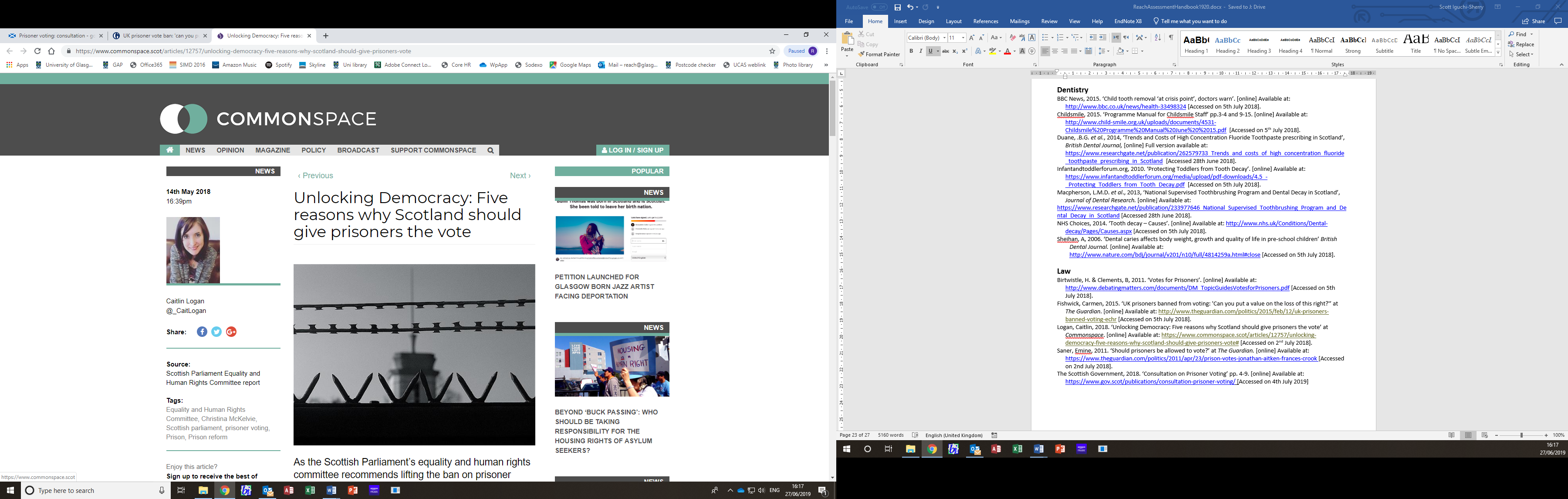


**Example Sources**

<https://www.pdsa.org.uk/media/4372/paw-2018-full-web-ready-a4-printable.pdf>



[https://www.commonspace.scot/articles/12757/unlocking-democracy-five-reasons-why-scotland-should-give-prisoners-vote#](https://www.commonspace.scot/articles/12757/unlocking-democracy-five-reasons-why-scotland-should-give-prisoners-vote)



1. **When to reference**

Knowing when to reference can be tricky. When you write an essay would you include a reference for the following?

* A COMMONLY KNOWN FACT
* A QUOTE
* YOUR OWN OPINION
* ANOTHER PERSON’S OPINION

Think about why you would / would not include a reference in each of these instances.

Directly below is an extract from the source ‘Pet obesity set to soar warns vet charity’ by The Peoples Dispensary for Sick Animals (PDSA). After that you’ll see an example of a piece of writing on obesity in pets. Read the source then go through the writing example sentence-by-sentence and decide where the reference (PDSA, 2015) should appear and why.

**Source - Pet obesity set to soar warns vet charity**

Obesity is the number one concern among vets when it comes to man’s best friend but worryingly, nearly half of people surveyed are not aware that it is a major issue. This is a huge concern given that 80% of vets and vet nurses believe there will be more overweight pets than healthy weight pets in five years’ time and PDSA is stressing the need for urgent action.

Depressingly, over six million dogs in the UK exercise outside of the home or garden for only an hour a day or less, contributing to the number of obese pets. Obesity can contribute to pets developing deadly conditions that can cut their lifespan such as heart disease, cancer and diabetes, as well as debilitating conditions including arthritis.

To help combat the pet obesity crisis PDSA today launches its annual Pet Fit Club competition and is inviting owners of the UK’s biggest pets to apply for a chance to take part in the fat fighting contest.

***Example***

*I believe obesity is the most serious problem for dogs and dog owners right now. Obesity can contribute to pets developing deadly conditions that can cut their lifespan such as heart disease, cancer and diabetes, as well as debilitating conditions including arthritis. Not providing enough exercise for dogs, many of whom are only given an hours or less of exercise a day, can be a contributing factor in the development of obesity.*

1. **Reference List**

At the end of your essay you then need to compile a reference list which provides full details of each source you have used in your essay. This should be organised alphabetically by author/source.

Here are some example references for the sources we’ve used in this section:

Plagiarism.org, 2014. ‘What is Plagiarism?’ [online] Available at: <http://www.plagiarism.org/plagiarism-101/what-is-plagiarism> [Accessed on 21st September 2016].

University of Glasgow. ‘How to Cite References’. [online] Available at: <http://www.gla.ac.uk/services/library/subjectssupport/informationskills/referencing> [Accessed on 21st September 2016].

Try and write a reference list for the sources in this section. Use the table on the next page to make sure you are including all the relevant information and using the right punctuation.

Remember: if any of the sources you are using don’t have a year of publication, you can leave these blank.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Name of author** OR **source,** | **Year of Publication.** | **‘Title of source’.** | ***Name of Newspaper,*** | **[online]** | **Available at:** INSERT FULL WEB ADDRESS HERE | **[Accessed on…**INSERT TODAY’S DATE HERE**]** |
| BBC, | 2015. | ‘Child tooth removal ‘at crisis point’, doctors warn’. |  | [online] | Available at:  https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-43659124 | [Accessed on 8th July 2019] |
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# Dentistry Written Assignment

The assignment for Dentistry is as follows:

Question*:*

*What is the most effective way to combat tooth decay in children? When assessing ‘effectiveness’, you should consider medical, social, practical and economic factors. As part of your answer, you should also critically evaluate existing programmes and policies (such as ‘Childsmile’ in Scotland), suggesting where changes and/or improvements can or should be made.*

Guidance*:*

*In your answer, you should outline the different effects of tooth decay in children, as well as noting the risk factors and causes. You should further outline some of the treatment options that are available to manage the problem, while also demonstrating an awareness of some of the different policies and/or programmes that exist to tackle tooth decay in children.*

**Research**

The reading materials for this assignment can be found on moodle and the full reference list is on page 22 of this booklet.

When reading through the sources make sure to keep a note of what information you’ve gathered from which source (this is really important for referencing).

## Dentistry Written Assignment – sample structure

**Introduction**

Briefly set out your argument and explain what your essay will cover

**Section 1:** define/explain the problem

* + What is tooth decay?
  + What are the effects of tooth decay?
  + Why is it a problem amongst children?

**Section 2**: set out your argument in greater detail by critiquing and evaluating the effectiveness of existing treatments and programmes/policies from a range of angles

* + What are the causes and risk factors of tooth decay?
  + What measures are currently in place to address the problem of childhood tooth decay, and how do these tackle the causes and risk factors?
  + Critique these current measures from each of the following angles:
    - Medical – how does a particular measure actually prevent/treat dental caries/tooth decay?
    - Economic/financial – how cost effective is this solution? Is it quite cheap or prohibitively expensive? Is it worth diverting funds from elsewhere?
    - Practical – how easy or difficult would it be/has it been to implement this solution?
    - Social – does this solution tackle some of the underlying social or cultural issues (e.g. the fact childhood tooth decay is more prevalent in lower income households, or that sugary drinks and snacks are targeted at children)?

**Section 3**: in light of your critique of existing measures, outline how you think they could be improved or expanded. Be sure to consider this from the four angles listed above.

**Conclusion**

Summarise your argument, bringing the various strands from sections 2 and 3 together into a coherent conclusion.

# Law Written Assignment

The assignment for Law is as follows:

*Question:*

*Should Scotland create an environmental court?*

*Guidance:*

*When making your case you should outline how environmental court cases are currently processed in the Scottish legal system and the problems with this. No matter your position on the issue, you should also consider the advantages and disadvantages of an environmental court in your essay. You should also come to a conclusion as to whether Scotland should implement an environmental court in its legal system and base this argument on the evidence from the sources.*

**Research**

The reading materials for this assignment can be found on moodle and the full reference list is on page 22 of this booklet.

When reading through the sources make sure to keep a note of what information you’ve gathered from which source (this is really important for referencing).

## Law Written Assignment – sample structure

**Introduction**

Briefly outline your argument and explain what your essay will cover. An introduction should be a ‘roadmap’ of your essay and should explain exactly what the reader will read in the essay so make sure the body of the essay and the introduction match up.

**Section 1:** set out the background to the issue and why we may need an ECT in Scotland.

* What is the background to this issue? Why is Scotland considering implementing an ECT in the first place?
* How are environmental cases currently processed in the Scottish Justice system?
* Why is the current system not fit for providing environmental justice?
* Explain what an environmental court is.

**Section 2:** set out and discuss the advantages and disadvantages of implementing an environmental court.

* You do not need to discuss every advantage and disadvantage; however, you should discuss at least two advantages and two disadvantages.
* The arguments fall broadly into two categories, and you should aim to cover both in your essay:
  + Practical – practical arguments surrounding how implementing a court would actually work; and
  + Social – how the public may view the implementation of an environmental court.
* You should also critique these arguments. Are they convincing? If they are convincing why and if they are not convincing, why not?
* Would a court work in practice? Would it be worth Scotland having this court based on the evidence? Are there alternatives to an ECT?

**Section 3:** Following your critique of the advantages and disadvantages, you should come to a conclusion as to whether Scotland should or should not have an environmental court and support this with evidence from the materials as to why you think this.

**Conclusion**

You should then conclude your essay by bringing together and summarising your arguments from sections 2 and 3.

# Medicine Written Assignment

The assignment for Medicine is as follows:

Question*:*

*What is the most effective way to combat obesity? When assessing ‘effectiveness’, you should consider the medical, social, practical and economic factors. As part of your answer, you should also critically evaluate existing programmes and policies, suggesting where changes and/or improvements can or should be made.*

Guidance*:*

*In your answer, you should outline the different effects of obesity on an individual, as well as noting the risk factors and causes. You should further outline some of the treatment options that are available to manage the problem, while also demonstrating an awareness of some of the different policies and/or programmes that exist to tackle obesity.*

**Research**

The reading materials for this assignment can be found on moodle and the full reference list is on page 23 of this booklet.

When reading through the sources make sure to keep a note of what information you’ve gathered from which source (this is really important for referencing).

## Medicine Written Assignment – sample structure

**Introduction**

Briefly set out your argument and explain what your essay will cover

**Section 1:** define/explain the problem

* + What is obesity?
  + What are the effects of obesity?
  + Why is it a problem in society?

**Section 2**: set out your argument in greater detail by critiquing and evaluating the effectiveness of existing treatments and programmes/policies from a range of angles

* + What are the causes and risk factors of obesity?
  + What measures are currently in place to address the problem of obesity, and how do these tackle the causes and risk factors?
  + Critique these current measures from each of the following angles:
    - Medical – how does a particular measure actually prevent/treat obesity?
    - Economic/financial – how cost effective is this solution? Is it quite cheap or prohibitively expensive? Is it worth diverting funds from elsewhere?
    - Practical – how easy or difficult would it be/has it been to implement this solution?
    - Social – does this solution tackle some of the underlying social or cultural issues (e.g. the fact obesity is more prevalent in lower income households, or that sugary drinks and snacks are targeted at children)?

**Section 3**: in light of your critique of existing measures, outline how you think they could be improved or expanded. Be sure to consider this from the four angles listed above.

**Conclusion**

Summarise your argument, bringing the various strands from sections 2 and 3 together into a coherent conclusion.

# Veterinary Medicine Written Assignment

The assignment for Veterinary Medicine is as follows:

*What is the most effective way to combat obesity in dogs? When assessing*

*‘effectiveness’, you should consider the medical, social, practical and economic factors. As part of your answer, you should also critically evaluate existing programmes and policies, suggesting where changes and/or improvements can or should be made.*

Guidance*:*

*In your answer, you should outline the different effects of obesity on dogs, as well as noting the risk factors and causes. You should further outline some of the treatment options that are available to manage the problem, while also demonstrating an awareness of some of the different policies and/or programmes that exist to tackle obesity.*

**Research**

The reading materials for this assignment can be found on moodle and the full reference list is on page 23 of this booklet.

When reading through the sources make sure to keep a note of what information you’ve gathered from which source (this is really important for referencing).

## Veterinary Medicine Written Assignment – sample structure

**Introduction**

Briefly set out your argument and explain what your essay will cover

**Section 1:** define/explain the problem

* + What is obesity?
  + What are the effects of obesity?
  + Why is it a problem in dogs in particular?

**Section 2**: set out your argument in greater detail by critiquing and evaluating the effectiveness of existing treatments and programmes/policies from a range of angles

* + What are the causes and risk factors of obesity in dogs?
  + What measures are currently in place to address the problem of dog obesity, and how do these tackle the causes and risk factors?
  + Critique these current measures from each of the following angles:
    - Medical – how does a particular measure actually prevent/treat obesity?
    - Economic/financial – how cost effective is this solution? Is it quite cheap or prohibitively expensive?
    - Practical – how easy or difficult would it be/has it been to implement this solution?
    - Social – does this solution tackle some of the underlying social or cultural issues (e.g. is there a link between human obesity and dog obesity)?

**Section 3**: In light of your critique of existing measures, outline how you think they could be improved or expanded. Be sure to consider this from the four angles listed above.

**Conclusion**

Summarise your argument, bringing the various strands from sections 2 and 3 together into a coherent conclusion.

# Reference Lists

Please note that electronic copies of the source booklets for each profession (containing the sources listed below) can be found online at www.gla.ac.uk/reachforms

**Dentistry**

BBC News, 2015. ‘Child tooth removal ‘at crisis point’, doctors warn’. [online] Available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-33498324> [Accessed on 5th July 2019].

Childsmile, 2015. ‘Programme Manual for Childsmile Staff’ pp.3-4 and 9-15. [online] Available at: <http://www.child-smile.org.uk/uploads/documents/4531-Childsmile%20Programme%20Manual%20June%20%2015.pdf> [Accessed on 5th July 2019].

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**Law**

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Mercer, I., 2019. ‘Natural justice for the environment can be helped by specialist courts’. [online] Scotsman.com. Available at: <https://www.scotsman.com/news/opinion/natural-justice-environment-can-be-helped-specialist-courts-1418205> [Accessed 6 August 2021].

Pring, G. and Pring, C., 2009. ‘Greening Justice Creating and Improving Environmental Courts and Tribunals’. [online] Law.du.edu. Available at: <https://www.law.du.edu/documents/ect-study/greening-justice-book.pdf> [Accessed 6 August 2021].

Pring, G. and Pring, C., 2016. ‘Environmental Courts & Tribunals A Guide for Policy Makers’. [online] Ajne.org. Available at: <https://www.ajne.org/sites/default/files/resource/publications/7182/unep-ects-guide.pdf> [Accessed 6 August 2021].

Scottish Environment Link, 2020. ‘Access to justice on the environment, and whether Scotland is providing it’. [online] Scotlink.org. Available at: <https://www.scotlink.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/ERCS-access-to-justice-prohibitive-expense.pdf> [Accessed 6 August 2021].

**Medicine**

BBC, 2018. ‘Soft drinks sugar tax starts, but will it work?’. [online] Available at: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-43659124> [Accessed on 28th June 2019].

Frayling, Timothy, 2012. ‘Are the causes of Obesity primarily environmental? No’ at *British Medical Journal*. [online] Available at: <https://www.bmj.com/content/bmj/345/bmj.e5844.full.pdf> [Accessed on 6th July 2019].

HM Government, 2016. ‘Childhood Obesity: A Plan for Action’ pp. 3-5. [online] Available at: <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/546588/Childhood_obesity_2016__2__acc.pdf> [Accessed on 5th July 2019].

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**Veterinary Medicine**

Linder, 2017. ‘Why are so many of our pets overweight?’. [online] Available at: <https://theconversation.com/why-are-so-many-of-our-pets-overweight-85958> [Accessed on 5th July 2019].

PetCoach, 2019 ‘Obesity in Dogs’. [online] Available at: <https://www.petcoach.co/dog/condition/obesity/> [Accessed on 2nd August 2022].

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**Referencing and Plagiarism**

Anglia Ruskin University. ‘Harvard System’ [online] Available at: <http://libweb.anglia.ac.uk/referencing/harvard.htm> [Accessed on 5th July 2019].

Plagiarism.org, 2014. ‘What is Plagiarism?’ [online] Available at: <http://www.plagiarism.org/plagiarism-101/what-is-plagiarism/> [Accessed on 5th July 2019].

Scribbr. ‘A Quick Guide to Referencing | Cite Your Sources Correctly’ [online] Available at: [www.scribbr.co.uk/category/referencing](http://www.scribbr.co.uk/category/referencing) [Accessed on 2nd August 2022]