Use of Latin

There is no need to use Latin abbreviations when you reference your work, but you will encounter a variety of Latin abbreviations in references, especially if the book or article is more than twenty years old. A list of the four most common abbreviations is given below. Many publishers today are moving away from using these abbreviations and you are advised to omit them or keep them to a minimum in your own work. Ibid. and perhaps op. cit. are the most useful, but if you follow the instructions given earlier in this guide (see Footnotes, above) you can avoid Latin abbreviations completely.

1. ibid. (short for ibidem) meaning “in the same [book, chapter etc.]” and used when a reference is given to the same source as the immediately preceding reference. For clarity you should add the page number.

   e.g.


   60. Ibid., p. 84

2. loc. cit. (short for loco citato) meaning “in the passage already cited”

3. op. cit. (short for opere citato) meaning “in the work already cited”

Both loc. cit. and op. cit. are used when the full reference has already been given in an earlier footnote, but not in the immediately preceding one. For clarity, you should add the page number of the relevant passage and also the date if the author has more than one source listed in your footnotes.

   e.g.


4. passim (from passus meaning scattered) and used when a point is made in many places, here and there or throughout a passage, a chapter or even a whole book.

   e.g.

   a reference to ‘pp. 60-80’ might indicate a concentrated discussion of an idea, whereas ‘pp.60-80 passim’ shows that the idea makes numerous, but sporadic appearances.