OSCOLA MINI GUIDE

These notes will help you to get started using OSCOLA. They should be used in conjunction with the OSCOLA Quick Reference Guide which gives examples of commonly cited sources. You will also need to consult the full OSCOLA manual – there is a link to this in the Law subject Guide http://libguide.stir.ac/law.

Footnotes
All citations should appear as footnotes.

- Use superscript numbers as footnote markers within the text of the document.
- Place footnote markers after punctuation in the text at the end of sentences if possible.
- Use the journal or case report abbreviation rather than full title. The most commonly used abbreviations are listed in the full OSCOLA manual or check the Cardiff Index.

Author Names
- In footnotes the author names are given in natural order (first name then last name).
- In the bibliography surname is followed by initials with no separating comma and no full stops. Author first names are not given in the bibliography.
- If there are more than three authors give only the first name followed by ‘and others’.
- If there is no personal author give the name of any organisation responsible for the content.
- If no person or organisation is named with responsibility for an item, list it by title.

Punctuation
OSCOLA advises minimal punctuation with no full stops in abbreviations or author initials.

Abbreviations
Law Reports and Journal Abbreviation

- Use abbreviations for law reports and journals listed OSCOLA Appendix 4.2.
- Use the Cardiff Index for law report or journal abbreviations not listed in OSCOLA.
- If abbreviations for very similar titles would cause confusion give the full title.

Other Abbreviations

- OSCOLA Appendix 4.2 includes tables of words usually abbreviated in case names (eg cc for County Council) and commonly abbreviated in footnotes (eg c for clause).

Brackets around Dates
If the date is an essential means of identifying law reports or journal articles (eg if there is no volume number) it should be enclosed in square brackets.

If the date is useful rather than essential (eg if there is a volume number) it should be in round brackets.

Case Names
Case names should be given in italics.

If the name of a case (eg party names) is mentioned in the text, OSCOLA gives these options:

- Do not repeat the case name in footnotes but provide the remaining citation details.
- Alternatively it is acceptable to give the full case details including the case name.
Students are recommended to give the full case details as it is easier to be consistent.

**Neutral Citations**
Neutral citations were introduced in 2001 -2002 in England and Wales and 2005 in Scotland to identify judgements independently of the published law reports.

Neutral citations include the **year of judgment, the court** and the **judgment number**.

- If a judgment has been allocated a neutral citation this must be included in your citation.
- If a judgement is not reported give only the neutral citation.
- If a judgement is reported give the neutral citation followed by the most authoritative report.
- If there is no neutral citation give the most authoritative report.

**Repeated Citations**
OSCOLA suggests ways to shorten the information in footnotes if you are repeating a citation used earlier. However it is also acceptable to give the full citation every time a source is cited. Students are recommended to always give the full citations with the following exception:

- If a citation would repeat details of the immediately preceding citation, replace it with the abbreviation **ibid** (ibid is short for ibidem, which means ‘in the same place’).

**Pinpoints**
Pinpoints are references to specific chapters or pages. See the pinpoint notes for Cases, Books and Journal articles in the **OSCOLA Quick Reference Guide** and further detail in OSCOLA manual.

**Quotations**
- Quotations of **up to 3 lines** are enclosed within single quotation marks and incorporated in the text.
- Add punctuation after the closing quotation mark (except if there is already punctuation at the end of the quote) followed by the footnote marker.
- Quotations which are **longer than 3 lines** are presented in ad indented paragraph without quotation marks. The footnote follows the end punctuation.

**Bibliography**
In addition to the footnotes, provide a list of cited sources arranged as follows:

1. Table of Cases.
2. Table of Legislation and other primary legal sources.
3. List of Secondary sources (books, journal articles, reports etc.).

Long lists of cases and legislation may be sub-divided by jurisdiction, otherwise each section is organised alphabetically.

The **format** of references in the bibliography is the same as for footnotes (see examples in the **OSCOLA Quick Reference Guide**) with the following **exceptions**:

1. Use author surname and initials (not first name/forenames) without a full stop.
2. The author surname should precede his or her initial(s) with no comma separating them. The list can then be arranged in alphabetical order of surname.
3. Secondary sources with no author should be preceded by a double em-dash (——) and be listed in title order at the beginning of the list of secondary sources.