

How to cite research data in a reference list

Data and other digital resources used in your research should be acknowledged in research outputs, in accordance with academic practice. This ensures that the creator is recognised for their work and avoids possible claims of plagiarism.

Citing research data in LSHTM coursework

Students enrolled on LSHTM courses should follow citation guidelines outlined in the LSHTM Academic Writing Handbook.

- **For data that you have captured:** Data should be described in the text, but at present does not need to be cited in a reference list.
- **For data obtained from a 3rd party:** Obtain permission from the data provider before citing 3rd party data in your work. A dataset that has been provided to you personally, but which is not publicly available, may represent 'personal communication' (as described in the LSHTM Academic Writing Handbook) and need only be cited in the text.

Citing research data in journal papers

Many journals provide guidance on how to cite digital resources, such as research data. These often take the following approach:

- **Public data:** cite the persistent identifier and/or URL for the resource
- **Restricted data:** Cite a persistent identifier and/or URL of a page where users can learn more about the dataset and how to access it. An email contact address may be used in some cases, although this is prohibited by some journals.
- **Unpublished data:** Obtain permission from the data provider before citing 3rd party data in your work. A dataset that has been provided to you personally, but which is not publicly available, may represent 'personal communication'.

Publishers such as PLOS and Nature request a Data Access Statement, while Cambridge University Press ask authors to list unpublished datasets at the bottom of the reference list. Review submission guidance or contact the publisher for advice on placement of the citation.

Create your own citation

If your publisher or style manual does not provide data-specific guidance, a variation of the citation style used for reports should be adopted, with the following differences:

- **Author:** The name of the data creator(s)
- **Title:** The name of the resource being cited – this should differ from the paper itself
- **Version number:** for regularly updated resources
- **Resource Type:** a short description of the content, e.g. Data Collection, Dataset, Image.
- **Publication date:** The date when the resource was released. If an embargo has been applied, this may be the date that it ends. Creation date may be used for unpublished material.
- **Publisher:** The name of an entity responsible for storing, curating and/or sharing the data. For example, London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, Figshare, Zenodo.
- **Location:** An identifier for use in locating the resource, e.g. a DOI, accession number, or URL.

Further information:

- LSHTM: Cite research data in your reference list
https://lshtm.sharepoint.com/Research/Research-data-management/Pages/data_referencelist.aspx