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PREFACE

ORIENTATION TO INS1502: Developing information skills for lifelong learning

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to INS1502. In this module you will learn more about information skills, which form part of the information phenomenon, one of the defining features of the world as we know it today.

The objective of this module is to ensure that you understand the information phenomenon: to make you aware of information; teach you to deal with information in daily life both in and outside the work context; and help you to understand what information is, where it occurs, what can be done with it, how important and/or valuable it is, and how it enriches and improves the lives of individuals and society. Working with information is fascinating, and this module teaches you skills related to dealing with information in an academic environment specifically.

In this orientation I will give you an overview of the content of the module, and provide some basic study and examination tips. I also include the specific learning outcomes for the module as a whole. Please note that you will not be examined on the content of the orientation.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

The overall purpose of INS1502 is to help you acquire information and skills that will help you to plan for various information tasks and to effectively locate, evaluate and organise information to complete information tasks such as academic essays and assignments successfully.

In this module, information skills are divided into three phases:

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**Planning:** The first part of the study guide deals with planning skills, which are dealt with in study units 1 and 2. In these units, you will be asked to study relevant sections and chapters of your prescribed book. In this part of the module I present a framework of information skills for solving an information problem. I explain what an information task is, and discuss how to plan an information task.

**Finding:** The second part of the study guide deals with finding information, which is dealt with in study units 4, 5, 6 and 7. Again, you will be referred to relevant sections and chapters of your prescribed book. I will discuss how to locate information in resource collections to meet specific information needs. I will be referring in particular to collections in libraries and those available on the internet. You will learn about reference sources that
provide information directly (dictionaries and encyclopaedias) as well as indirect information sources (bibliographic, indexing and abstracting sources).

**Organising:** The third part of the study guide deals with organising information, which is dealt with in study units 8 and 9. Also study the relevant sections and chapters of your prescribed book. You will learn how to organise the information you have retrieved in order to complete a task, and how to apply all the information skills you have acquired in this module to complete an essay assignment. In study unit 9 you will learn how to cite sources.

After working through all the study units in the study guide and the relevant sections and chapters of your prescribed book and completing the activities:

1. you should have developed enough self-confidence and acquired the necessary skills to complete an information task successfully
2. you should be able to
   - plan an information task
   - find relevant information for an information task
   - organise the information
   - use various reading and thinking skills
   - complete an information task
   - cite information sources correctly
3. you should be able to transfer and use the information skills you learnt in this module throughout your life

**USING THIS STUDY GUIDE**

This module combines theory and practice, and by studying the module content you will learn how to use information to plan, research and write an academic essay. At the beginning of each study unit you will find a list of the learning outcomes you should have achieved by the end of the unit. There is also a list of key concepts for each study unit. You will find the definitions of these keywords or concepts in the relevant chapters of the prescribed book.

This study guide consists mainly of a wrap-around discussion, so you need to study the guide in conjunction with the prescribed book that contains the theory and activities. **It is therefore essential that you buy the prescribed book before you start your studies for this module.**

**Prescribed book**

You must buy the following prescribed textbook:


**Activities and exercises**

All the chapters in the prescribed book and most of the study units in the study guide contain activities or exercises. I urge you to complete these activities and exercises, because they will help you when it comes to the assessment opportunities for this
module, such as assignments and the examination. Answers or feedback are usually included in the text.

I hope you enjoy working through this study guide and the prescribed textbook. If you have any comments (whether positive or negative), please send them to me. These comments help me to improve the study guide for future students.

**STUDY TIPS**

You are probably familiar with a study environment and may already have developed various study techniques that you apply successfully. In this section I provide some basic information to help you with your studies and academic achievements.

**Time management**

It is very important for students enrolled for distance learning to use their time wisely and to plan their studies. Manage your time effectively by drawing up a weekly timetable, as this will help you to reserve sufficient time for your studies. Evaluate your daily activities to ascertain which you can eliminate or reduce if you need more time for study purposes. For example, do you spend a lot of time on your cellphone, watching television, or chatting on Facebook? You could spend less time on these activities, and more time on your studies. You will be able to study far more effectively if you manage your time well.

**EXERCISE 1**

Prepare a timetable for each semester required to complete this and other modules. Fill in all important events and important study dates such as assignment due dates and examination dates. Be sure to give yourself enough time for the preparation, completion and posting of assignments and for studying for the examinations. If you know of events that will take up time during the year (such as an important workshop your employer wants you to attend, or a family gathering), include these in your planning for the year. This will help you to avoid crisis periods, such as suddenly realising that you have two assignments due in a week’s time, and not yet having started work on either of them.

**Reading for a degree**

At the top English universities of Oxford and Cambridge, studying towards a degree is referred to as “reading” for a degree. In South Africa we do not generally use that expression, which is a pity. Reading (with insight) is the only way to absorb the wealth of knowledge that is available. To be a successful and accomplished student, you have to read and read and read.

Reading is probably the hardest thing a student has to do, but it is vitally important. It is the only way to absorb and master the information in your prescribed book and study guide. Moreover, by reading more widely (eg the articles and books listed under further reading or those you discover on your own) you will expand your knowledge base, broaden your horizons, and begin to form your own opinions.
Reading, like other activities, becomes easier the more you do it. When you start out you may find that you read slowly and often need to stop and look up words in a dictionary. But the more you read, the faster and more fluently you will be able to read, and the more insight into the content of what you are reading you will gain. So persevere — in time you will find that reading is no longer an effort, but a pleasure!

**EXERCISE 2**

Time yourself to see how long it takes you to read a full page in your prescribed book. Include the time that you need to look up words you do not understand in a dictionary. If you know how long it takes you to read a page, you can work out how long you will need to read a longer section, for example a chapter. It is difficult to estimate the amount of time you need for your studies if you do not know how fast you read. Remember, however, that you will have to read important sections more than once when you are studying seriously. Now that you know more or less how much time you need to read a page or a whole chapter, you can go back to your timetable and calculate the time you will need to work through each chapter and study unit.

**Keeping a journal**

People who learn from the past, and do things better the second time round, are successful people. You can learn to reflect on and learn from your successes and mistakes. A good way to do this is to keep a journal. A journal is a record of your thoughts, feelings and activities. You could use a notebook or create a computer file for this purpose. Suppose you have missed handing in an assignment, and you realise that this happened because you do not work well under pressure; write this down so that you will remember to work differently next time. Write down your reflections on what you learn, and read through your notes at the end of a semester or year. You will be amazed at how much you have learnt about yourself and how you do things.

**EXERCISE 3**

Buy a notebook or a diary that has enough space for you to keep a daily record of your reflections and ideas. Start keeping a journal from this moment onwards. You can start by writing down things such as

- what you expect to learn in this module
- what you think ‘information skills’ are
- whether you can use these skills in your other modules
- how you think the module may be of benefit to you
- your reasons for studying
- whether your studies are a priority in your life
- the amount of time you have available for studying

It will be interesting to reread these notes when you have completed the module.

As soon as you start working through the study units, take the time to reflect on your strengths and weaknesses in terms of the study process and make notes on how well
you cope with the workload. These notes will help you to monitor your progress throughout the course and will also help you to set new challenges for yourself. Keeping a journal will help you to see how you progress both academically and personally.

**Managing stress**

If you learn to manage stress at university, you will be better able to cope in the workplace. Identify situations that cause stress reactions and learn how to deal with them. For example, many students do not perform well in examinations because they become too stressed. They realise that they experience stress because they feel they did not have enough time to study and therefore have not prepared properly. However, students who start to study in good time may be less likely to feel stressed.

Another important way of dealing with stress is to ensure that you eat healthy foods and exercise regularly. Try to make time for sport or exercise, however busy you are. You do not always have to go to the gym to get exercise. Try to walk more often or climb the stairs instead of using the lift. If you really do not enjoy exercise, try to find other ways to relax (such as going to a movie with friends).

**EXERCISE 4**

- Go back to your timetable and write down specific activities that will help you to relax or de-stress.
- Use your journal to list the things or events that are likely to cause stress. You may find writing assignments stressful, for example, perhaps because you start working on them too late.

You can reduce this kind of stress by starting to study earlier and leaving enough time for studying.

**Keeping up with technology**

Some of you may not have had the opportunity at school or at home to experiment with a computer or to surf the internet. This module deals with the information phenomenon — do your best to become exposed to technology, as this is the only way to understand many of the exciting and interesting developments that are taking place. Technology such as the internet is becoming increasingly accessible. You can access it at the Unisa library, and possibly at your community library. In addition, there are many internet cafés where you can use the internet for a small fee. You can access information about this module on myUnisa via the internet and the Unisa website, and you are able to chat online to other students taking this module. The sooner you become computer literate and learn to use the internet, the more successful you will be as an information literate student. Using e-mail to keep in contact with your lecturers and build up a study relationship can be a very important part of your studies at Unisa. I also recommend that you type your assignments, and being computer literate will help in that regard too.
EXERCISE 5
Access myUnisa (http://my.unisa.ac.za) and link onto INS1502. If you do not have a computer at home or at work, try to find other places where you do have access to one. Perhaps you have a friend or a colleague who has a computer and is willing to show you how to use it. Alternatively, ask at either your local Unisa study centre or your local library about where you can find a computer to practise your computer skills, or find the internet café closest to you.

Read your tutorial matter
You must read all the tutorial matter you receive from the university. Other than your study guide, printed tutorial letters (also available on myUnisa) are the principal means by which your lecturers are able to communicate with you. Read these tutorial letters and make sure that you understand the instructions and other information in them. Take note of important dates (eg assignment submission dates, discussion class dates and examination dates) and record these on your timetable.

Take charge of your own studies
At university, especially at a distance learning institution such as Unisa, you have to take responsibility for your own studies. Lecturers are there for consultation, but they do not check up on you like your teachers did. At university level you are expected to organise your own studies and do the required work. If you are a first-year student, this may at times be difficult, and that is why we urge you to plan your time carefully and make a note of important dates.

Self-motivation
Self-motivation is an important indicator of academic success, especially when you are a distance learning student. It is often difficult, when you are tired and busy, to be motivated enough to sit down and do the work required for your studies. That is why I encourage you to work regularly. If you are in the habit of working at set times, you are more likely to stick to the routine — even when you lack motivation. Try to find ways to motivate yourself (eg reward yourself with a break after you have completed an assignment or if you have mastered a difficult section of the work).

Working in groups can also be motivating. If you have a regular commitment to meet and work together in a group, it is easier to maintain a study routine. It is also comforting to discover that others have similar problems and to share your problems with other people.

PREPARING FOR AND WRITING EXAMINATIONS
This module covers various processes involved in reading, taking notes and writing down information for information tasks such as assignments. Writing an examination is often the final event in most courses at tertiary level. In this section I will talk about exam stress and how to reduce it. I will also discuss the actual writing of the examination — reading the paper, selecting questions to answer, and answering multiple-choice questions, which are one of the types of questions you may be asked.
**EXERCISE 6**

Ask yourself the following questions:

1. How far ahead of exams do you start reviewing your work?
2. Do you draw up a timetable that helps you plan your work before the exams?
3. Do you prepare text maps, outlines and summaries to help you master and remember the work you need to cover?
4. Do you look after your health while you are studying for exams?
5. When you write the exam, do you take time to read through the paper, budget the available time and read through your answers carefully before handing in your exam script?

**Dealing with exam anxiety**

Many students experience exam anxiety around exam time. This can be so severe that it causes insomnia (the inability to fall asleep) and physical symptoms such as nausea and headaches. Some students find it hard to concentrate, and their minds go blank when the exam paper is handed out — they forget information that they knew well a few hours before the exam.

Exam anxiety will never disappear, but it can be controlled. Here are some things you can do.

- Take time to relax
- Practise relaxation techniques such as deep breathing
- Concentrate on the positive
- Focus on your achievements
- Get into a routine
- Study at regular times
- Take charge

**Revision for the examination**

If you want to do well in your exams, start your revision well in advance. Create a revision timetable and plan to revise specific sections on specific days. Begin by skimming the section of work that is scheduled for the particular day. Then study-read the material. You will probably have to read the text more than once if you really want to read it critically. Techniques that can help you in revising are:

- making text maps
- thinking of possible exam questions
- reviewing past exam papers (do not depend too much on past papers, however)

**Writing the examination**

Here are some practical guidelines.

1. Make sure you have all the materials you may need or are allowed to use in the exam. Take a spare pen, a pencil, an eraser, a sharpener and a calculator (if needed) with you.
2. Arrive for the exam in good time. You are less likely to feel stressed if you leave
plenty of time to get to the exam hall, so take things that could delay you, such as traffic, into account. When you arrive, sit down and try to focus on the exam you are about to write. Shut out all thoughts that may be worrying you. If you are feeling tense, try breathing deeply to help you relax.

(3) When you receive your exam paper, scan it quickly to get an overview of the questions and evaluate the importance of each section. Then read the entire exam paper carefully. Take note of the instructions at the start of the paper. How many questions do you have to answer? Is the paper divided into different sections? Are you required to answer a number of questions from each section? How long is the exam? How are the marks allocated? Now read the questions. If you have a choice, read the topics carefully before you make your choice, and then choose the questions you wish to answer. Jot down memory aids such as formulas, facts or other material you know you will need and might forget. You can do this on the question paper itself or at the back of the answer book.

(4) Before you start answering the questions, work out how much time you have to answer each one. Divide up the available time to avoid spending too much time on one question and then being unable to complete the paper. Allocate your time according to the marks for each question. Remember to keep some time aside for rereading your answers before you hand in your exam script. Start answering the questions.

Choosing the questions

If you can choose from a number of questions, try to decide which ones you can answer best. Some students make the mistake of choosing a particular question because they feel confident about answering one part of it, even though they are unable to answer the other part of the question. Remember that if you leave out half a question, you are unlikely to pass that question, even if you do very well in the half you answered. It would be better to choose a question that covers information you do not know as well, but that you are able to answer in its entirety. Always start with the easiest question or the one you feel most confident about. You will cope better with the paper if you have made a good start.

Multiple-choice questions

The advantage of multiple-choice questions is that the computer marks them, and your answers are therefore assessed objectively and consistently: the marker’s opinions or feelings are not involved in the mark that is awarded.

Before you attempt to answer a multiple-choice question, read it carefully. The function of the problem statement or question (the ‘stem’) is to give you the basis on which to decide which option is more correct than the others. Try to identify the key issue by looking for keywords or action words in the stem. Remember that the correct option is the one that relates best to the stem.

Read the stem of each multiple-choice question and try to mentally supply the correct answer before you look at the options. If you already know the answer before you look at the options, you are less likely to be confused and make the wrong choice.

Even if you think you know the answer, you should consider all the options that are given. Do not choose the first option that makes sense to you without looking at the rest; one of the other options may be even more correct in the light of the perspective provided by the stem. In some multiple-choice questions, all the options are plausible or
serve as possible answers, but one is better or more correct than the others. Incorrect
options often seem correct because all the options are plausible (ie potentially correct).
Study the stem and all the options carefully and eliminate those that only appear to be
correct at first glance. Examine obvious answers carefully, because they may be
incorrect and may have been deliberately included to mislead you.

When you consider and compare all the options, eliminate those you are sure are
incorrect by crossing them out. Then concentrate on the most reasonable options. Keep
up the process of comparison and elimination until you are left with the option that is
probably the best or correct answer.

Limit guessing to the minimum.

Check your final choice by putting the stem and the correct option together to make sure
that you have identified the logical and most correct answer.

Multiple-choice questions sometimes provide clues to help you. If you do not know the
answer to a question and if marks are not deducted for incorrect answers, the following
guidelines could help you to choose the correct answer intelligently:

- Eliminate all options that you know are incorrect so that you can focus on the options
  that are possibly correct.
- If two answers are similar, choose one of them.
- If the answer requires you to complete a sentence, eliminate the options that would
  not form a grammatically correct sentence.
- If two quantities are almost the same, choose one.
- An option that includes a modifier such as “always” is probably incorrect.

Rereading your answers

Allocate some time to rereading your answers and making minor corrections. Make sure
that you have numbered your questions correctly and clearly, and write your name or
student number on the front cover of the answer book.

After the examination

Do not discuss your answers with other students or check your answers in your
textbooks after you have handed in your exam script. The exam is over and you have
done your best. Do not try to “second-guess” the marker as to what he or she expects.
Keep in mind that you are unlikely to remember everything you know under exam
conditions, nor would you have time to write everything down. Your writing would not
be up to your usual standard because in an exam situation you do not have time to plan,
rewrite and polish what you have written. Your examiners are aware of these limitations.
Remember that everyone is in the same position and that the markers do not expect the
same standard they expected when you had to submit an assignment. Put the exam
behind you and focus on the next paper. Do not waste time and energy worrying about
exams that have already been written.

CONCLUSION

This preface provided an overview of the module INS1502 as a whole and the
information that will be covered in it. I also provided some tips for successful study at
university. I am confident that you will enjoy your studies and that all your efforts will be
rewarded.
You are fortunate to be living in interesting times. The rapid growth in technology means that the world, especially the working world, is constantly changing. You will enjoy exciting opportunities in the workplace, but these opportunities will also be demanding. Thirty years ago one could train for a profession, find work with a company or organisation and stay there until one retired. That is unlikely to happen today. You will probably have to upgrade your skills constantly to keep abreast of the rapid changes in technology. The greatest skill you will learn at university is how to learn. The information skills you acquire during the course of this module will not only help you in your academic career at Unisa, but will also prepare you for your future life. In becoming information literate, you are giving yourself a head start in life!
STUDY UNIT 1

Putting information skills in perspective

Compulsory reading

Read chapter 1 of your prescribed book, *Mastering information skills for the 21st century*, as you work through this study unit.

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The main focus of this module is on information — how to find it, organise it and use it. For this, people need information skills. In this module you will consider information and information tasks and learn how to apply information skills in the context of information tasks in an academic environment specifically.

The purpose of this first study unit is to provide you with background to the topic of information skills for lifelong learning. You may already have some idea of what these concepts involve, because we use them frequently in everyday language and read or hear about them in the media.

Reflective activity

(1) Think about the term “information”. What do you think this term means? What kind of information do you think people use every day?

(2) Think of the information you as a student would probably encounter and need in an academic environment. List as many of your information needs as possible.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

After working through this study unit in conjunction with chapter 1 of your prescribed book, you should be able to

- explain the concept “information” in your own words
- explain the concept “information society” in your own words
- discuss why you need information skills
- explain the role of information and communication technologies (ICTs) in the information society
KEY CONCEPTS

These key concepts and their definitions appear in your prescribed book:

- information
- information society
- ICTs
- information literacy
- information skills

1.2 WHAT IS INFORMATION?

There are many definitions of information. Information can be seen as a collection of facts and messages which have some meaning for the person who receives them; information can therefore be viewed as communicated knowledge. In chapter 1, page 7 of your prescribed book, information is discussed in terms of

- the fact that it is a vital resource
- the explosion of information
- the usefulness of information
- finding and applying the right information
- the importance of knowing how to work with information

1.3 THE INFORMATION SOCIETY AND ICTs

Human societies are built on information, and information has always been an essential part of our survival. Humans have constantly found new ways to store and transmit information. The present time in history is referred to as the information era, during which society regards information as a key product or resource, and political decisions, economic development, quality of life and social change depend on the use of information.

The merging of computing technologies and communication technologies has made vast amounts of information and data instantly available almost anywhere. Computer and other communication technologies such as television and cell phones play an essential role in the improvement of information management and distribution. ICTs and the information society are interwoven.

1.4 THE INFORMATION SOCIETY, INFORMATION LITERACY AND LIFELONG LEARNING

A high level of literacy is essential in the information society. By literacy I do not mean just the ability to read and write well, but also the ability to be information literate and to handle information. People need to know how a library works, be computer literate and be able to use different types of information sources and communication media effectively. People also need to be aware of the need for information, and how to find it, evaluate it and use it to solve problems.

Lifelong learning goes hand in hand with the rapid changes in the information society. We all need to learn to become lifelong learners. Since information and technology grow and change constantly, we can no longer take it for granted that once we have completed our university studies, our learning has come to an end. We will have to learn
how to learn, change and adapt. The most important requirement is not specific skills, but a universal skill in the use of information.

Constant learning, changing and adaptation is the only way to succeed in the information society, where lifelong learning and information literacy are prerequisites for success.

1.5 INFORMATION SKILLS

You will find that handling information is something you are already doing daily, especially as a university student. When you read, write or think at a high level, compare ideas and prepare assignments, all the skills you apply in these situations have to do with using information in some way. We use the generic term “information skills” to refer to these skills.

Information handling skills are an important part of becoming information literate. Students’ abilities to use information effectively vary considerably. Some first-year students have already mastered information skills at a fairly high level, whereas others still have to acquire these skills. An advantage of this module is that these skills are discussed in terms of how they relate to your studies, and specifically how you can apply them in preparing and writing essay assignments.

Reflective activity

Read through the list of information skills in chapter 1, section 1.6 of your prescribed book.

(1) Explain what you understand by the concept of information skills.
(2) Do you have information skills? List the information skills you already have.

After working through this module you will be able to add many more skills to your list, as you will have become more information literate and increased your knowledge of information literacy and information skills.

1.6 CONCLUSION

This study unit is brief, and is meant as a supplement to chapter 1 of the prescribed book. The purpose of the discussion was to make you aware of the information society and the positive role information literacy skills can play in ensuring success in this society. You considered the information phenomenon in the present time, which is referred to as the information age.

In the next study unit at you will learn more about the information skills you need in order to write an assignment and information tasks. You will learn about using a work plan to plot a course through an information task.
STUDY UNIT 2

Planning information tasks and work plans

Compulsory reading
Read chapter 8 of your prescribed book, *Mastering information skills for the 21st century*, and other sections indicated as you work through this study unit.

2.1 INTRODUCTION
Study unit 2 covers information tasks and work plans. I am sure you are familiar with the words “tasks” and “plans,” as you probably encounter them nearly every day. However, before you learn more about information tasks and work plans, take some time to reflect on your understanding of these concepts.

Reflective activity
(1) Think about the term “information tasks”. What do you think this term means? What kind of information tasks do you think people are involved in every day? Write down your thoughts.
(2) Think of the information tasks you as a student would probably have to carry out in an academic environment. List as many of these tasks as possible.
(3) What do you think a work plan entails in an academic setting?

There are many kinds of information tasks. For instance, assignments and examination questions are information tasks. An information task is any task that requires the use of information.

Assignments can also be referred to as information problems. In many courses at Unisa students are required to write assignments in the form of essays. Lecturers set assignments for many reasons, but the main one is to give students the opportunity to practise applying their knowledge of a subject and improve their writing skills. Students apply this knowledge by analysing the topic of an assignment and then presenting an answer to the problem in the form of an essay. Assignments require information-handling skills.

Completing assignments is a fundamental part of the formal learning process. However, you may not have realised that when you are completing your assignments, you are in fact applying information skills. If you struggle when it comes to completing assignments, or fail to achieve high marks for assignments, the problem might lie in your application of information skills. In this module you will learn how to apply information skills to complete an assignment. You will improve your ability to cope with assignments, and learn the skills information literacy requires. Moreover, you will learn
these skills in such a way that they can be transferred to any situation in which you need information to solve a problem.

In the examinations students have to demonstrate that they have achieved certain learning outcomes. In most cases they do this by demonstrating their knowledge about a subject by writing down answers to questions. You could think of examination questions as information problems that require solutions. All the preparation you do for an examination (eg studying, reading and completing assignments) involves accessing, evaluating and using information to increase your knowledge of a particular subject.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

After working through this study unit in conjunction with chapter 8 of your prescribed book, you should be able to

- explain the concept “information task” in your own words
- identify specific information tasks related to your studies
- explain the use of a work plan in completing an assignment task
- identify various ways of compiling a work plan
- interpret the topic and identify the instructions relating to an information task
- identify the audience and format for a specific information task

KEY CONCEPTS

These key concepts and their definitions appear in your prescribed book:

- information task
- work plan
- interpret
- topic

2.2 WHAT IS AN INFORMATION TASK?

An information task is any task that requires (the right) information if it is to be completed successfully. An information task requires a certain amount of work to solve a problem that is information related. In other words, the solution to the problem lies in finding and applying the right information. Read chapter 1, section 1.7 and chapter 8 of your prescribed book.

When you are faced with an information task, you need to approach it systematically. You have to devise a work plan or framework to guide you in completing the information task successfully. The information skills you need to complete the information task include planning, finding and retrieving information, and finally organising the information. In this study unit I will give you more detail about information tasks, and you will learn more about applying information skills to academic information tasks in particular.

2.3 THE WORK PLAN AS A TOOL IN ACADEMIC WRITING

A plan is an outline or a description of how something is going to be done. In other words, the purpose of a plan is to explain the method by which something is to be done. A plan helps you to organise what has to be done. Plans are used in many situations,
both formal and informal for — example, a shopping list is a plan of what you are going to buy, and if you are planning to go and visit your grandmother in Ulundi, your itinerary could be seen as an example of a work plan.

The work plan for completing an assignment is very much like a shopping list or an itinerary. There are many ways to compile a work plan for an assignment. For example, you could use a single large sheet of paper, several smaller sheets of paper, cards, files or folders, or even a computer program. Section 8.4 in chapter 8 in your prescribed book discusses the work plan (what it is, why it is necessary, how it will help you) and suggests some techniques for compiling work plans. It offers two examples of work plans, and I have also given you an example of a work plan in section 2.5.4 of this study unit. It is important to remember that a work plan is your personal way of preparing for an information task, and it can and should be individualised.

You do not have to include the work plan in your final assignment or any given information task, because it is part of your rough draft. Your work plan becomes the framework or blueprint for the information task. The work plan represents the results of the various information-handling activities that are carried out in order to complete the information task successfully. The plan may be a bit untidy, since it is just a draft. However, make sure that you can read your own handwriting and follow your own thoughts.

### 2.4 INTERPRETING THE INFORMATION TASK

Planning an information task involves various information handling skills. Information-handling skills should become second nature to you in the same way that reading and writing skills are — in other words, you should be able to apply all these skills without any difficulty. One of the skills you need is interpreting the topic. Return to chapter 8 of your prescribed book and read section 8.2 carefully. If you have read chapter 8, you will know that in order to successfully interpret the information task you must

- identify the topic
- identify the keywords
- identify the action words or verbs
- identify any other instructions

As you work through the sections in the prescribed chapter, think about these issues. Complete the various activities in chapter 8 and then study the examples below. The first example shows you how to interpret a topic. The second example is intended to help you to identify keywords and to think about the purposes of particular information tasks, and to consider how a task is aimed at a specific audience.

#### 2.4.1 Identify the topic

A topic is the subject of any particular information task.

Look at the following example:

> You have completed your first year at university, and you managed to pass four of the six examinations you wrote. Now you want to register for the next academic year, but have run out of funds. You realise that the only way to carry on studying is to obtain a bursary. You now need to find out where to go to apply for a bursary.
This topic is not about registering for the next academic year — it is about obtaining funds to enable you to register for the next academic year.

Read chapter 10, section 10.3.2 of your prescribed book, which explains how to identify the topic sentence in any text that you have to read.

2.4.2 Identify the keywords

Keywords are those words in a topic that indicate what the topic is about or what is discussed in the topic. When you retrieve information for an information task, you will use these keywords to find relevant information. In the above example the keyword would be “bursary”. Identifying the keywords is important, as they indicate the focus of the assignment topic and influence the assignment discussion. If you are uncertain of the meaning of a specific keyword, it is always a good idea to consult a dictionary or an encyclopaedia. (You will learn more about these reference sources in study unit 5.)

Now let us consider the type of information task that you as a student are familiar with. Look at the theme below. This is a typical example of an assignment or examination question in any of the modules for which you registered, including this one.

In an essay of 1200 words, explain why South Africa needs more social workers to play a role in combating AIDS in the rural areas in particular. In your discussion, pay specific attention to the Children’s Act of 2005.

In this instance the keywords are “social workers”, “AIDS”, “rural areas” and “the Children’s Act”.

Identifying keywords takes practice. Determine the keywords contained in your INS1502 assignment topics. Then select one or two of your other modules and identify the keywords in other assignments you have to submit in the near future.

2.4.3 Identify the action words or verbs

An assignment question always asks you to do something — in other words, it gives you an instruction that you have to carry out. To do this, you have to identify the action words or verbs in each topic, as these words express the instruction for instance, they tell you whether you are required to investigate a situation, discuss the topic or offer an explanation.

Study figure 8.2 in your prescribed book. This figure contains some of the verbs or instructions used in academic information tasks.

2.4.4 Identify any other instructions or aspects

When you have written down the keywords, you need to read the assignment theme again and think about other aspects that have to be established, for example:

- other instructions (eg length of an essay)
- format of the task (eg an essay, notes, a video — the format of a PowerPoint presentation is different from that of an academic essay, for instance)
- level of presentation (the type of information supplied in an essay will differ from that of a list of names of 20th-century philosophers)
- audience (usually an academic audience such as a lecturer or a marker — refer to chapter 13, section 13.2.1 in your prescribed book in this regard)
- purpose (mostly an academic task). You would ask yourself questions such as: Why
am I doing this task? Is it an assignment I need to do to complete my studies, or did my tutor ask me to give a talk on a certain topic?

2.5 Compiling a Work Plan

2.5.1 Thoughts and ideas

Write down all the details that could assist you with your work plan for the assignment topic.

You have already identified the keywords and the audience, identified the instructions and determined the form or format of the information task. You could also determine whether you already know anything about the topic, and write down any thoughts or ideas you have as a starting point. These thoughts should form part of your work plan.

2.5.2 Assignment headings

You can now start identifying headings. Using the example of an assignment question I gave you in section 2.4.2, possible headings would be:

1. Introduction
2. Definitions
2.1 Social workers
2.2 AIDS
3. AIDS and rural South African children
3.1 The reality of AIDS for children in rural areas
3.2 The Children’s Act
4. The role of the social worker
5. Conclusion
6. List of sources

2.5.3 Finding sources

I will focus quite extensively on finding information for information tasks in study units 3 to 7. Finding accurate and reliable information sources is an essential information skill. To be information literate, you must know how to use libraries, the internet and various information sources, including published and electronic sources.

2.5.4 Example of a work plan

Below is a detailed example of a work plan. Remember that your work plan can be in any format you prefer, but it must contain all the essential elements. Read the appropriate sections in chapter 8 of your prescribed book again.

You will see that this work plan indicates the arrangement of headings and subheadings into a logical order. It also includes the notes made of the relevant information for the specific assignment. Searches were conducted and information appears under each heading. When you compile a work plan for an assignment, it must be complete, otherwise it cannot serve as a framework for writing an essay.
The example I have used is from a previous study guide. I have selected this example on purpose to avoid plagiarism by students, as unfortunately many students make themselves guilty of this offence. Read chapter 10, section 10.6.3 in your prescribed book to learn more about plagiarism.

**Assignment task**

Write an essay of five typed pages explaining why buying a pirated DVD or music CD is stealing. Consider the Copyright Act.

**WORK PLAN**

**Main topic:** Explain why buying pirated DVDs or music CDs is stealing.

**Keywords:** piracy, copyright, intellectual property

**Verbs:** explain; consider

**Audience:** lecturer

**Form:** academic essay

**My thoughts or ideas** (Some of these could eventually be used for the introduction)

- The topic asks me to explain why buying a pirated DVD or music CD is stealing. I must also consider the Copyright Act. Piracy is the “unauthorized use or reproduction of another’s work” (*South African concise Oxford dictionary* 2002:888)
- Stealing also reminds me of ethical issues. I need to address information ethics as well.
- I have to include information on copyright and determine whether I may copy a DVD or music CD, and if I may, how much of the information on the DVD or CD may be copied.
- The word “explain” means that I really need to think about why buying a pirated DVD or music CD is stealing and explain this to my audience in such a manner that they understand why it is the same as stealing.
- My study guide and prescribed book do not include information on piracy, copyright, information ethics or intellectual property. I will therefore have to begin looking for information in the Unisa library and on the internet. I should first use a dictionary to determine the exact meaning of the keywords. An encyclopaedia may also be useful for background information. I will use the Unisa library catalogue to find information. I will use the words “piracy”, “copyright” and “intellectual property” for my search.
- If I cannot find a suitable dictionary or encyclopaedia at home or in the library, I can access an online dictionary or encyclopaedia on the internet.
- I first have to define the terms so that my audience is clear on what they mean in the context of my essay.
- I must then discuss each keyword.
- My essay must not exceed five typed pages. This means that I do not have to discuss each keyword in depth.
1. Introduction
2. Definitions
2.1 Piracy

The unauthorized use or reproduction of another’s work (*South African concise Oxford dictionary* 2002:888).

The systematic unauthorized reproduction or use, without permission and recompense, of a work protected by copyright law, usually for the purpose of profiting from such activity (Reitz 2004).

Pirated edition: an edition issued in violation of existing copyright law, without permission of the author or copyright holder (Reitz 2004).

2.2 Copyright

The exclusive legal right to publish ... (*South African concise Oxford dictionary*, p 255).

The legal right granted by a government to an author, editor, compiler ... to produce, sell, or distribute copies of a literary, musical, dramatic, artistic or other work ... ODLIS (http://lu.com/odlis/odlis_p.cfm).

The right to publish, reproduce and sell matter and forms of a literary, musical, dramatic or artistic work (*New Encyclopaedia Britannica* 2002, 3:616).

3. Discussion on piracy and information ethics

Davies, G. Piracy of phonograms
Segrave, K. Piracy in the motion picture industry

4. Discussion on copyright

Davies, G. Piracy of phonograms

*New Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 3:616

Segrave K. Piracy in the motion picture industry

4.1 Intellectual property

4.2 Electronic copyright

Rao, SS. Myths about electronic copyright (p 266)
Rao, SS. Protecting the enterprise (p 266)
Article by Rao (p 266)

4.2.2 Multimedia copyright

Article by Rao (p 266)

4.2.3 Copyright Issues

Article by Rao, (p 268)

4.3 Methods of copyright infringement

Hannabuss, S. Infringement is so easy. pp 185–86.
Wikipedia: (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/copyright_infringement)
2.6 CONCLUSION

This study unit is a supplement to chapter 8 of the prescribed book. The purpose of the discussion was to make you realise that you need information in order to write an assignment and that an academic assignment is an information task. You learnt about using a work plan to plot a course through an information task.

In study units 3 to 7 you will learn more about types of information sources and how to find relevant information in order to carry out information tasks.
STUDY UNIT 3

Finding and retrieving relevant information

Compulsory reading

Read chapters 4, 9 and 10 of your prescribed book, *Mastering information skills for the 21st century*, as you work through this study unit.

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous two study units we discussed the planning of an information task. You learnt about using work plans as tools for preparing for a specific assignment theme. Your plan could have consisted of a sheet of paper on which you jotted down aspects related to the theme of the assignment, such as keywords, who the audience is, the format of the task, and possible sources of information. By planning the information task, you interpreted the task and started to consider the information situation.

The next set of information skills needed to complete an information task relates to finding or locating information, and retrieving it. Study units 4 to 7 focus on finding and retrieving information that is relevant to a specific information task by using various reference sources and electronic information systems. You will learn about locating information in resource collections, in particular those held in libraries and those available on the internet.

This study unit provides background to finding and retrieving information. Some of the information might be familiar to you, but this unit gives you an opportunity to formalise your knowledge. You will examine ways to relate this knowledge to academic information tasks such as writing an academic essay. You will find out the differences between published and unpublished sources and multimedia, and you will consider the concept of “relevant” information and why this is important when writing an academic essay.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

After working through this study unit, you should be able to

- differentiate between the different types of information sources
- define multimedia
- explain the difference between the formats and types of information sources
- consider existing and potential information sources
• decide on a strategy to find additional information sources
• determine the type and amount of information required for a task
• record this information on the work plan
• apply reading and note taking skills
• expand the work plan as you become more knowledgeable about the assignment theme
• evaluate the information you have retrieved for your work plan (i.e. assess its relevance, level, currency, accuracy and bias)

KEY CONCEPTS

These key concepts and their definitions appear in your prescribed book:

• book
• conference proceedings
• government document
• grey literature
• information retrieval
• information source
• locate
• multimedia (e.g. DVD, CD)
• relevant
• periodical
• report
• resource collection
• thesis/dissertation

3.2 THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN FORMATS AND TYPES OF INFORMATION SOURCES

In order to find information you must know about the various types of information sources available, such as books, periodicals, government publications and multimedia. It is important to understand that the format or form of the information source does not change the content of the source, but just the way to access it. For example, Shakespeare’s play Macbeth will be the same irrespective of whether you read it as a printed copy (a book) or as an e-book (an electronic book). Journal articles can be

• read as a paper copy in a printed journal
• accessed via a full text database on a CD-ROM
• accessed full text via the internet on a bibliographic database such as Emerald

The internet can either be a source of information, or just a channel allowing you to access information.
3.3 SOURCES OF INFORMATION

3.3.1 Published and unpublished sources
Read chapter 4, sections 4.2 to 4.4 in your prescribed book and familiarise yourself with the various forms of published and unpublished sources. One form you will be familiar with is the book, such as a textbook or your prescribed book. Two other forms you will know are the popular magazine, such as Drum or Time, and the newspaper, such as the Sunday Times or Mail and Guardian. Scientific journals are a very valuable source of information, as they contain up-to-date scientific information. Journals can be published in print form or online as e-journals. Make sure that you understand the difference between journals and magazines.

Think of your own subject field and the most likely information sources in which you will find suitable or relevant information. For example, if you are a social work student you will find information in books and journals, but grey literature containing information on social issues, especially government documents, will be important as well.

3.3.2 Multimedia
Read chapter 4, section 4.5 in your prescribed book. Multimedia sources contain information in the form of moving images and sound as well as text. The information can be stored on compact discs (CDs) or similar storage devices. You will learn more about CD-ROMs in section 6.5 of this study guide.

3.3.3 The internet
As I said earlier, the internet can be both an information source and a channel for accessing information sources. We discuss the internet throughout the study guide, but it is dealt with specifically in study unit 6.

3.4 INFORMATION RETRIEVAL
You must now start planning how to find the information you need to complete an information task, and determine how much information you are going to need. These actions of planning and determining together make up a strategy: this is the start of your plan of action for finding relevant information. You begin your strategy by assessing what information sources are available, and which other sources could be considered. Start thinking about the sources that you can access immediately.

EXERCISE 3.1
Consider the following questions: Which of the following sources do you have easy access to (for example, which of these sources do you have access to at home)? Are these sources readily available? Are they likely to provide information on the keywords you have identified in your work plan? These sources are referred to as “internal information sources”.
You also have to consider “external” sources, which are those beyond your immediate surroundings. External sources are typically found in libraries such as reference sources, periodicals and monographs. The following exercise will assist you with this.

**EXERCISE 3.2**

1. First, list the internal sources for which you ticked the “Yes” boxes in the previous exercise. Jot these down somewhere on your work plan (a top corner of the sheet of paper on which you are working is a good place).
2. Second, think of possible external sources that you could access for information on your assignment theme.
3. Jot down these external sources on your work plan.
4. How would you go about locating these external sources?
5. How would you prioritise the resources?

Read chapter 9, section 9.3 of your prescribed book to learn more about locating relevant sources. This section provides an introduction to the use of the library catalogue (you will learn more about this in study unit 4). It also discusses how to preview sources you have located by scanning the table of contents, reading headings and subheadings in the text and using the index.

You also have to decide whether the sources and information you have found are relevant. Once you start making notes and read more broadly on a subject, you will be able to assess how relevant a source is. This is an ability that cannot really be taught, but you can develop it through practice and experience. Read chapter 9, section 9.4 of your prescribed book, which deals with these aspects. Do the activities in chapter 3 of your prescribed book. Refer to study unit 8 for more discussion on making notes and reading skills.
3.5 READING SKILLS AND NOTE TAKING

As a university student you are expected to read extensively in study guides, prescribed books, journal articles and other relevant information. There are various ways of reading through a lot of information for studying purposes; we call skills in this area ability reading skills. Skim read chapter 10, sections 10.2 and 10.3 of your prescribed book to learn more about reading skills.

Once you have found your information on a specific assignment topic, you need to make notes. You can include these notes in a work plan like the one in section 2.5.4 of unit 2, and then rework them into an essay. You also need to make notes when preparing for examinations. Skim read chapter 10, sections 10.4 and 10.5 of your prescribed book to learn more about note taking and text mapping.

3.6 EVALUATION OF INFORMATION

The retrieved information must be evaluated for its relevance to the information task, its currency (whether it is up to date) and accuracy. Information must also be unbiased (it must not reflect prejudice).

Read chapter 11, sections 11.4 and 11.5 of your prescribed book. Study figure 11.4 and use it to evaluate the information you have retrieved before applying it in your information task. Also refer to study unit 8, section 8.3.1. Evaluation should be a continuous activity throughout an information task.

3.7 CONCLUSION

An important part of information literacy is the ability to locate information for any problem that is information related. This means that you must be able to find relevant information when you need it. It is important to understand that the format the information is found in is not important, but the relevance and quality of the information is. However, you need to know about the different types and formats of information in order to locate information successfully.

In the next study unit we discuss how you can find (locate) information for your information task, as well as other information needs you might experience with regard to various external information sources in resource collections. Study unit 4 will teach you how to use a library effectively and how to find information in library collections. You are given opportunities to practise your skills in finding information in libraries. In study unit 5 you will learn about reference sources that provide information directly, for example dictionaries and encyclopedias. Study unit 6 explores electronic information sources, with specific reference to the internet. Study unit 7 is the last unit dealing with finding information, and covers indirect sources of information such as bibliographic, indexing and abstracting sources.
STUDY UNIT 4

Finding information in libraries

Compulsory reading

Read chapter 2 of your prescribed book, *Mastering information skills for the 21st century*, as you work through this study unit.

4.1 INTRODUCTION

As I mentioned in study unit 2, skills in finding relevant information for your specific information needs are an important part of being information literate.

In this study unit you learn more about finding information in a library. Several exercises have been included to allow you to practise and improve your information-finding skills. After studying this unit, you should have a basic knowledge of the Dewey Decimal Classification system and be able to use a library catalogue.

If you have identified useful internal sources of information (see study unit 3, exercise 3.1) for your information task (assignment topic), you will of course use them first. However, keep in mind that although much of the information is available free of charge (even on the internet), you do pay in some way or other for many of these information sources (eg in the form of an internet connection fee; a public library membership fee; the cost of making photocopies of articles from journals, and magazines or textbooks to add to your collection of information sources at home). The fact that information has value is not new, as you are well aware. You have to pay registration fees to study at a tertiary institution, but once you have enrolled, you usually have free access to all the information sources in the library of the institution.

If you are not familiar with libraries — especially large libraries like those attached to universities — you will come across many new concepts in this study unit. If you are a regular user of the Unisa library or another library, you probably know much of what is covered in this study unit. However, you may be able to pick up some new tips and ideas, so please do not simply skip this unit.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

After working through this study unit in conjunction with chapter 2 of your prescribed book, you should be able to

- find the information desk in a library
- identify and locate different library collections
- find an information source in the catalogue and on the library shelves
- identify the elements used in a bibliographic record
- use subject headings and keywords to find information sources on specific topics
KEY CONCEPTS

These key concepts and their definitions appear in your prescribed book:

- access point
- call number
- catalogue
- classification system
- holdings
- reference source
- subject heading

4.2 LIBRARY COLLECTIONS

Read chapter 2 in your prescribed book to get an overview of what you are going to learn in this study unit. You may ignore all the activities in chapter 2 at this first reading. Then return to the start of the chapter and work slowly through the first part, which deals with rules and regulations in a library, the layout and organisation of a library, and library collections.

You are probably aware that there are different kinds of libraries. If you attended a school that had a library, you may have gone to the school library to find information for a variety of purposes (eg to complete a school project or assignment; to find out more about a specific sport, hobby or career; or to obtain information about your legal rights or how to solve some personal problems). If your school did not have a library, you may have used a public or community library, or a mobile library service, to find information. People also sometimes consult their personal libraries to find information — these consist of teachers, parents or members of the community. Many learners make use of the public or community library irrespective of whether they have access to a school library or not.

EXERCISE 4.1

Read the following statements about finding information, and tick the box in the appropriate column to build up a profile of your library use and knowledge.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I regularly used a school library in the past.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I regularly use a public/community library these days.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know which collections are usually kept separately in a library.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can identify a reference source.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know how much of an information source I am allowed to photocopy.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know the 10 main classes of the Dewey decimal classification system.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I understand the function of a call number.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have used a card catalogue in a library.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have used an online public access catalogue (OPAC) in a library.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I understand the function of a bibliographic record.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I understand the purpose of a subject heading.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know when a citation refers to a book, a periodical article or an internet site.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
If you answered “Yes” to all the statements in this exercise, you should do the other exercises in this study unit simply to review your knowledge. If you answered “No” to several questions, work through this study unit carefully because you need to expand your knowledge of using a library. You should be able to learn many of the basic skills required to use a library by studying chapter 2 in your prescribed book and by doing the activities in the book and the exercises in this study unit.

Most people feel anxious about using a library for the first time, and students who visit a university library for the first time may feel particularly nervous or overwhelmed. University libraries are very large, and contain thousands (and sometimes millions) of books and other documents. Compare finding information in a library with going on a shopping expedition. When you need household supplies, you probably make a shopping list. In order to make your list, you have to determine your needs. You do this by considering various categories of goods or products, such as cleaning materials, vegetables, dairy products, condiments, sauces and beverages, and deciding what you need or want. If you shop at a supermarket, when you arrive with your list, you probably study the layout of the shop and follow the signs that guide you to the appropriate shelves. There is usually someone to help you if you cannot locate a specific item.

The process to follow when visiting a library is similar. When you want access to a wide range of information sources (eg for complicated information tasks such as assignments), you need to use a resource collection in a library or on the internet. Finding your way around a large library such as the one at Unisa can be intimidating if you do not know libraries well. Familiarise yourself with the library layout and study the plan that indicates where collections are shelved on each floor of the library. Different libraries have different layouts, but most of them will contain the following service areas:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Information desk</th>
<th>You may ask a librarian at the information desk for more information on the library’s rules and regulations, its layout and organisation, or its services. The librarian at the information desk is there to help you.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Security checkpoint</td>
<td>The security staff protects visitors to the library as well as the books and resources in the library. Make sure that you have borrowed your books or other resources in accordance with the library’s rules, or you may be stopped by a member of the security staff on your way out.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Circulation desk</td>
<td>You go to the circulation desk to borrow the sources (eg books, CDs) you want to take with you. You need a library card (sometimes your student card doubles as a library card) and the items you want to borrow will be issued against this card so that the library knows who has its books and other sources. The sources you borrow are date stamped so that you know when to return them to the library. If someone else has already taken out a book or other item you want, you can fill in a reservation card at the circulation desk. Some Unisa libraries now have a self help book issue and return facility. You can ask the librarian on duty about this.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library catalogue and internet section</td>
<td>The library catalogue is found in this area. Access to the internet can be arranged as well.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reserve or study collection</td>
<td>A collection of books which students will rely on heavily for their assignments is held in a reserve or study collection.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 4.3 Learning How to Use a Library

All university libraries provide orientation courses for students to familiarise them with the services the libraries provide. University libraries also offer library skills programmes that train students how to use the library. Many libraries provide internet training courses. These courses and programmes are important, because university libraries provide access to thousands of information sources in a variety of formats (e.g., books, CD-ROMs, databases, full text online journals and other e-resources, and online services such as the internet). Few students are aware of all the services their university library offers, and they usually do not know very much about using a library and related information services.

It would be a good idea for you to contact the information section of the Unisa library to enquire about the courses and programmes the library offers during this semester. The Unisa library provides orientation courses and library skills programmes in an electronic classroom with computers to facilitate the training. If you live in or near Pretoria, you should try to attend these training sessions.

You may use the myUnisa website to enrol for the library and information skills programmes that are offered on the internet. If you have access to a computer that is linked to the internet, you can go to the Unisa homepage and then visit the myUnisa homepage. Training in basic library use and information skills is offered, and includes some practice in basic information skills such as locating and using books. This is a computer-aided orientation programme that also introduces you to the collections in the Unisa library.

### 4.4 Classification System and Catalogue

Return to chapter 2 in your prescribed book and reread the section on the library catalogue. The classification system and the catalogue are two of the most important tools for finding books and information sources in a library.

Libraries store large numbers of books and other information sources such as periodicals and sound recordings. They therefore need to organise the material in such a way that people can find the books or material they are looking for. One method of organising material such as books is to arrange them in alphabetical order according to the author’s name. This method works very well for certain sources, and most community libraries organise their works of fiction in this way. However, this only works if the users know who wrote the book they are looking for. Many people who use the library come to look for information on a certain topic, such as *AIDS* or *copyright*, rather than for a particular book by a certain author. They do not necessarily know who wrote books on these topics.

It is convenient if all the sources on a particular topic are kept together so that users can browse and then choose the source that best meets their needs. The method libraries use to organise their material according to subject is called a classification system. The most commonly used classification system in South Africa is the Dewey Decimal System.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reference collection</th>
<th>This is a collection of sources that may only be consulted in the library. They may not be taken out on loan.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Serial collection (periodicals)</td>
<td>This is a collection of serials such as journals, magazines and newspapers.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Classification (DDC) system. This system divides the universe of knowledge into ten main classes and assigns notations to each class (eg 900–999 is the notation for geography and history). This notation is subdivided for more specific subject classification (eg 968 is used for South African history and 916.8 for the geography of South Africa). The system has even more subdivisions for the history of a specific period (eg the Anglo-Boer War (968.048) or the Anglo-Zulu War (968.4045)).

You will find a list of the ten main classes of the DDC system in chapter 2, figure 2.1, of your prescribed book. If you memorise these ten main classes it will help you to find the right section of numbers on the library shelves. For example, if you want books on South African history, you have to look in the sections signposted from 900 to 999.

EXERCISE 4.2

Indicate in which main sections of the DDC you would look for information on the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Information you want</th>
<th>DDC notation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) a book of poetry for your English course</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) a map showing where Shaka Zulu’s armies travelled</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) a copy of the Bible</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4) a dictionary of medical terms</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5) a writing handbook to help you write an assignment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(6) an introduction to zoology</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(7) the South African artist, Gerard Sekota</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(8) a print of the painting, Malay Women and Gloxinias, by Maggie Laubscher</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(9) the culture of the Matabele people</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(10) a general encyclopaedia</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(11) a world atlas</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(12) a Shakespeare drama (eg Hamlet)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(13) social work issues</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All DDC notations consist of at least three digits. When there are more than three digits, a point is inserted after the third digit. The DDC notation is then followed by the first three (sometimes four) letters of the author’s surname, or if the book is a collection and has an editor, the first three letters of the title (excluding “The”, “A”, and “An”). This combination of digits and letters is the book’s call number, which becomes the physical address of the book and indicates its exact position on the shelf. For example: 025.524 MAC would be the call number for the book prescribed for INS1502, namely Mastering information skills for the 21st century, and 031 ENCY would be the call number for the New Encyclopaedia Britannica.

Do the following exercise to get used to this type of numerical order:
EXERCISE 4.3

Arrange the following DDC notations in the order you would find them on the library shelf:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Examples</th>
<th>Correct numerical order</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>968.94 GEL</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>968.803 CATH</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>968.04 BART</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>968.904 WEL</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>968.9404 PET</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>968.9 EED</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>968.8303 DALE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>968.8103 COLO</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>968.8 GARN</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>968.5 DUPL</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.5 LIBRARY CATALOGUE

Return to chapter 2 of your prescribed book and read the section on the library catalogue. The catalogue is a logically arranged list of all the sources in a library’s collection, and it has a very specific purpose.

Carefully read section 2.4.1 on bibliographic records. You may find this section difficult to understand at first, but reread it with concentration. You need to understand how bibliographic records are compiled. This knowledge will help you a great deal when you use catalogues and when you compile lists of sources cited in your assignments.

Please note that many catalogues can now be accessed online via a portal. Read chapter 6, section 6.3.1 in your prescribed book, as this section deals with the library portal. Unisa’s library catalogue is available via the internet, and can be accessed from Unisa’s homepage. When you search this catalogue for information, it is not the same as searching the internet. I will explain this in more detail when we discuss the internet.

4.5.1 Verbal subject description

Chapter 2 section 2.4.2 of your prescribed book explains using subject headings to locate topics in the catalogue. Consider, for example, the assignment topic example in section 2.5.4 of this study guide: “Explain why buying a pirated DVD or music CD is stealing. Consider the Copyright Act”. During the planning stage of your work plan, you identified “copyright” and “piracy” as keywords. You were also introduced to other relevant concepts such as “information ethics” and “intellectual property”, which could also be used as keywords. You could use any of these terms to conduct a subject heading search or a keyword search in the library catalogue.
4.5.2 Subject headings

When you search the Unisa library catalogue, you will find options allowing you to search for subject headings or keywords. These terms could be confusing. For our purposes, subject headings are a restricted list of terms used by the cataloguer (the person who described the book in the library catalogue) to describe the content of the book.

4.5.3 Keywords

The term “keyword” refers to a term that is generally used to describe a topic. If you conduct a keyword search, you will have many more hits than when you conduct a subject heading search. The keyword search is conducted for specific information sources, and the keyword will appear either in the title of the information source or elsewhere in the catalogue record of the source. The keyword search facility is usually available only in online catalogues.

Using keywords is useful for retrieving information from specific types of sources such as the internet and other electronic information sources. You will learn more about this in study unit 6 and in chapter 7, section 7.6 of your prescribed book.

4.6 VIRTUAL LIBRARIES

A virtual library can be defined as a “library without walls” (a virtual library is also called an “online library” or an “electronic library”). Using a virtual library involves accessing databases online; there might not be a core collection of traditional sources such as printed books and journals.

The Unisa library is not a virtual library, but it offers elements of a virtual library. We could therefore call it a hybrid library. You can use the internet to access the catalogues of a number of libraries. You can, for example, search the Unisa library catalogue from home or from your office, and you can search the library catalogue of any other South African university or of the National Library of South Africa or the Library of Congress (the national library of the United States) in the same way. You do not need to actually visit the library to determine whether a specific information source is available and what its call number is. Note that this is not “searching the internet”. The internet is merely the tool or means you need to access these information resources.

4.7 CONCLUSION

This study unit has provided you with the knowledge base you need to use a library effectively to find information for your information tasks. I suggest that you return to the learning outcomes at the start of this study unit to ascertain what progress you have made. If you feel unable to accomplish some of these outcomes, you should return to the prescribed chapter and the relevant activities and exercises.

If you still feel anxious about using library services, you definitely need practical experience. The best way to gain the necessary library skills is to attend a library orientation course and/or a library skills programme such as those provided by the Unisa library. If you are unable to attend the courses or programmes offered by the Unisa library, visit your local, public or community library to establish how its catalogue and classification system work.
In the next study unit you will learn more about the main reference source types (e.g. encyclopaedias and dictionaries) found in libraries.

**FEEDBACK ON THE EXERCISES**

**Exercise 4.2**

(1) 820–829  
(2) 968  
(3) 200  
(4) 610–619  
(5) 420–429  
(6) 590–599  
(7) 700  
(8) 700  
(9) 300  
(10) 030  
(11) 910  
(12) 823  
(13) 361

**Exercise 4.3**

968.04 BART  
968.5 DUPL  
968.8 GARN  
968.803 CATH  
968.8103 COLO  
968.8303 DALE  
968.9 EED  
968.904 WEL  
968.94 GEL  
968.9404 PET
STUDY UNIT 5

Using reference sources

Compulsory reading
Read chapter 3 of your prescribed book, *Mastering information skills for the 21st century*, as you work through this study unit.

5.1 INTRODUCTION
In this study unit you will learn about different types of reference sources. All these reference sources are available in libraries, and some are used so regularly that they are kept easily available at the information desk or in a separate reference collection. You are probably quite familiar with many of these reference sources, for example dictionaries and encyclopaedias — you may even have some of them at home.

In this unit you will learn a bit more about the best-known reference source types, namely dictionaries, encyclopaedias, directories, almanacs, yearbooks and atlases. The information in these sources has been arranged in such a way that the person who needs it can find it easily (eg the words in a dictionary are arranged in alphabetical order). Because these types of reference sources are easy to use, they are often referred to as “ready-reference sources”.

Bibliographic, indexing and abstracting sources are also reference sources. They serve a different purpose, namely to refer users to information sources such as books and periodical articles. They are somewhat more difficult to use, and are discussed separately in study unit 7.

Reference sources are usually kept in separate collections in a library, and the letters REF or R appear in their call number. Do the exercise below to test how much you already know.

EXERCISE 5.1
Indicate whether you think each of the following statements relating to reference sources is true or false by ticking the appropriate box.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>True</th>
<th>False</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) Reference sources are not information sources.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) Reference sources are usually kept in a separate collection in a library.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) Reference sources are seldom loaned to library users.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4) Reference sources should be read through from beginning to end.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5) Reference sources are useful when specific factual information is needed.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(6) Most reference sources supply authoritative information.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(7) The scope of all reference sources is international.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

You will find feedback on this exercise at the end of the unit. If you were able to decide correctly which of these statements were true and which were false, this is an indication that you do understand what a reference source is, and you should therefore not experience many problems while you work through this study unit. However, if you were not able to decide correctly, you need to study each reference source type in more depth. You must know what kind of information is available in each reference source and for which information tasks you would use the information contained in each.

**LEARNING OUTCOMES**

After working through this study unit in conjunction with chapter 3 of your prescribed book, you should be able to

- explain the purpose of a reference source
- distinguish between dictionaries, encyclopaedias, directories, handbooks, yearbooks, almanacs and atlases
- establish the scope of a specific reference source (ie decide whether it is a general reference source or a subject-specific information source)
- find information in a reference source of which the content has been arranged in alphabetical order

**KEY CONCEPTS**

These key concepts and their definitions appear in your prescribed book:

- almanac
- atlas
- dictionary
- directory
- encyclopaedia
- format
- guide word
- handbook
- index
- scope
- yearbook
**EXERCISE 5.2**

How familiar are you with reference sources? Think about your past experiences with reference sources, and answer the questions below.

1. What type of reference sources have you used before?
2. Do you have reference sources of your own at home?
3. Have you used reference sources in a library (eg at school, in a public library or in a university library)?
4. Where were these books located in the library?
5. Why did you use these reference sources?
6. How did you use them?
7. Were you able to take reference books home?

If you are a regular library user, you may find much of the content of this study unit familiar. However, you may learn some new techniques about consulting reference sources, or discover new categories that you have not yet used. Read chapter 3 of your prescribed book to get an overview of its content. Reference sources are available in printed form (book form) or as electronic reference sources in CD-ROM form or online on the internet.

Remember that the library catalogue is an indirect source of information, since it refers you to where you can find information. Reference sources such as dictionaries and encyclopaedias are direct sources of information, since they actually contain the information you need.

**5.2 DICTIONARIES**

Study section 3.2, which deals with dictionaries, in chapter 3 of your prescribed book. You will learn to identify several types of dictionaries, for example general language dictionaries and translating dictionaries, subject dictionaries and biographical dictionaries.

Chapter 3 in your prescribed book offers a few helpful hints about how to use dictionaries. The content of a language dictionary is alphabetically arranged, so you need to remember the sequence or order of the 26 letters that make up our alphabet. So, for example, if you wanted to look up the word “infrastructure”, you would think about the place of “i” in the alphabet. You know that “i” comes several letters before “n”, which is halfway through the alphabet, and you would therefore open the dictionary a little before the middle. Then you look at the guide words at the top of the page, as these words indicate whether you need to page back or forwards. The guide word in the top left-hand corner is the first word on the page, and the guide word in the top right-hand corner is the last word on the page. If you see the guide words “inflect” and “ingenuous” on the same page, you know that “infrastructure” would also be on this page, because it comes after “inflect” but before “ingenious”.

**EXERCISE 5.3**

Try to answer the questions below about using dictionaries.

1. Which section of the dictionary would you turn to if you want to check the correct meaning of “typology”?
2. To which section would you turn to look up “metacognition”?
3. In which section would you find the word “discuss”?
(4) If the guide words at the top of a page are “psych” and “publication”, which of the following words would you expect to find listed on this page?

- pseudonym
- psalm
- publication
- psychic
- provisional

When you write an academic essay, it is not acceptable to use only one information source to define a term. You therefore have to consult another dictionary as well, and preferably a subject dictionary. Subject dictionaries are available on the internet, for example the Online dictionary for library and information science (ODLIS), 2010, by JM Reitz (http://www.abc-clio.com/ODLIS_A.aspx).

5.3 ENCYCLOPAEDIAS

When we think of encyclopaedias, most of us probably think of the Encyclopaedia Britannica or the World book. These are the best-known encyclopaedia titles in print form. Each comes in a number of volumes, and they cover all subjects. Both are also available on CD-ROM and on the internet. These general encyclopaedias are indeed the most useful sources for general information searches. However, there are other encyclopaedia types, such as subject encyclopaedias, which specialise in one particular subject.

A very popular encyclopaedia that is available on CD-ROM and the internet is Encarta. However, you have to be a subscribed member to search this encyclopaedia. If your library subscribes to Encarta, you should be able to use it.

Read section 3.3, which deals with encyclopaedias, in chapter 3 of your prescribed book. This section contains useful hints for using the index to an encyclopaedia (as well as other reference sources), and you will discover different filing methods such as the word-by-word and the letter-by-letter arrangements.

5.4 ATLASES

Atlases are collections of maps and charts. These could be international, national or regional, depending on the scope of the atlas. You would consult an atlas when you need geographical information. Page through an atlas in your library or at home to determine what kind of information it contains.

Read section 3.8, which deals with atlases, in chapter 3 of your prescribed book.

5.5 OTHER REFERENCES SOURCES

Read about other types of reference sources such as yearbooks, almanacs and directories in chapter 3 of your prescribed book. Make sure that you understand the function of each.

5.6 CONCLUSION

You should not have found this study unit difficult, especially if you are familiar with the
use of reference sources. The reference sources discussed here have been specifically compiled to be easy to use, so that information can be found directly and quickly. If you need more information about using a particular reference source, I suggest that you read the introductory pages in the relevant volume, as there you will usually find an explanation on how to use the source. Internet sources will be discussed in more detail in study unit 6.

If you are not familiar with some of the reference source categories discussed in the prescribed chapter, I recommend that you visit a library to find examples of them and see how to use them. Most public and community libraries have a number of examples of various types of reference sources, and university libraries such as the Unisa library hold hundreds of different examples.

Here is a review exercise for you to complete. Visit a library to see examples of the reference sources you have studied here. Practical experience in using different reference sources will broaden your knowledge base considerably and give you confidence in using the sources in a library. This confidence is important when you need to locate information for various reasons, especially for writing assignments.

**EXERCISE 5.4**

1. Look up the term “DNA” in an abridged English language dictionary. Where did you locate the term? If you cannot find the term in the main alphabetical list, check to see whether the dictionary you are using has a separate alphabetical list for common abbreviations.

2. Which reference sources would you consult if you were faced with the following information problems:
   
   (a) Where is Mount Kilimanjaro, and how high is it?
   (b) Find information on the well-known British novelist, Iris Murdoch.
   (c) Find information on the life of Theodore Roosevelt, President of the United States from 1901 to 1909.
   (d) Find the names of medical doctors in your town or city.
   (e) Find the telephone number of a TV repair service in your vicinity.
   (f) Find synonyms for “violence”.
   (g) Which country won the most medals at the Olympic Games in 2008, and how many medals were won?
   (h) What is the Zulu equivalent for the English word “information”?

**FEEDBACK ON THE EXERCISES**

**Exercise 5.1**

1. false
2. true
3. true
4. false
5. true
6. true
7. false
Exercise 5.3

(1) You would turn to the last quarter of the dictionary, because “t” is towards the end of the alphabet.
(2) You would turn to the middle of the dictionary, because “m” is almost in the middle of the alphabet.
(3) You would turn to the first quarter of the dictionary, because “d” is towards the beginning of the alphabet.
(4) “Pseudonym”, “psalm”, and “psychic” all come after “pry” and before “public”. “Publication” would not be on this page because it comes after “public” and “provisional” would also not be on this page because it comes before “pry”.

Exercise 5.4

(1) Many language dictionaries contain a separate list of abbreviations at the back of the dictionary.
(2) (a) a physical map of Africa in an atlas
(b) a subject encyclopaedia
(c) a general encyclopaedia or a retrospective biography
(d) a directory of medical practitioners or the local telephone directory under “medical practitioners”
(e) the local yellow pages
(f) a language dictionary, and specifically a thesaurus
(g) an almanac or encyclopaedia yearbook for 2008
(h) a bilingual English-Zulu dictionary
STUDY UNIT 6

Searching the internet and other electronic information sources

Compulsory reading

Read chapters 5 and 7 of your prescribed book, Mastering information skills for the 21st century, as you work through this unit.

6.1 INTRODUCTION

Information technology has changed the world of information. More and more information sources are being digitised so that they can be stored and read by computers. Digitisation refers to the process of putting information in a form suitable for processing by a computer. The term “digital” refers to information (whether textual, audio or visual) expressed in binary digits to make it suitable for processing by a computer.

Computers allow people to store vast amounts of information, and to store and access information extremely fast. In study unit 5 you learnt about different types of direct reference sources that are available in print and in electronic format. You will learn about indirect reference sources in study unit 7. An increasing number of these information sources are available in electronic form only, for example on the internet.

The internet has revolutionised many established practices in fields such as education, information provision and sharing, business and even shopping, and the system is still expanding dramatically.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

When you have worked through this study unit as well as chapters 5 and 7 in your prescribed book, you should be able to

- recognise and use basic internet terminology
- list various types of information sources that are available electronically
- access information in electronic format by using keywords
- explain how to use Boolean logic to construct a simple search statement using the AND, OR and NOT operators
- read and use a URL to find information
- differentiate between the World Wide Web (WWW) and the internet
- conduct a simple search on the internet
- check whether information obtained from the internet comes from an authoritative source
KEY CONCEPTS

These key concepts and their definitions appear in your prescribed book:

- Boolean operators
- browser
- computer network
- digitise/digital
- download
- e-mail
- homepage
- HTML
- hyperlink
- hypermedia
- hypertext
- internet
- listserv
- protocol
- search engine
- software
- thesaurus
- URL
- web/World Wide Web (WWW)

6.2 THE INTERNET

Your prescribed book provides important background information on the internet in terms of its history, development and characteristics. It also gives information about the various ways in which we use the internet, such as e-mail and Facebook. Complete the next exercise to make sure that you have mastered this information.

EXERCISE 6.1

1. When and where did the internet originate?
2. What technology was developed by the ARPAnet?
3. Why was this technology an important new development?
4. Who has access to the internet today?
5. What is the part of the internet that consists of hypertext and hypermedia documents called?
6. What internet language accesses information that is electronically available on the WWW?
7. What do you need to access the internet?
8. List three characteristics of the internet.
9. List five information sources found on the internet.
10. Is all information on the internet provided free of charge?
11. List three uses of the internet.

6.3 BOOLEAN OPERATORS

If you use random search points, you will probably retrieve a large number of references. If you were writing an assignment on a specific topic, many of these references might
not be relevant. It is usually better to do a more complex or advanced keyword search by using functions such as Boolean operators. The Boolean operators are AND, OR and NOT.

Boolean operators are used to connect keywords in order to refine or broaden the results of a search. These operators are used in an electronic search on databases and the internet to retrieve more specific information that is more relevant to your needs.

Always check whether the electronic source you are accessing supports the use of Boolean operators. Some sources use symbols such as + (AND), / (OR), and – (NOT).

The use of Boolean operators is explained in more detail in chapter 7, section 7.3 of your prescribed book. Please read that section again to make sure that you understand this concept.

**EXERCISE 6.2**

Answer the following questions on Boolean operators:

1. Which Boolean operators enable you to narrow a search?
2. Which Boolean operator enables you to broaden a search?
3. Can you use another method to broaden a search?
4. Suggest two ways to narrow the keyword search you carried out in the previous exercise.

**6.4 RETRIEVING INFORMATION FROM THE INTERNET**

Information on the internet changes rapidly. New sites appear daily, and others are removed, edited or updated. This means that the information on the internet is not static, in other words it does not remain the same. You could expect to find the very latest information on a topic on the internet. However, as anybody may publish on the internet, much of the information on the internet may not be reliable.

**6.4.1 URLs (uniform resource locators)**

The URL is the internet equivalent of a postal address, and it is used to connect to internet sites around the world. If you want to access a specific site for information, you have to enter the correct URL of that site in the “address” block indicated on the screen when you go to the internet. Your prescribed book discusses how URL addresses are put together, and explains the main features of a URL in chapter 5, section 5.9.1. Test your knowledge of URLs by doing exercise 6.3.

**EXERCISE 6.3**

1. Try to work out the URLs of the following companies and organisations:
   - Amazon (a US bookshop on the internet)
   - the University of Cape Town
   - the CSIR (Council for Scientific and Industrial Research) in South Africa
   - the *Mail & Guardian* newspaper

2. Look at the following URLs and decide which elements may be eliminated, and in which order, if you are unable to find the address on the internet:
http://www.llrx.com/columns/quality.htm
http://www.pbs.org/uti/begin.html

(3) Which countries do the following codes represent?
- uk
- za
- nz
- ca

Check your answers at the end of this study unit. If most of your answers are not correct, I suggest that you return to your prescribed book and study this section again.

6.4.2 Search engines

If you have read chapter 7, section 7.5.1 in your prescribed book, you will know that a search engine is a computer program that has been designed to help you search for information on the internet. There are sites on the internet that explain which search engines are available and that provide information on how to use these search engines effectively.

The internet search engines can only retrieve a document or a website if you use the same words the writer of that document or website did. When you carry out a search, you therefore have to think of all the possible words and combinations of those words to find the information you need. The art of searching accurately on the internet lies in selecting keywords with sufficient precision to identify appropriate references and to exclude irrelevant references. This is really an art, and takes a fair amount of practice. I recommend that you carry out searches on the internet to practise your skills whenever possible.

First of all, select a search engine. For example, if you want to conduct a search relating to South Africa, you would choose one of the South African search engines, such as Aardvark (http://www.aardvark.co.za) or Ananzi (http://www.ananzi.co.za). You may even use Google (http://www.google.com), although it is not South African based. Google has a South Africa-specific search engine that can be instructed to retrieve only South African sites. At the time of writing this study guide, Google was the most popular search engine throughout the world.

6.4.3 Formulating a search statement

When you conduct a search on the internet (or in other electronic resources), you have to enter a search statement in the search box of the search engine. A search statement consists of keywords or even a specific term that you enter in the search box when you wish to conduct a search on the internet or any other electronic source. Read chapter 7, section 7.6 in your prescribed book to learn more about keywords.

There are many search engines, and each one uses a slightly different search language. It is therefore worthwhile taking the time to read the search guides each search engine provides. Always use the help function to check the instructions and tips that are given to ensure that your search statement is formulated correctly for the particular search engine. Different search engines use different conventions; never assume that they will all be the same. Here are some general tips, but remember that they may not apply to every search engine:

(1) The more specific your search, the greater the chance that you will find what you
are looking for. Tell the search engine exactly what you are looking for. For example, if you want information about Windows XP bugs, you should search for “Windows XP bugs”, not just “Windows”.

(2) Remember that Boolean operators help to narrow or broaden a search. Using the + sign or AND (some search engines do not use the + sign) helps you to be more specific in your search. For example, if you want to find pages containing references to both Thabo Mbeki and Jacob Zuma, you could search this way:

mbeki AND zuma
or
mbeki +zuma

Only pages that contain both words would appear in your results. Here are some other examples:

windows AND XP AND bugs
or
windows +XP +bugs

The above would find pages on which all three terms appear. This is especially helpful if you want to narrow down the search to Windows XP bugs, rather than Windows in general. However, most search engines automatically insert the AND (or +) operator between two terms.

AND or the + sign is especially helpful when you do a search and find that you have retrieved too much information. For example, if you wanted to find information on camping facilities in the Kruger National Park, you could start the search like this:

kruger AND park
or
kruger +park

You would probably get a large number of results, many of which would be irrelevant. Instead, try searching for all the words you would find helpful on the page for which you are looking:

kruger AND park AND camping AND reservations
or
kruger +park +camping +reservations

You may want to use a search engine to find pages containing a specific word, but not another. NOT or the – sign allows you to do this. For example, if you want information on blues but not jazz, your search statement could look like this:

blues NOT jazz
or
blues –jazz

(Note that there is no space between the – and jazz.)

The above search statement tells the search engine to find pages that mention “blues” and to ignore pages that also mention “jazz”.

In general, NOT or the – sign is helpful in limiting results that are unrelated to your topic. Simply subtract the terms you are not interested in, and you should get better results.
(3) Make sure that you group the AND and OR operators correctly. Use brackets to make your intention clear (eg soccer AND (za OR “South Africa”).

(4) A “phrase search” is an effective way to get good results. Look at the example I gave earlier of searching for camping sites in the Kruger National Park:

kruger +park +camping +reservations

This search statement will retrieve pages that contain all these words, but there is no guarantee that the words will all appear in the same context. Your search could result in a page that mentions the Kruger Park in the opening paragraph but subsequently discusses camping reservations at Pilanesberg. All the words you added together in the search statement will appear on this page, but it might still not be what you were looking for.

A phrase search avoids this problem. You tell a search engine to find pages on which the terms appear in exactly the same order as you specified in the search statement. You do this by putting quotation marks around the phrase, like this:

“kruger park camping reservations”

In this case only the pages on which all the words appear in the same order will be listed. The answers you retrieve in this manner should be more relevant than when you used the addition sign alone.

(5) You could also do a domain search. If you require information published in South Africa about the 2010 soccer World Cup, you would, for example, conduct an advanced search on Google. At the bottom of the search screen there is an option to search under a domain only, and you would then type in “.za”. A domain search would then retrieve information published on South African websites only.

(6) You should aim for 10 to 50 URLs per search. The first 10 hits are usually the most relevant, and you should be able to cope with this many. If you have too few hits, or too many hits, or if many of the hits are irrelevant, you have to repeat the search. Try one of the following strategies to improve your search results:

(a) Use more concepts connected with AND or the + sign to limit the search.
(b) Use AND (+) and NOT (–) to exclude unwanted homonyms (ie words with the same spelling but a different meaning).
(c) Use all the synonyms you can think of and connect them with OR.
(d) Use another concept connected with AND or the + sign to limit the search. For example, if you enter Arcadia AND Pretoria, the search will be narrowed to those webpages in which both words appear.
(e) If you find nothing, check to see whether you have not perhaps made a spelling mistake. Go back, correct your mistake if necessary, and repeat the search. If there are no misspellings, try another search engine.

EXERCISE 6.4
Access the internet to look for information on one of your assignment topics.

- Which search engine will you use? You can use Google, but using a different search engine will retrieve different sites, as each search engine’s policy for collecting websites is different. So try the same search using Yahoo, Altavista and Aardvark.
- List the successive refinements you make in your search.
- Indicate how many URLs you retrieve.
Exercise 6.3 has given you some practice in using the internet. Remember that the internet is constantly changing and improving. You have to use the internet frequently to improve your searching skills and to become familiar with the various search engines.

6.4.4 Evaluating the retrieved information

When you use information from sources you accessed via the internet for your assignments, you must make sure that these sources are reliable. Not all the information on the internet is useful or correct, so you need to evaluate it carefully. Some of the information you find may be unreliable, misleading or deceptive, or have no intrinsic value. Read chapter 7, section 7.9 of your prescribed book for details on evaluating information obtained from the internet. Study this section before you try to complete exercise 6.5.

EXERCISE 6.5

The following are actual websites on the internet. Evaluate whether you think a website is reliable or not, based on the information I provide. Try to visit these websites and examine them for yourself. Read chapter 5 of your prescribed book before you evaluate the information on these websites.

1) http://www.infolit.org
   This site provides an overview of the development of information literacy in the USA. The National Forum on Information Literacy was created in response to recommendations by the American Library Association’s Presidential Committee on Information Literacy. I accessed this site on 14 March 2011 while writing this study guide, and at that time it was stated that the site had been most recently updated in 2011.

2) http://searchenginewatch.com
   This site was compiled by Danny Sullivan, who provides background information about himself. He works in information technology (IT) and has his own business. The site provides information on using search engines and a newsletter is regularly issued. The site is updated regularly. I accessed this site on 13 March 2011 while writing this study guide, and the most recent article on the website was dated that same day.

3) http://www.health.state.ny.us/nysdoh/consumer/anthrax.htm
   This site was compiled by the New York State Department of Health. It is a fact sheet on anthrax, giving information such as how anthrax is spread, the symptoms, what anthrax is, and so on. An e-mail address is provided to which one can send comments or queries. The site was revised in 2011, which was the year in which I visited it while writing this study guide.

4) A review of a book found on Kalahari.net (http://www.kalahari.net)
   This site is run by Kalahari.net, an electronic bookshop. It also features book reviews and recommendations.

6.5 RETRIEving INFORMATION FROM A CD-ROM

Electronic sources provide multiple access methods, for example an index or a menu, keyword or subject searches, and hyperlinks to related sources. Many reference sources
are available on CD-ROM. These sources provide information in a variety of formats, for example text, graphics, video clips, sound and animation. Reference sources such as bibliographies on CD-ROM are updated frequently, up to three or four times a year. These sources are mostly available for use in libraries.

The methods used to access information on a CD-ROM are described in your prescribed book. I suggest that you go to a library that provides access to a CD-ROM and then do the exercise below to make sure that you understand how to use a CD-ROM and how to access the information it contains. Refer to chapter 4, section 4.5 in your prescribed book.

**EXERCISE 6.6**

Complete this activity to review what you have learnt about electronic information sources in the previous study units, the chapter in your prescribed book and the article in appendix A. Indicate whether each of the statements below is true or false by ticking the appropriate block.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>True</th>
<th>False</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) All types of reference sources are available on the internet.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) It is possible to access a CD-ROM with any personal computer.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) There are more ways to access a CD-ROM than there are ways to access a book.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4) It is possible to conduct keyword searches when searching electronic information sources.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5) Some databases can be searched using database-specific subject headings or descriptors and keywords.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(6) When you use a CD-ROM, you can read the information on the computer screen, but you cannot print the information.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(7) If you want to search for information in an electronic information source and it is important to link two terms, you will use AND or a sign such as +, depending on how the database operates.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(8) You can limit an electronic information source search by using the Boolean operator OR.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(9) The internet enables you to access a wide range of information (eg information about television programmes, hotel bookings, and medical information).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(10) Information on the internet is usually accurate, as it is checked before users are allowed to put it on the internet.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(11) The URL is an address on the internet, similar to a postal address.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(12) The letters “http” in a URL indicate the host computer.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(13) The internet is the ultimate virtual library.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(14) E-mail is a synonym for listserv.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(15) A good search engine can do keyword searching.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(16) The internet does not provide academic information.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Check your answers against the feedback at the end of this study unit to see how much you have learnt about electronic information sources.

6.6 CONCLUSION

This study unit discussed electronic information sources and the internet in particular. The number of information sources available on the internet and in electronic forms such as CD-ROMs is growing exponentially (very quickly). Anyone who wishes to use information effectively must know about electronic information sources.

An effective electronic information search takes time and practice. Plan your search strategy carefully to ensure good results. Remember that the information on the internet has not been evaluated, and that you should always check who put it there and when it was last updated. You may find it difficult to use the internet successfully at first, but the sooner you get started and become familiar with it, the sooner you will improve your information-retrieving skills. Electronic information sources are becoming prevalent (widely used) and it is vital that you learn how to use them effectively.

In the next study unit I will tell you a bit more about bibliographic, indexing and abstracting sources.

FEEDBACK ON THE EXERCISES

Exercise 6.1

(1) The internet originated in the USA in 1969.
(2) The ARPAnet was a network of 20 computers that sent information backwards and forwards in an open system.
(3) This was an important new development because it allowed e-mail to be sent from one computer on one network to another computer on a different network. Files could be shared between individuals, and other utilities were created so that it was possible to search library catalogues and so on.
(4) Today the internet is a global computer network used by individuals, businesses, educational institutions and government departments. The system is so open that anyone can access it (provided they have a computer, modem and telecommunications links).
(5) The part of the internet that consists of hypertext and hypermedia documents is called the World Wide Web (WWW).
(6) “Hypertext transfer protocol” or http is the language used by the internet to access information that is electronically available on the WWW.
(7) The requirements for accessing the internet are the necessary hardware (computer system with a modem), a telecommunications link (eg a telephone line), a browser for the WWW (such as Netscape Navigator, Microsoft’s Internet Explorer or Firefox), and a subscription to an internet service provider (ie a company that links you to the internet and charges a fee for its services).
(8) Three characteristics of the internet:

- The internet is a worldwide network that connects thousands of networks.
- The internet is growing at an extraordinary rate and it provides access to more information than one can imagine.
- It may be difficult to locate the information one needs.
(9) Five information sources on the internet:
   - libraries, databases and research centres worldwide
   - social networks such as Facebook
   - listservs or newsgroups
   - teleconferencing and live, multi-user discussions by groups sharing similar interests
   - the full text of thousands of books and classics

(10) Not all information on the internet is provided free of charge. The internet is used as a portal or access point to many services. Think of electronic databases.

(11) Read chapter 5, section 5.5 of your prescribed book. The list is long and growing.

Exercise 6.2

(1) The Boolean operators AND and NOT narrow your search.
(2) The Boolean operator OR broadens your search. Truncation also helps to broaden a search.
   - You can link the terms with the AND Boolean operator (e.g. “information AND technology”).
   - You can link the two terms as a phrase between quotation marks so that only the sites on which the two words appear together are retrieved (e.g. “information technology”).

Exercise 6.3

(1) URLs for companies or organisations:
   - amazon.com (Note: no code is used for the country, as it is in the USA.)
   - www.uct.ac.za (Note: only the initials of the name of the university are used, “ac” indicates that it is an academic institution, and “za” indicates that it is in South Africa.)
   - www.csir.co.za
   - www.mg.co.za

(2) Elements that may be eliminated from URLs to retrieve the website:
     You would first delete /research.htm, then /internet.
     You would first delete /quality.htm, then /columns.
   - http://www.pbs.org/uti/begin.html
     You would first delete /begin.html, then /uti.

(3) Domain abbreviations:
   - “.uk” stands for United Kingdom.
   - “.za” stands for South Africa.
   - “.nz” stands for New Zealand.
   - “.ca” stands for Canada.
Exercise 6.5

(1) http://www.infolit.org
This site appears to be reliable. Contact addresses are provided and the site has been updated recently.

(2) http://searchenginewatch.com
This site appears to be reliable. A contact address is provided and the site is updated regularly. It is in fact a well-known resource on search engines.

(3) http://www.health.state.ny.us/nysdoh/consumer/anthrax.htm
This site was compiled by the New York State Department of Health. One would assume that this entity knows the subject. An e-mail address is provided and the site was revised in 2011.

(4) A review of a book found on Kalahari.net
This site may not be reliable as far as book reviews are concerned. It is an electronic bookshop, so reviews featured on the site may be a ploy (trick) to publicise and sell its books.

Exercise 6.6

(1) true
(2) false (You need a CD-ROM drive and a sound card.)
(3) true
(4) true
(5) true
(6) false
(7) true
(8) true
(9) true
(10) false
(11) true
(12) false (This is the protocol the site uses. “http://” indicates that the resource is in hypertext.)
(13) true
(14) false
(15) true
(16) false
STUDY UNIT 7

Bibliographic, indexing and abstracting sources

Compulsory reading
Read chapter 6, section 6.3.3 in your prescribed book, *Mastering information skills for the 21st century*, as you work through this study unit.

7.1 INTRODUCTION
In study unit 5 you learnt about reference sources that are easy to use because they have been designed to make information readily available (usually by following the alphabetical arrangement of their content). In some cases, for example if you first used the index to an encyclopaedia and then followed directions to a particular page in the encyclopaedia, the route was somewhat longer, but the information was nevertheless available in the same source.

In this study unit you will learn more about other types of reference sources that are slightly more complicated to use because they do not actually contain the information themselves. Instead, these indirect reference sources refer you to another source containing the information. In other words, two sources are involved: the first provides details of where you can find the information you are looking for, and the second source contains the information itself. You are in fact familiar with this routine, because a library catalogue works on this principle: you consult the catalogue and the catalogue directs you to the place on the shelf where a particular book can be found.

You will learn more about specific types of indirect reference sources in this study unit. These sources are now mostly available as online databases, and can include

- bibliographic databases
- indexing databases
- abstracting databases

As I explained before, the simpler reference sources (eg dictionaries and encyclopaedias) provide the required information directly, whereas bibliographies and indexing and abstracting sources provide references to other sources where the required information may be found.

LEARNING OUTCOMES
After you have worked through this unit in conjunction with chapter 6 of your prescribed book, you should be able to

- explain the difference between direct and indirect reference sources
- distinguish between different types of bibliographies
• use bibliographies to find information that meets your needs
• identify retrieval aids for periodical articles
• distinguish between indexing and abstracting sources
• use references from indexing and abstracting sources to find articles in periodicals

KEY CONCEPTS

These key concepts and their definitions appear in your prescribed book:
• bibliography
• periodical
• portal
• subject heading(descriptor)

Read chapter 6 in your prescribed book to get an overview of the content of the chapter. You may ignore the activities in the chapter at this first reading.

Try to do the following exercise to establish how much you already know about bibliographies and indexing and abstracting sources before you go any further with this study unit.

EXERCISE 7.1

Indicate whether each of the statements below is true or false by ticking the relevant block.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>True</th>
<th>False</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) The purpose of a bibliography is to identify and locate information sources.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) Bibliographies and indexing and abstracting sources are also referred to as indirect sources.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) Bibliographies list references to books only.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4) Indexing sources are always general in scope.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5) Some journals are available in electronic format only.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Do not worry if you had trouble completing the above exercise; all these issues are discussed in this study unit. If you work through the prescribed chapter carefully and do the activities and exercises, you will come to understand these information sources better. Bibliographies and indexing and abstracting sources are just another type of reference source. As you know by now, they only provide references to other information sources, and are therefore known as “indirect sources”. You have to actually locate the source that provides the information you require.

7.2 BIBLIOGRAPHIES AND BIBLIOGRAPHICAL DATABASES

I’m sure you know what a bibliography is. The list of references at the end of this study guide is in fact a type of bibliography. If you have ever used a list of books or articles
recommended for a particular assignment, you have used a type of bibliography. If you have ever used a catalogue in a library, you are familiar with how a bibliography works.

However, the type of bibliography discussed in this study unit is more extensive. These bibliographies can be in the form of whole books, for example the South African National Bibliography (SANB). The SANB contains a list of the full bibliographic details of all South African publications within a given year. The SANB is no longer published in book form, but is available on CD-ROM and as an online database.

Go back to the prescribed chapter and carefully read the section on different types of bibliographies. Make sure that you understand the difference between a reading list for an assignment (the list of sources or bibliography that appears at the end of an assignment or academic essay — refer to study unit 9), a subject bibliography, and a national bibliography.

Bibliographical databases can be direct (eg full text databases) or indirect information sources. Indirect sources refer you to where you can find an information source that is relevant to your information need. Examples of indirect bibliographic databases are online library catalogues or union catalogues such as SACat or WorldCat. A number of libraries have combined their catalogues to help their users find information that is not available at the user’s home library, but can be borrowed from another library. National bibliographies like the SANB or indexing databases such as ISAP (see section 7.3 below) are also examples of such databases.

**EXERCISE 7.2**

Complete the table below by distinguishing between the different types of bibliographies listed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bibliography</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) reading list</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) subject bibliography</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) national bibliography</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If you find it difficult to use a bibliography or a bibliographical database, remember that you can always read the introductory pages, as they tell you about the scope of the work and the types of information sources that have been included in the bibliography. These pages frequently provide guidelines on how to use the bibliography. Also remember that assistance is available at the information desk in a library: ask the librarian to explain things to you. Librarians have specialist knowledge and skills in using bibliographies.

**7.3 ACCESS TO THE CONTENT OF PERIODICALS**

Indexing and abstracting sources are used mainly to access information that has been published in periodicals.

Periodicals are common sources of information for recreational, educational and other purposes; they are found in homes, libraries and on the internet. Periodicals of a scholarly nature are known as “journals”, and periodicals of a less serious nature are
referred to as “magazines”. Periodicals record current events and research results, and they also reflect the perspectives and cultures of the community that is their target market. Some information may never appear in books, but is reported in magazines or journals. Students use periodical articles to supplement the information in their textbooks and other study material with more recent or specialised information.

Most libraries subscribe to periodicals, and these are usually arranged and shelved in separate collections. Periodicals in these collections are seldom allowed out on loan, and are kept in the library so that users may consult them there. It is possible to make or request a photocopy of a specific article in a periodical. Electronic journals are becoming more and more the norm (read chapter 6, section 6.3.2 in your prescribed book).

I pointed out earlier that a bibliography is similar to a library catalogue. However, remember that a library catalogue does not usually provide references to articles in periodicals and newspapers. You therefore need some other retrieval aid to help you find and access articles in periodicals and newspapers. Indexing and abstracting sources are important retrieval aids, and provide access to many different periodical titles.

### 7.4 INDEXING AND ABSTRACTING SOURCES

First read chapter 6, section 6.3.3 of your prescribed book.

An abstracting source is similar to an indexing source. Both provide full bibliographic details of articles in journals. The main distinguishing factor is the brief summary of the article that accompanies the bibliographic description. This summary is also called an “abstract”. Be sure that you understand the difference between the two types of retrieval aids. They are, however, used for the same purpose, which is to identify articles in periodicals and sometimes articles in newspapers.

There are explanations in the prescribed chapter on how to use these retrieval aids. Various access tips are given: for example, it is suggested that you could read the introductory pages for advice on how to use the source, which abbreviations have been used in the bibliographic descriptions, and so on.

It is possible to access these retrieval aids by looking up a particular subject or by using the name of a particular author. Take note of cross-references such as “see” and “see also” references. You should be familiar with the use of subject headings or descriptors if you are to use indexing and abstracting journals in printed form successfully.

Electronic indexing and abstracting databases are easier to use because it is possible to search for keywords, and additional guidance or help is provided on the screen. However, you still need a sound knowledge of search techniques. An example of an indexing database is the Index of South African Periodicals (ISAP), which is available on CD-ROM and on subscription via the internet.

**EXERCISE 7.3**

You need to be able to think of possible subject headings for a search in indexing and abstracting sources, so try the activity below, which deals with this technique. Read the following general topics and write down as many synonyms — broader or narrower terms — as you can to serve as subject headings/descriptors. Follow the example I have given you in the first row.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General topic</th>
<th>Subject headings/descriptors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>capital punishment</td>
<td>death penalty, hanging, electric chair, crime and punishment, criminal rehabilitation, bill of rights, right to life, Amnesty International</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>child abuse</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>political corruption</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wildlife management</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ecological disaster</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>copyright</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>one of your assignment topics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**EXERCISE 7.4**

The next time you visit the Unisa library or another library, go to the information desk and ask where the bibliographies and indexing and abstracting journals are shelved. Also ask which, if any, of these reference sources are available on CD-ROM or online.

1. Search some of the indirect reference sources, especially subject indexing sources and subject abstracting sources, in your particular fields of study. If you can locate a few relevant, recent articles on a topic you are researching for your assignment, make a note of these references if you are using printed indexes. If you are using an electronic form, print the references if the computer is attached to a printer. Then try to locate the periodicals in the library’s periodical collection.

2. Search for the following types of references and complete the table below. Try to fill in all the columns:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of reference source</th>
<th>Titles of examples you found</th>
<th>Format (print, CD-ROM, online) available in the library</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a national bibliography for a country</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>an index to a single periodical title</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a general periodical indexing journal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a subject periodical indexing journal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a subject abstract journal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Use as many examples as you can find. Remember to read the introductory pages if they are in print form to find tips on how to use the source. If they are in electronic
form, instructions appear on the screen and there is always a key you can press for help. If you have any difficulties relating to any of the sources, ask the librarian for assistance.

(3) Access an indexing or abstracting source to find a reference to information that is relevant to one of your assignment topics.

7.5 FULL TEXT DATABASES

Read chapter 6, section 6.3.3.4 of your prescribed book.

Full text databases such as Emerald are direct information sources. These databases include the full text of a journal article, which you can print at the time of your search. The Unisa library subscribes to a number of full text databases, and you will therefore be able to access them.

7.6 CONCLUSION

I strongly advise you to do all the activities and exercises in this study unit and in chapter 6 of your prescribed book, as they provide an opportunity to practise the specific information skills you need for using bibliographies and indexing and abstracting sources. Because journals are the primary source of scientific information (especially the most up-to-date information on specific subjects), a serious search for information has to cover indexing and abstracting sources.

We have now completed the finding phase of information skills. In the next two study units you will learn more about the organising phase.

EXERCISE 7.5

Complete the following exercise to check whether you have mastered the information and library skills discussed so far in the finding phase.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) I know for how long I can borrow a book from the library and how many books I am allowed to borrow at a time.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) I can list three services the library offers.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) Nonfiction books are arranged alphabetically on the shelves.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4) If I want to find a source in the library and I know the author and title of the book, I would consult an index.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5) I can locate a source by checking the accessions register.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(6) I can search for a source by title, author or subject in a computerised catalogue.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(7) Books are arranged on shelves by a classification number and then alphabetically.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(8) If I want to find an article by a particular author, but I am not sure in which journal it has been published, I can look it up in the library catalogue.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(9)</td>
<td>When something is arranged in chronological order, it means that it is arranged according to date.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(10)</td>
<td>When I am looking for articles on a particular topic, it is best to use an indexing source because it provides more information than an abstracting source.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(12)</td>
<td>When I need to look up specialised terms in social work, I use a general dictionary.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(13)</td>
<td>I know where periodicals, reference material and audiovisual material are kept in the library.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| (14) | Is any information missing from the following list of details that you need to note for a bibliographical citation for a book?  
   - author  
   - title  
   - publisher  
   - place of publication |

**FEEDBACK ON THE EXERCISES**

**Exercise 7.1**

1. true  
2. true  
3. false  
4. false  
5. true

**Exercise 7.3**

The following are possible subject headings/descriptors:  
**child abuse:** child molesters, child molestation, child victims, paedophiles, children and strangers, street children, missing children, child pornography, child prostitution  
**political corruption:** government corruption, state corruption, fraud, conspiracy, graft, misappropriation  
**wildlife management:** resource management, planet management, Gaia hypothesis, marine ecology, flora and fauna  
**ecological disaster:** environmental disasters, dangerous substances, oil spills, hazardous substances, nuclear leaks, nuclear waste, toxic waste  
**copyright:** computer crime, plagiarism, piracy, intellectual property, copyright law, information ethics
Exercise 7.5

1. You should be able to answer “yes” to this question if you are familiar with your library.
2. Some of the services offered by a library such as the Unisa library are a reference service, an information desk, user education programmes, and interlibrary loans.
3. No. Nonfiction books in most libraries are arranged by classification number and then alphabetically according to the author’s name. Only in the study collection are nonfiction books arranged alphabetically.
4. No. You would look in the catalogue, as this will give you the physical location of a source in the library.
5. No. You would look in the catalogue. The acquisitions register is a list of the library’s acquisitions, and is not available to clients.
6. Yes
7. Yes
8. No. Library catalogues usually list only the title of the journal, not the titles of individual articles in journals. You have to use an index or a bibliography to determine in which journal the article appeared.
9. Yes
10. No. An abstracting source gives a short summary of the content of an article. It would therefore be more useful to consult an abstracting than an indexing source.
11. Yes
13. You should know where to find these materials.
14. The date of publication is missing.
STUDY UNIT 8

Organising information

Compulsory reading
Skim read chapters 11, 13 and 14 of your prescribed book, *Mastering information skills for the 21st century*, as you work through this study unit.

8.1 INTRODUCTION
By now you know what an information task is and how to plan an information task. You also know how to find and retrieve the information you need to complete an information task from various direct and indirect information sources such as dictionaries, encyclopaedias, bibliographic sources, indexing and abstracting sources and electronic sources such as the internet and CD-ROMs.

This study unit and the next one focus on how to organise the information that you retrieve in order to complete an information task (such as an academic assignment) successfully.

The work plan provides a framework for solving the problem posed in an assignment theme. The plan contains a number of headings and subheadings. Under each heading there is a brief indication of where relevant information can be found in the study guide, the prescribed book and other information sources. These “blocks” of information will help you to complete the assignment — but only if you have organised the information properly. Organising the information involves various activities, one of which is the actual writing of the essay. Remember that the work plan is not the essay itself; it is merely the framework for the essay.

LEARNING OUTCOMES
After working through this study unit in conjunction with chapters 11, 13 and 14 in your prescribed book, you should be able to

- differentiate between facts and non-facts
- write a definition
- draw up a table of contents
- apply the form of an essay
- apply critical thinking skills to organise information you have found into a coherent and logical essay (that is, write an academic essay)
- evaluate the quality of the essay you have written
KEY CONCEPTS
These key concepts and their definitions appear in your prescribed book:

- definition
- editing
- facts
- organise
- present
- table of contents

Reflective activity
You learnt about taking notes when we discussed the planning and finding phases. When you look at this information and the informal notes you have made, think about the following:

(1) What does a work plan represent?
(2) What is the best way of entering the information I have retrieved on the plan?
(3) Does the retrieved information enable me to answer the question posed in the assignment theme?
(4) How do I use the information to write an essay?
(5) What are the elements of an essay?
(6) Is the essay ready for submission?

8.2 ORGANISING THE RETRIEVED INFORMATION
The next step involves manipulating the retrieved information to formulate an answer to the assignment problem. You have progressed through the study material by working through the planning phase (study units 1 and 2) and the retrieving phase (study units 3 to 7), and you have now reached the organising phase. At this level of the information skills framework, you need higher-order thinking skills, which are also called “critical thinking” skills. Reread the sections in chapter 11 of your prescribed book in which critical reading is discussed. You are going to manipulate the information you retrieved by applying critical thinking skills, so make sure that you know what you need to do.

Read the questions in the reflective activity above again. This will give you an idea of what you are going to do in this study unit. You need to respond to all these questions in order to present your final task, namely the essay, which is your solution to the information problem posed by an assignment theme.

8.2.1 Evaluating the information
You need to go back to your notes on found information that you inserted in the work plan to evaluate the retrieved information. You evaluate this information by asking critical questions related to the level of the information, its currency (how up to date it is), accuracy, bias and objectivity, its overall relevance to the theme, and the amount of information you retrieved.

The exercise below illustrates how the level at which information is presented can vary.
EXERCISE 8.1

First read the following two descriptions of copyright. Then answer the questions that follow:

Description 1

Copyright provides legal rights exclusively given for a definite period to the creators of an intellectual work, eg literary works (anything in writing), artistic works (drawings, maps, plans, etc), musical works, films, sound recordings, computer programs (source and object code) for sale or any other use. It is, in principle, not concerned with things that are not perceivable, such as abstract ideas, concepts and the like. Copyright protection begins when works are actually created and fixed in a tangible form (Rao 2003:264).

Description 2

Over the weekend I wrote a letter to my aunt. Although I did not do it, I could have put a “c” in a small circle with my name and date and claimed rights to ownership on the letter. My copyright would have started from my creating that tangible form of the letter, not just in the thoughts and ideas I was planning to put down in the letter to my aunt. I could have taped my letter to her and sent her the audio tape — that, too, would have been my copyright. It is unthinkable, of course, but if my aunt had decided to get 20 of her friends in to hear the tape, and if she had charged per person, there would have been performance rights as well, and I am afraid she would have infringed my copyright, and that would have been the end of a beautiful relationship (Hannabuss 1998:185).

Level of understanding

1. Which of the two descriptions did you find easier to read?
2. Why do you find this one easier to read?
3. What makes the other description difficult for you to read?
4. If you find something that is difficult to read, does it mean that you cannot understand what is being said?

During the evaluation process, you constantly check the retrieved information for relevance to the theme. This is important. There is no point in including details that are not relevant to a particular information problem. If you include irrelevant information, this shows that you have not understood the problem you have been investigating. It also shows that you failed to move to a higher level of thinking.

As you work through your found information, you are constantly increasing your knowledge base. As a result, you might decide to add additional headings to your work plan, or change the existing headings to show specific hierarchies. All this comes from working with information at a higher level, which requires you to apply critical thinking skills.

EXERCISE 8.2

Evaluating the retrieved information is a crucial step, so it is worthwhile checking that you have the necessary skills. Complete the following sentences to test yourself.

1. If I do not understand some of the retrieved information, I will ...
2. If I still do not understand it, I can ...
3. If none of these actions helps me to understand the information, then I should ...
(4) If I am unsure whether the information is up to date, I can ...
(5) If I am sure that the information is out of date, then I need to ...
(6) Accurate information is information that is ...
(7) Biased information is information that is ...
(8) The retrieved information has to be sifted because ...
(9) If I find that I do not have sufficient information to complete the task, then I need to ...

Compare your responses with the feedback at the end of the study unit.

8.2.2 Writing drafts

The manipulation of retrieved information is a vital part of processing information. Read chapter 13, section 13.6 in your prescribed book, which deals with writing the first draft. You are now “packaging” the information into an answer to the information problem. You have now begun modifying your work plan in preparation for the actual writing of the essay. As you write, you can continue to evaluate the retrieved information. Remember that constant evaluation for relevance is crucial throughout all the phases of planning, finding and organising. You are now putting all the information together to form a logical whole, which consists of the information you have retrieved, evaluated, and repackaged into a new information source. This is the essay which answers the information problem posed in the assignment.

8.2.2.1 Definitions

Read chapter 11, section 11.2.1 in your prescribed book for information about definitions.

EXERCISE 8.3

Read the following three definitions on piracy as formulated by other authors. Combine this information to formulate your own definition of piracy, while acknowledging the original authors.

- The unauthorized use or reproduction of another’s work (South African concise Oxford dictionary 2002:888)
- The systematic unauthorized reproduction or use, without permission and recompense, of a work protected by copyright law, usually for the purpose of profiting from such activity (Reitz 2004)
- Pirated edition: an edition issued in violation of existing copyright law, without permission of the author or copyright holder (Reitz 2004)

8.2.2.2 Outlines

Read chapter 13, section 13.5 of your prescribed book to learn more about outlines. An outline can be seen as a provisional table of contents.

Think about the following two problems:

(a) What will you do if you have a block of information left over after you have modified your work plan?
(b) What will you do with this information that now does not seem to fit in anywhere?
You might have to modify the framework or outline of your essay. All of this can be recorded on your work plan. If you have leftover blocks of information, you need to consider

- where they can best be used in terms of the current headings.
- whether new headings not yet incorporated into the framework might be needed if so, add them.
- whether they are really relevant — if not, discard them.

### 8.3 WRITING THE ESSAY

Read chapter 14 of your prescribed book. During the planning phase you had to determine the form of your final task. This was written down early on in your work plan. In this module we worked according to the premise that the assignment was going to take the form of an essay. This had to be decided right at the start, since both this form and many of the steps you took to reach it influenced the activities you completed. (If the final form of an information task were to be a video programme, for example, you would have carried out many of the activities differently.) However, as I said in study unit 1, academic information tasks often take the form of an essay.

When you write an essay, you have to arrange the information in a way that explains something. You have been using many of these skills during the planning and finding phases (taking notes is part of writing), although at a lower level than the one required during the actual writing of the essay. This part of the process takes the most time. Becoming a successful essay writer takes a lot of practice.

#### 8.3.1 Requirements for an essay

An academic essay has very specific requirements. There must be

- a table of contents (with numbered headings and subheadings)
- a properly formulated introduction
- a main discussion, divided into several logical sections under headings and subheadings
- a convincing conclusion
- textual citations to consulted sources (text references)
- a list of cited sources (you will learn how to compile this list of sources in study unit 9)

#### 8.3.2 Evaluating your essay once you have written it

You have to evaluate your essay before you submit it. Read the editing checklist in chapter 14, section 14.6 in your prescribed book for suggestions. You can then move on to the final proofreading of the essay, which is discussed in section 14.7. Once you have done that, you have completed an information task!

### 8.4 CONCLUSION

The organising phase of the information skills framework is the final phase, which follows on from the planning and finding phases. In carrying out the information task, you evaluated and combined the retrieved information according to your work plan. You
modified the framework represented in the work plan, and used this final framework to present the information task as a written essay. To conclude the organising process you evaluated your completed essay.

FEEDBACK ON THE EXERCISES

Exercise 8.1
You probably found the second description easier to read. There are no unfamiliar words, the sentences are not very long, and the writing style is easy to understand. The first description contains many words and phrases whose meanings may not be clear to you, and the first sentence in the paragraph is very long. If you have difficulty in reading something, you will have difficulty in understanding it.

Even if you understand both the descriptions, you may use them in very different ways in your assignment answer. If one of these descriptions is too difficult to understand completely, you would probably use only the one that you understand best. Alternatively, you could read more widely, use a dictionary and gain a deeper understanding of the concept you are dealing with. You could then return to the difficult text to see whether you are able to cope better because of your increased knowledge.

Exercise 8.2
(1) If I do not understand some of the retrieved information, I will read through it again carefully.
(2) If I still do not understand it, I can use a dictionary to find the meanings of difficult words.
(3) If none of these actions help me to understand the information, I should try to find more information on the topic, possibly from a source that deals with the topic at another level.
(4) If I am unsure whether the information is up to date, I can check the date of publication of the source (or the date on which the information was updated, in the case of an internet site).
(5) If I am sure that the information is out of date, I need to retrieve more recent information.
(6) Accurate information is information that is factually correct and truthful.
(7) Biased information is information that is not objective, impartial or neutral.
(8) The retrieved information has to be sifted because I am interested in the most relevant information.
(9) If I do not have sufficient information to complete the task, I need to repeat the earlier steps and retrieve some more information.

Exercise 8.3
Definition of piracy: Piracy may be defined as the unauthorised use or reproduction of another’s work (South African concise Oxford dictionary 2002:888) without the permission of the author or copyright holder, usually for the purpose of profiting from such an activity (Reitz 2004).
STUDY UNIT 9

Citing sources

Compulsory reading

Read chapter 12 of your prescribed book, *Mastering information skills for the 21st century*, as you work through this study unit.

9.1 INTRODUCTION

When you write an essay, you have to compile a list of the information sources that you referred to in the text. This list is called a list of sources cited, but the headings “References” and “List of references” can also be used. If you include sources you consulted but did not cite in the text, the list is called a bibliography or, alternatively, a list of consulted sources.

When you gather information for an information task such as an assignment, you have to record certain details relating to these sources. I really recommend that you record these details while you are collecting and organising the information you need for your assignments. This is very important, because by the time you actually write the essay, you may already have returned the books you consulted to the library. If you obtained information from the internet, you would also no longer have the particular screen and site address in front of you.

However, if you make a note of the elements needed for references to these sources as you use them, it is quite easy to compile the list of sources and include it at the end of an assignment.

Copying direct from another source without acknowledging it and using another author’s ideas or thoughts and including them in an information task (eg an academic essay) as if they were your own are forms of plagiarism. Read chapter 10, sections 10.6.2 and 10.6.3 in your prescribed book for more information. Acknowledging the sources you have consulted is extremely important, which is why this unit forms part of our discussion of the process of organising information for an information task. In this unit I explain how to compile a list of sources for written assignments and acknowledge sources in the text of your information task, and you are given ample opportunity to practise applying reference techniques.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

After you have worked through this study unit in conjunction with chapter 12 of your prescribed book, you should be able to

- interpret a bibliographic citation
- compile references or citations for books, periodical articles, chapters in a collected work, reference sources, and electronic information sources
- compile a correct list of sources cited for inclusion at the end of a written assignment
KEY CONCEPTS
These key concepts and their definitions appear in your prescribed book:

- collected work
- compiler
- edition
- editor
- publication date
- publisher
- verso
- volume

9.2 BIBLIOGRAPHIC CITATIONS
A bibliographic citation consists of the elements needed to describe an information source so that it can be identified.

Reread chapter 2, section 2.5 of your prescribed book, which deals with bibliographic citations.

9.3 REASONS FOR INCLUDING TEXT REFERENCES IN AN ASSIGNMENT
Chapter 12, section 12.2 of your prescribed book discusses the main reasons for citing references and providing a list of sources cited at the end of an assignment. Read this section carefully and think about these reasons. You need to understand why it is important for you to learn the reference techniques and to practise them very early in your academic career. Study the various examples carefully.

Here are three examples of text references.

(a) Machet (2012:202–203) indicates that text references are essential in avoiding plagiarism.
(b) Text references are essential in avoiding plagiarism (Machet 2012:206).
(c) According to Wessels and Knoetze (2005:210), learners prefer to read books in English rather than books in indigenous languages.

9.4 COMPILING REFERENCES OR CITATIONS
Each entry in the list of cited sources is called a “reference” or a “citation”. When you want to record a citation or reference, you have to comply with certain standards or rules. There are many different techniques, methods and styles of citing sources. For the purposes of this module we use one of the most widely used methods, namely the Harvard method.

I will now briefly discuss how to compile citations for various types of sources. The discussion is followed by some exercises to allow you to practise compiling citations for different types of information sources. You will need to keep referring to your prescribed
book for more details about different types of citations. It is a good idea to work through the study unit and the prescribed chapter at the same time.

9.4.1 Books

A reference for a book includes the following elements:

- surname(s) and initial(s) of author(s)
- date of publication
- title of the book
- edition
- place of publication
- publisher

These elements are discussed in more detail in your prescribed book. Your prescribed book also contains information on compiling references for books written by more than one author or with a corporate author.

EXERCISE 9.1

Examine the title page and verso of your prescribed book. Then fill in the information below.

Author(s): .................................................................................................................................
Publication date: ...........................................................................................................................
Title: ..........................................................................................................................................
Edition: ........................................................................................................................................
Place of publication: ....................................................................................................................
Publisher: .....................................................................................................................................

When you are able to identify the different elements that are required, you are able to compile a citation, such as the one below:


Note that the author’s surname comes first, followed by his or her initials. You do not need to write the author’s first names in full. Also note that you either underline the full title of the book or, if you are using a computer to write your assignment, you use italics for the title. Take care to use the correct punctuation and spacing in the citation. Use full stops after each element, except after the place of publication, where you use a colon.

If the book you are using was written by two or three authors, in the text you provide the surnames of all the authors before you give the date. In the list of sources, you would provide the surnames and initials of all the authors before you give the date.

If the book you are using has more than three authors, you do things slightly differently. In the text, you provide the surname of the first author only, followed by “et al”, and then the date. In the reference list, however, you would supply the surnames and initials of all the authors before giving the date.
9.4.2 Periodical articles
A reference for an article in a periodical or newspaper should include the following elements:

- surname(s) and initial(s) of author(s)
- date of publication
- title of article
- title of newspaper or periodical
- periodical volume and number
- newspaper date (newspapers and popular magazines may not have a volume and number)
- section of the newspaper if the article appears in a separate supplement (eg the classified supplement)
- page numbers on which the article appears (remember to include the last page)

EXERCISE 9.2

Read the paragraph below and then extract the information you need to compile a citation.

Stuart Hannabuss wrote an article called Issues of intellectual property in 1998. The article appeared in volume 99 number 5 of the journal New Library World. It was published on pages 185 to 190.

Author: .............................................................................................................................
Publication date: ...........................................................................................................
Title of article: ...................................................................................................................
Title of periodical: ...........................................................................................................
Periodical volume and number: ......................................................................................
Page numbers on which the article appears: .................................................................

Now that you have identified the necessary elements, you can compile the citation.


Compare this reference with the reference for a book (which you compiled in exercise 9.1). Note that in this case, the title of the journal is given in italics (or is underlined if your text is handwritten). The title of the article, however, is not given in italics. Also note that the first letters of the important words in the journal title are capitalised.

9.4.3 Chapter in a collected work
When you compile a reference for a chapter in a collected work, the reference should include the following elements:

- surname(s) and initial(s) of author(s)
- date of publication of the book (usually just the year)
- title of the chapter as it appears in the collected work
- title of the collected work as it appears on the title page
- surname(s) and initial(s) of editor(s)
- place of publication
• publisher
• page numbers on which the chapter appears (first and last page of the chapter)

EXERCISE 9.3

Read the paragraph below and then extract the information you need to compile a citation.

Linda J Henry wrote a chapter called Appraisal of electronic records: traditional principles endure in 2003. The chapter was published in a book Thirty years of electronic records. This book was edited by Bruce I Ambacher, and was published in Lanham by Scarecrow. The chapter appeared on pages 25 to 41.

Author(s) of chapter: ............................................................................................................
Publication date: ....................................................................................................................
Title of chapter: .....................................................................................................................
Title of collected work: ..........................................................................................................
Editor(s) of collected work: ..................................................................................................
Place of publication: ..............................................................................................................
Publisher: ...............................................................................................................................
Pages: ......................................................................................................................................

Now that you have identified the necessary elements, you can compile the citation.


Note that in this example of the citation for a chapter in a collected work, we use the word “in” to indicate the collected work in which it was included. Underline or italicise the title of the collected work (not the title of the specific chapter). Take careful note of the punctuation: there is a comma after the chapter title before the word “in”, a comma before the name(s) of the editor(s), a full stop after the name(s) of the editor(s), and a colon before the page numbers.

9.4.4 Book with an editor

A book with an editor or editors is usually entered under the title, followed by the date of publication. Read the section in your prescribed book on books with editors before you attempt the next exercise.

EXERCISE 9.4

Read the paragraph below and then extract the information you need to compile a citation.


Title: ......................................................................................................................................
Publication date: ..................................................................................................................
Editor(s): ..............................................................................................................................
Now you can combine the different elements to compile the citation.


### 9.4.5 Electronic sources

A reference for an electronic source or a file on the internet should include the following elements:

- surname(s) and initial(s) of author(s)
- date
- title
- format (eg CD-ROM)
- URL (if it comes from the internet)
- date accessed (ie the date you visited the website to retrieve the information)

#### EXERCISE 9.5

Find the website for the British Museum in London. Fill in the required information below.

Name(s) and initial(s) of author(s): ...........................................................
Publication date: ....................................................................................
Title: .......................................................................................................
Format: .................................................................................................
URL: .......................................................................................................  
Date accessed: ........................................................................................

Now you can combine the different elements to compile the citation.

Example of a reference for an electronic source:


Note that this website gives no information about when the web page was created. However, at the time of writing this guide there was an indication that it was last updated in 2011, since it included links to exhibitions and activities that were uploaded in 2011. This date may therefore be included. If you are not quite sure about the date in cases like this, you can put the year in square brackets like this: [2011]. This indicates that the information was not actually found on the information source. Including the date on which a website was accessed is very important, as websites are constantly being updated. When you access The British Museum website it will not look exactly like it did when this study guide was written in 2011.

### 9.5 STRUCTURE OF A LIST OF CITED SOURCES

Citations are listed in alphabetical order. When you include two or more sources written
by the same author in different years, you arrange these sources chronologically (ie according to the date of publication). If two or more sources by the same author were published in the same year, you arrange them alphabetically according to the title of the source, and distinguish between them by inserting a lower-case letter of the alphabet after the date (eg 2002a, 2002b, and so on). If the author has written some works in collaboration with another author or authors, you arrange these references after the references for the sources written by the author on his or her own.

Chapter 12 in your prescribed book discusses the various factors that affect the structure of the list of sources. Read this section carefully before you attempt the next exercise. To ensure that you always use the latest format, refer to Tutorial Letter INKALLE/302, which you received after registering.

**EXERCISE 9.6**

Arrange the following citations in the correct order. In the column headed “Position in the list”, write the position from 1 to 11 that each citation would occupy in the list.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Example of citations</th>
<th>Position in the list</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
The next exercise requires you to apply much of what you have learnt in this study unit. Do this exercise to test whether or not you have mastered the skills needed to cite references correctly. If there are any elements you are uncertain about, reread the relevant section in your prescribed book.

**EXERCISE 9.7**

This exercise is based on the list of citations below, which contains numerous mistakes. Correct these citations and compile a correct bibliography.

**Cited sources**


Ministerial Committee on a National Education Evaluation and Development Unit: Final report. 2009 *Government Gazette*, (32133) pages 4 to 64.


**9.6 CONCLUSION**

In this study unit you learnt how to acknowledge sources in your text (such as an
assignment) and to compile citations. I explained the importance of including citations in a list of sources at the end of an information task such as an assignment. Compiling correct citations and a list of sources cited is a very important aspect of information literacy. It can be confusing initially because of the different rules that apply to different types of information sources. Do not be discouraged if you do not always remember the correct way to cite a reference. You can always check the method that should be used and make sure that you have included all the necessary elements. If you practise and pay attention to detail, you have a good chance of mastering the necessary referencing skills.

**FEEDBACK ON THE EXERCISES**

**Exercise 9.6**

The correct order is:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Example of citations</th>
<th>Correct alphabetical order</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>The social construction of literacy</em>. 1986. Editor: J Cook-Gumperz. Cambridge, Mass: Cambridge University Press.</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Exercise 9.7

The corrected list of citations appears below. Remember that if you are writing by hand, you will underline titles of books and periodicals.

Cited sources


List of sources
