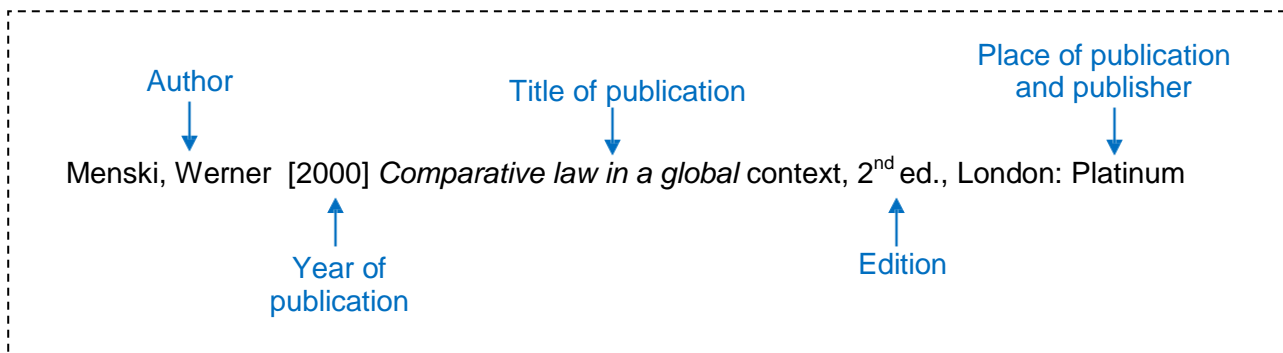# Understanding a reading list

Introduction

In order to find Information you need to know what it is you're looking for.

This guide will help you to understand the references on your reading list so that you can find the resources you need.

Book

Author [Year of publication] Title of publication, Edition., Place of publication: publisher

Menski, Werner [2000] *Comparative law in a global* context, 2nd ed., London: Platinum

- Author
- Title of publication
- Place of publication and publisher
- Year of publication
- Edition

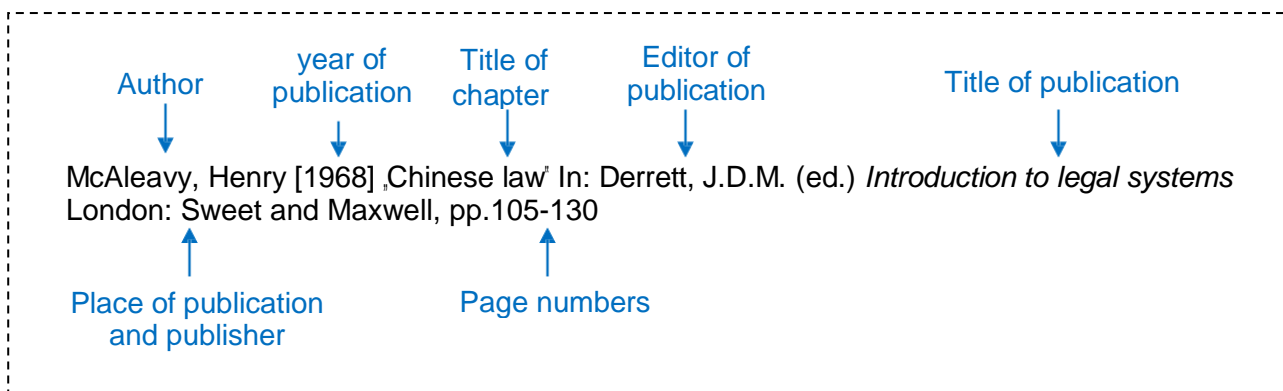Hints that it is a book:

- It has publishing details [i.e. a place of publication and publisher name]
- It does not have volume or issue details

Chapter in a book

Author of chapter [year of publication] „Title of Chapter" In: Editor of Publication *Title of publication* Place of publication:

McAleavy, Henry [1968] „Chinese law" In: Derrett, J.D.M. (ed.) *Introduction to legal systems* London: Sweet and Maxwell, pp.105-130

- Author
- year of publication
- Title of chapter
- Editor of publication
- Title of publication
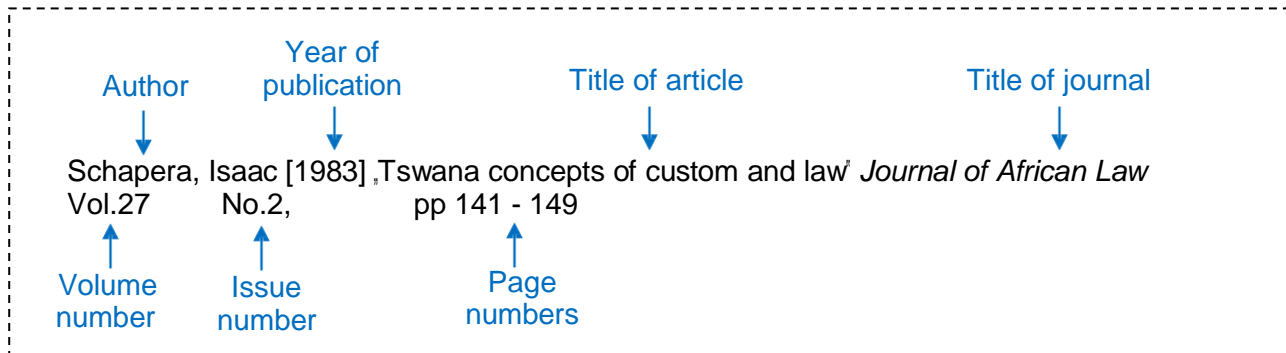- Place of publication and publisher
- Page numbers

Hints that it is a chapter in a book:

- It has publishing details
- It does not have volume or issue details
- The word "*IN*" appears indicating the material appears in another item
- There are two titles [use the book title to find the item]

Journal articles

Author [year of publication] „Title of article" *Title of journal* Volume No. Issue No. Page Nos.

Author → Schapera, Isaac [1983] „Tswana concepts of custom and law" *Journal of African Law*
(Year of publication) (Title of article) (Title of journal)

Vol.27 No.2, pp 141 - 149
Volume number / Issue number / Page numbers

Hints that it is a journal article:

- It has volume or issue details [sometimes written as 27(2)]
- There are two titles [use the *journal title* to find the item]
- Note: Full references may not be given. An article can sometimes be referred to only by the name of the database it"s available in.

Conference papers

Author (Date published) *Title of paper* Title of conference, Place and date of conference

Author → Kennedy, David (1992) *Some Reflections on "The Role of Sovereignty in the International*
(Date published) (Title of paper)

Order". In State Sovereignty: The Challenge of a Changing World: Proceedings of the 21st
Annual Conference of the Canadian Council on International Law, Ottawa, October, 1992

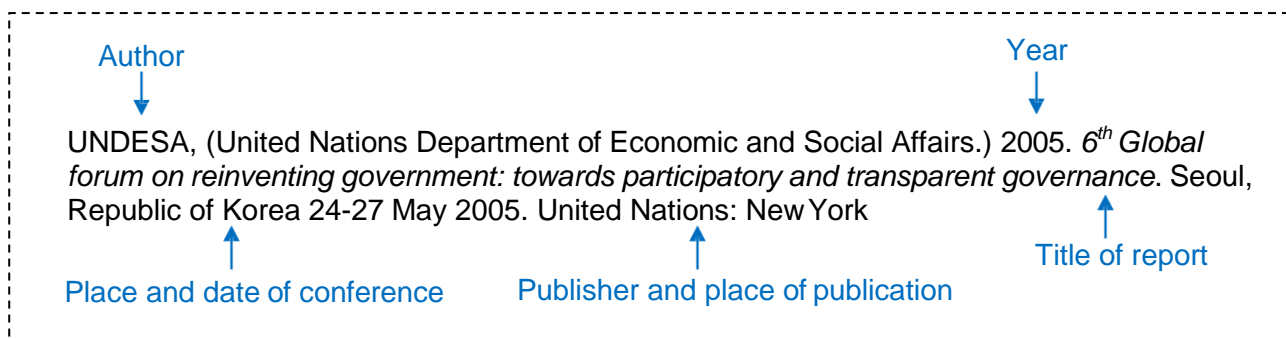Title of Conference / Place and date of conference

Hints that it is a conference paper:

- The words "conference" or "proceedings" appear
- There are two titles [use the *title of the paper* to find the item - often freely available online]

Conference reports

Author. Year. *Title of report* Place and Date of conference. Publisher and place of publication

Author → UNDESA, (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs.) 2005. *6th Global*
Year →

forum on reinventing government: towards participatory and transparent governance. Seoul,
Republic of Korea 24-27 May 2005. United Nations: New York

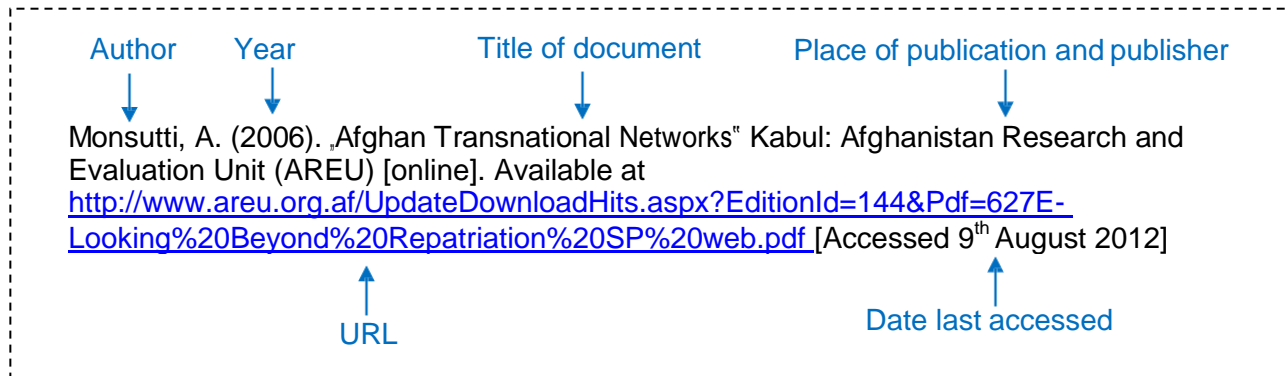Place and date of conference / Publisher and place of publication / Title of report

Hints that it is a conference report:

- There are specific dates which refers to when the conference took place
- The words "Conference", "Proceedings", "Symposium" and "Forum" are used [often freely available online]

Online documents

Author. (Year). „Title of document" Place of publication and Publisher [online]. Available at URL [Date last accessed]

Author   Year   Title of document   Place of publication and publisher

Monsutti, A. (2006). „Afghan Transnational Networks" Kabul: Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit (AREU) [online]. Available at http://www.areu.org.af/UpdateDownloadHits.aspx?EditionId=144&Pdf=627E-Looking%20Beyond%20Repatriation%20SP%20web.pdf [Accessed 9th August 2012]
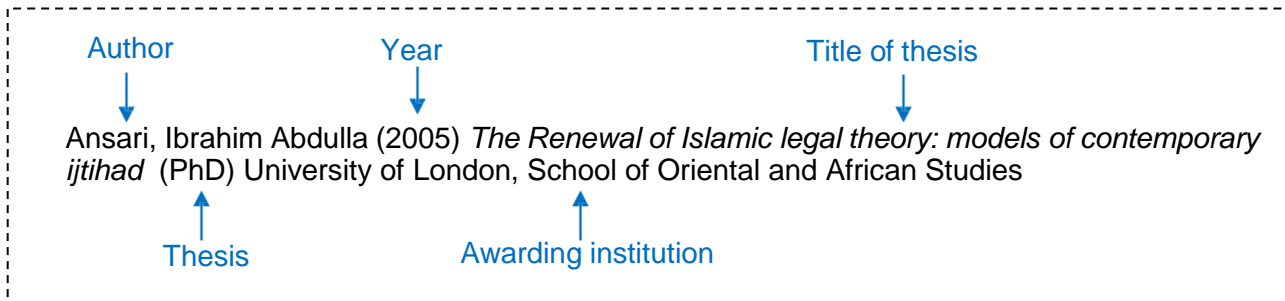
URL   Date last accessed

Hints that it is an online document:

- It has an URL. [It is usually freely available on the web]
- It has a last accessed date
- Note: Some documents may be unavailable. Check the date the document was last accessed

Theses

Author. (Year). *Title of thesis* (Thesis) Awarding Institution

Author   Year   Title of thesis

Ansari, Ibrahim Abdulla (2005) *The Renewal of Islamic legal theory: models of contemporary ijtihad* (PhD) University of London, School of Oriental and African Studies

Thesis   Awarding institution

Hints that it is a thesis:

- The level of thesis is given (MPhil or PhD)
- The name of the awarding institution is given
- Note: Some theses may not be available at SOAS library

Law report

Party names (Year) Volume no. Law report abbreviation Page number

Party names   Volume number   Page number

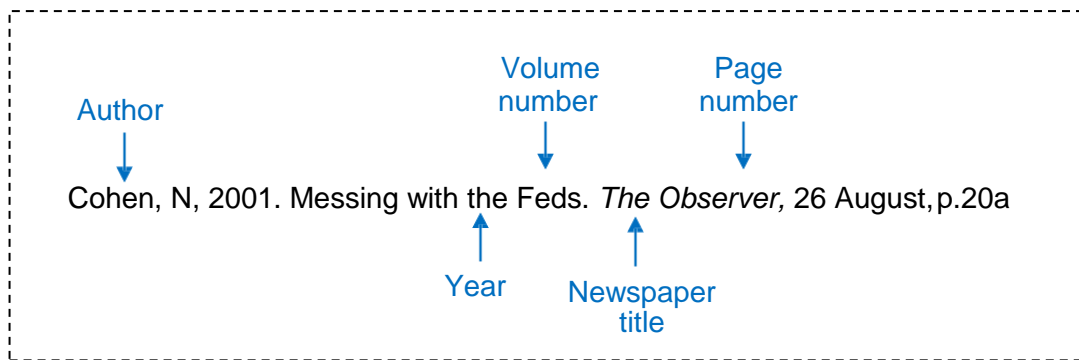R v Cheshire (1991) 93 Cr. App. R. 251

Year   Law report abbreviation
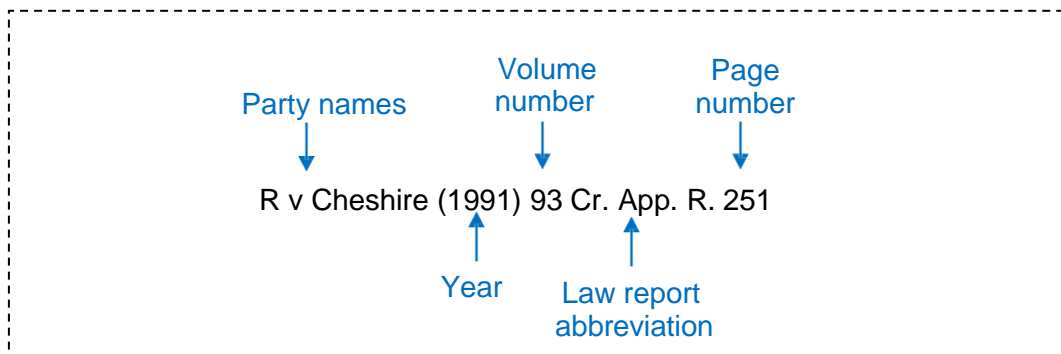
Hints that it is a case in a Law report:

- It has a „v" separating party names
- It has a citation describing where the case can be found [i.e. date, abbreviation of law report, page number etc.]

Newspaper articles

Author, Year. Title of article *Newspaper title,* Date published, Page number and column

Volume
number

Page
number

Author

Cohen, N, 2001. Messing with the Feds. *The Observer,* 26 August, p.20a

Year

Newspaper
title

Hints that it is a newspaper article:

- It has a short title (usually only a few words)

Remember!

Styles and format may differ between lecturers, for example:

- Books may be referred to by just an authors name
- Journal titles may be abbreviated
- Articles or online documents may be referred only to the database or website it can be found in
- Cases may be referred to by name or citation only

What if it still doesn't look right?

Various mistakes can be made, including:

- Misspelling Author or Title
  - o Try variant spellings when searching on the catalogue

- A word in the title may be wrong (e.g. using England instead of Britain.)
  - o Try an Author search when checking the catalogue.
  - o Try a Keyword search which words that are least likely to be incorrect.

- Providing a different publishing date or edition to the copy available in the library
  - o Check which edition you should be reading

If in doubt contact the Enquiry Desk (*http://www.soas.ac.uk/library/resources/enquiries/*)