



# The Galle Medical Journal

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## Editorial Assistant

S Sureka Samanmalie

@ The Galle Medical Journal, 2018 March  
The Galle Medical Association  
GMA Office  
Teaching Hospital Karapitiya  
Galle  
SRI LANKA

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Tel/Fax: +94 91 2232560  
E-mail : [gmathk@gmail.com](mailto:gmathk@gmail.com)  
[gmjgalle@gmail.com](mailto:gmjgalle@gmail.com)  
Website: [www.gma.lk](http://www.gma.lk)

Internet Home Page:

<http://www.sljol.info/index.php/GMJ>

## Editorial

### References; the backbone of a manuscript

Referencing plays a key role in scientific writing. It allows acknowledging the contribution of other writers and researchers in your work. It is a crucial part of successful academic writing; avoiding plagiarism, enhancing the credibility and acceptability of your work.

A reference list should contain a complete list of all the sources (journal articles, books, communications, websites, etc.) that you have cited directly in a manuscript. If there are in-text citations of a source, there must be a reference list entry, and vice versa. This is one way that a reference list differs from a bibliography.

A referencing style is a set of rules to be followed when referencing. There are several different styles of referencing; each style has its own rules for properly citing sources. When submitting your work to a journal you must use the referencing style accepted by the particular journal. It is said that the list of references is like a mirror that reflects the strength of the manuscript as well as integrity of the researcher. A quick glance through the list of references will tell the editor / reviewer how thorough a person is in his or her work. Accordingly, the overall impression of the work may be underestimated if the author has failed to arrange the references according to the requirement. Occasionally, vice versa could also happen where authors give a comprehensive list of references at the end but fail to cite them correctly within the body of manuscript.

Galle Medical Journal had issues related to referencing at the beginning when it was operating small scale locally. It involved many working hours of the secretarial staff to put reference list in order. We are happy to see that the current day authors are more concerned about referencing. With the availability of referencing software the authors can create their own database or library to store references and create automatic reference lists.

*Sarath Lekamwasam*  
*Eisha Waidyarathne*  
*Editors / GMJ*