Adding Illustrations to your Essays and Captioning Them

In most Visual Culture assignments, you will be expected to include illustrations. This is important so that the reader (and marker!) can fully understand what it is that you are writing about. Images also serve as an important kind of evidence you are presenting to back up your essay’s argument. Juxtapositions of images, and juxtapositions of image and text serve as a rhetorical device that forms part of your argument and contributes to its persuasive force. For example, if you are writing about the links between two designers, and you supplement your argument with a pair of images, which clearly show the shared features you are writing about, your reader is much more likely to be convinced of your argument than if you do not!

It is up to you whereabouts in your essay you choose to include images. You might want to have them all at the start, all at the end, all in the middle in a “centrefold” section, or interspersed throughout the text. This is a design decision. It may depend on how you wish the images to interact with the text, and this may depend on quite how you are using them as evidence in your argument.

You need, however, to make sure that you are giving full details about the source of each of your images, and you need to be pretty explicit with the reader about why the image is in your text. To do this you need to remember four things:

1. **Caption**: Below each image include a numbered caption, giving details of the image and a citation of where it’s come from;
2. **List of illustrations**: At the start of the essay include a list of all the images you have used in your text;
3. **Reference list**: In the reference list give full details of all the sources you have used for the images reproduced in your essay;
4. **Refer to the image in your essay**: In the essay itself, tell the reader when to look at an illustration that you have included.

### 1. Captions
These should include:

- The word “Fig.” followed by the figure number. These run consecutively throughout the essay, e.g. Fig.1, Fig.2, Fig 3, etc.
- After the number, you should give information about what the image depicts, and where you got the image from, giving details of:
  - the name of the artist/designer/author of the work in question (where applicable),
  - its date,
  - the title or name of the work,
  - where the object is to be found,
  - your source for the image.

These details differ somewhat depending on the kind of thing that your illustration might depict. Here are some common examples:

**Example 1: an artwork**
Name of artist, *Title of artwork*, date. [medium and size (if known)] Collection where the work is held, details of secondary authors such as photographers where available (Source author, year, page number).

**Example 2: a building**
Architect, name of building, location, date. Details of any secondary authors e.g. photographer. (Source of image – author, year, page number).

_e.g._
Fig. 2: Richard Rogers, Lloyds Building, 1 Lime St., London, 1986. Photographed by Phillips, L.S. (*‘Lloyds Building’*, 2008).

**Example 3: a design:**
Designer, name of design, date. Any secondary author such as photographer, where known (Source of image – author, year, page).

e.g.
Fig 3: Alvar Aalto, Model No. 41 Paimo chair, 1931–2 (Coles, 2005, p.51).

**Example 4: a photograph (by a named photographer)**
Photographer, *title of photo*, date. [size and kind of print (if known/appropriate)] (Source of image – author, date, page).

_e.g._
Fig. 4: Andreas Gursky *Salerno I*, 1990. [Cibachrome, 188 x 226 cm.] (Cooke, 2001, p.73).

**Example 5: a print:**
artist/printmaker, *title of image*, date. [Medium and dimensions] Title of work it is part of (if relevant), publisher where relevant (Source of image – author, date, page).

e.g.
Fig. 5: James Gillray, *Tales of wonder*, 1802. [Etching, 25.5 x 35.4 cm.] Published by Hannah Humphrey (Myrone, 2006, p.115).

**Example 6: a book illustration:**
name of illustrator if known, ‘title/details of image, where they exist’, date (where applicable: original publication author, date and page; where different: add details of the source you get the image from – author, year, date).

e.g.
Fig 6: Gustav Doré, ‘Now to the ascent of that steep savage hill / Satan hath journey’d on, pensive and slow’, 1866 (originally published in Milton, 1866; reprinted in Milton, 2013, p.109).

**Example 7: An image with no author/artist but a descriptive caption**
Descriptive text. (Source author, date, page)

_e.g._
Fig. 7: View of the upstairs room at Damien Hirst’s restaurant, Pharmacy, in Notting Hill, London, March 2000. (Haden-Guest, 2004, pp.22-3).

- Note that you are also allowed to add some kind of brief comment in your caption explaining something about the image, or its relevance to your essay, with any of the detailed above.
Using your own photographs.
Exactly how you caption these will depend on the status of your authorship of the image in question. For example, if you have taken a photo of a sculpture, building or design object, you should caption the image as you would any other image of the artwork and add your name in as the “secondary author” of the photo, just as you would attribute any other photographer. If you are presenting it for discussion as a work of art in and of itself, then you would caption the image as a photograph (as above) with your own name as the primary creator of the image. If the photograph is primarily to show some other aspect, then you can give a descriptive caption telling the reader what the image shows, and then briefly note your authorship of the image (e.g. ‘Photo by Smith, J.’) in the place of citing a source text from which you have drawn the image.

2. The List of Illustrations
This should be placed at the start of the essay, after any coversheet and table of contents. It should include the page numbers of the images and all of the details in your captions.

A list of illustrations for an essay including all of the examples above might look like this:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>List of Illustrations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fig 1: Sarah Lucas, Sod you gits!, 1990. [Photocopy on paper on canvas, 216 x 315 cm.] Collection of Charles Saatchi (Rosenthal, 1998, p.118).............................................p.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fig. 2: Richard Rogers, Lloyds Building, 1 Lime St., London, 1986. Photographed by Phillips, L.S.('Lloyds Building’, 2008). .................................................................p.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fig 3: Alvar Aalto, Model No. 41 Paimo chair, 1931-2 (Coles, 2005, p.51)..........................................................p.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fig. 4: Andreas Gursky Salerno I, 1990. [Cibachrome, 188 x 226 cm.] (Cooke, 2001, p.73).............................................p.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fig. 5: James Gillray, Tales of wonder, 1802. [Etching, 25.5 x 35.4 cm.] Published by Hannah Humphrey (Myrone, 2006, p.115). .................................................................p.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fig 6: Gustav Doré ‘Now to the ascent of that steep savage hill / Satan hath journey’d on, pensive and slow’, 1866 (originally published in Milton, 1866; reprinted in Milton, 2013, p.109)..................................................p.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fig. 7: View of the upstairs room at Damien Hirst’s restaurant, Pharmacy, in Notting Hill, London, March 2000. (Haden-Guest, 2004, pp.22-3)..........................p.23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. The Reference List
Your reference list should include all the sources which from you have taken your images, amongst the other sources you cite in the essay. An essay with the examples above would thus include the following entries in the reference list:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>References</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

4. Referring to the images in your text
We include images in our academic texts, not for decoration, but because we want to talk explicitly about them. We do this to draw our reader's attention to particular aspects of the image, or themes that image helps us to explain. So, when you include an image in your text, make sure you tell the reader when to look at it, and help the reader understand what you consider to be important about it.

The first time that you mention an illustration in your essay, you should refer the reader to it by its figure number, for example:

Sarah Lucas’s infamous painting Sod you gits!, 1991(see fig. 1) was one of the works shown at the Royal Academy Gallery in 1996.

or:

One of Richard Rogers’s most iconic buildings is the Lloyds Building in London (fig. 2).
Copyright Issues

Where you are just submitting work to a tutor, you should not have to worry about the copyright status of images, or receiving permission for this. However, you should be aware that where the work is being made public in any form (for example, being posted on a blog or wiki, or printed in a magazine) – even if only to other students on the module – you may be breaching another author’s copyright. This also holds where, as with many dissertations and theses, the work will be held after submission in a University’s research repository.

Images from social media sites, Google Images, Pinterest, facebook, Instagram, etc. will usually be placed there without license from the copyright holder, and further reproduction of these is a further breach of copyright. As they lack proper attribution of a source, it is hard to trace copyright owners to get clearance. It is therefore good to develop good habits in finding images from legitimate sources instead, and these research skills will stand you in good stead for life after University.

You should be warned that many photographers and image libraries are very proactive in pursuing copyright infringements!

‘Creative Commons’ images are images made available for more general use without having to contact the original author, and may be a useful source of images for which you do not have to pay a copyright fee. However, do note that there are often conditions attached as to the different kinds of use that the authors of these images allow. Where you use images from Wikimedia Commons, or other ‘Creative Commons’ sites, you need to check the terms on which these images have been made available, make sure that you include with your the details of the particular Creative Commons License (e.g. ‘Creative Commons Attribution Share-alike 3.0’), as listed on the original website where the author has posted the image.

For more information on copyright, see:

http://unihub.mdx.ac.uk/study/copyright/index.aspx
The Lloyd’s building (see fig. 1), designed by Richard Rogers and completed in 1986 is one of the most iconic buildings in London. It is striking in its ‘inside out’ design, where the functional aspects of the architecture (lifts, staircases, pipes and ducts), usually hidden inside the depths of a building are placed on its outside in a spectacular display.

Fig. 1: Richard Rogers, Lloyds Building, 1 Lime St., London, 1986. Photographed by Phillips, L.S.(‘Lloyds Building’, 2008). Note the prominently visible staircases and ducting.

As Richard Waite (2011) has noted in an article for the Architects Journal, the Lloyds building has become such a seminal building in the history of architecture that it was granted the status of a Grade I listed building only 25 years after its completion - the youngest building ever to have achieved this honour.