

# Long Essay and Dissertation Formatting and Length

## Length

Word limits must be strictly adhered to. There is **NO DISCRETION** whatsoever to exceed the word limit on assessed long essays or dissertations.

An essay or a dissertation that exceeds the stated word limit will not be accepted, but will be handed back to the student for further editing. Any delay in submission caused by the need to reduce the length of an essay or a dissertation will be subject to the standard penalty of a reduction of two marks for every day it is late.

For all assessed work (book review, long essay or dissertation) the word count **INCLUDES** *tables and appendices*, but **EXCLUDES** the bibliography, title pages, acknowledgements, tables of contents, lists of abbreviations and abstracts. **References** in footnotes and endnotes don't count, but any additional information or content included in a footnote or endnote does count. Graphs, charts and images are counted as however many words the word counting software calculates them as. To repeat: **exceeding the word-limit by any percentage is NOT ALLOWED.**

## Layout

The following notes give guidance on the preparation of a typescript, on bibliographies and footnoting. They are not intended to be exhaustive; nor are they compulsory. There are a number of acceptable conventions; the main principle is to be **consistent**.

### *Paper and Printing*

Computer produced work should be printed on a laser printer or one of the better inkjet printers.

### *Spacing*

Everything in the main text should be **DOUBLE-SPACED**, except indented quotations and footnotes (at the foot of the page), which should be single-spaced.

### *Font*

There is no prescribed typeface but it is strongly recommended that the candidate should use simple classical typefaces (e.g. Times New Roman or Sabon), 11pt or 12pt font; word processing software will select a smaller font for footnotes.

### *Abbreviations*

If applicable, a list of the abbreviations used in the text and the footnotes should be placed at the beginning of the work. This will not be included in the word count.

### *Tables*

Tables may be typed on separate sheets or in the text. Tables of more than four lines should be numbered and referred to in the text by number rather than 'as follows'. Check your tables carefully. Are they in the form that the reader will find most helpful? Will the reader be able to compare one set of values with another? Are all units, percentages and totals identified? Do the totals tally with the individual values? Are the sources given in the same form for each table? Are the tables referenced in the text?

### *Quotations*

Short quotations should be enclosed in single inverted commas (except for quotations within quotations which have double inverted commas), and run on with the main text in double-spacing. However, quotations extending to more than five lines of typescript

should be distinguished from the rest of the text and do not need inverted commas (except for quotations within quotations). Start each such quotation on a fresh line and indent the whole quotation and type in single-spacing. Take particular care to transcribe quotations accurately. If a quotation includes an obvious error, do not correct it but indicate it by placing the Latin word 'sic' (meaning 'thus') in round brackets immediately after the error.

#### *Internet Citations*

Websites: cite author or webmaster (if known), date created or last updated (if known), title of text, heading of page, full url, and date last accessed; eg. Urry, J. (1999), 'Automobility, car culture and weightless travel: A discussion paper', Department of Sociology, Lancaster University, Jan.  
<http://www.lancaster.ac.uk/sociology/soc008ju.html>, last accessed 1 Nov. 2000.

#### *Bibliographical References*

The bibliography must include all material, primary and secondary, that has been cited or has substantially informed the long essay; it should not include materials consulted that have not, in the end, been used. It should normally be divided into manuscript sources, printed sources, printed secondary works and unpublished dissertations.

We do not give precise instructions about citations. The choice between footnotes and author-date or Harvard referencing is a pragmatic one, on which you may want to take advice from your supervisor, and may reflect the discipline within which you are working and the extent to which your work relies upon primary materials. If in doubt, we recommend that you consult one of the Style Guides below. As most Style Guides have been through numerous editions, it is always best to consult the most recent edition.

- *MHRA Style Guide: a Handbook for Authors, Editors, and Writers of Theses* (London: Modern Humanities Research Association, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, 2008).
- Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 7<sup>th</sup> edition, 2007). Excellent, and good value, though it is due for a new edition. This is a scaled down version of *The Chicago Manual* (see below).
- R. M. Ritter, *The Oxford Guide to Style* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003). This is a recent re-branding of *Hart's Rules* (1893 and subsequent editions), but a bit pricey for those not intending an academic career.
- *The Chicago Manual of Style* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, various editions). Simply the best, but very comprehensive, and expensive.