

Essays

The writing of essays is of central importance in studies at the English Department. In them, students can best show the degree to which they have mastered the key skills fostered by a university education – the ability to think logically, the ability to argue persuasively, and the ability to express oneself clearly. Written work is not something “extra” – it is at the very heart of a liberal education. For this reason, many courses include written work as the major element in evaluation.

Deadlines

It is essential to hand essays in by the given deadline. Teachers need to plan their work, and cannot do this properly if essays come dribbling in over the course of weeks or even months. Moreover, they can mark essays best when it is possible for all the work in a particular course to be compared. From the student’s point of view, the ability to meet deadlines is a useful form of self-discipline, indispensable in the everyday world of jobs and commitments that follows after university studies. It is also an illusion to think that the longer an essay assignment is put off, the more time there is to think about it, and the better the result will be. In fact a deadline acts as a stimulus, and almost invariably better essays are produced when a student is working against a definite, but fair, deadline. As Dr Johnson – commenting on a very different situation, but one with illuminating parallels – once pointed out: “Sir! When a man knows he is to be hanged in a week, it concentrates his mind wonderfully!”

Deadlines for handing in essays are set by the professors individually for each course. The deadline date is included in the course syllabus. There are at least two deadlines for each course; the first one is regular, the second one is a resit-only option.

Essays should be handed in to the departmental secretary (in exchange for a confirmation slip, which is kept by the student as a record). Exceptionally, they may be sent by recorded delivery (doporučeně); in such cases, they must reach the department no later than the required deadline.

Resubmissions. If an essay is failed, the student can resubmit it at the resit essay deadline (first resit) or at the first following opportunity (second resit). Mind that handing in essays follows the same rules as examinations and is therefore subject to the rules of the University.

Plagiarism

Plagiarise: to steal the thoughts or words of another person in literary composition;
plagiarism: the crime of literary theft

Concise English Dictionary

Good essays should reflect the students’ own ideas as well as an awareness of what others have written or said on the topic in question. This necessitates reading and research, but just as cheating is not permissible in the writing of exams, so plagiarism is forbidden in the writing of essays. Credit must be given for other people’s ideas, whether these serve as background or are paraphrased, and the actual words of another person must be clearly quoted and accredited. Plagiarism occurs when a student directly copies someone else’s work without acknowledgement; closely paraphrases the equivalent of a short paragraph or more without acknowledgement; or borrows, without acknowledgement, any ideas in such a way as to present them as his or her own. The avoidance of plagiarism is a matter of elementary academic ethics and must be scrupulously adhered to. Essays showing evidence of plagiarism will be automatically failed.

Duplication

It is forbidden to submit substantially the same piece of written work to two different courses. Minor modifications and amendments or changes do not constitute a significant and acceptable reworking of an essay.

Length

Essays vary in length, increasing during the course of studies as follows:

B.A Studies:

1st Year: 1500 words

2nd and 3rd Years: 2000 - 2500 words

M.A. Studies: 2500 - 3000 words

These are not absolute figures. Teachers are free to make other arrangements – for example, two shorter papers, brief tests, or a class participation/presentation element. In such cases, the amount of work everything represents will correspond to that involved in writing essays of the above lengths.

Appearance

Essays, like all written assignments in the department, must be typed or printed.

Spacing: preferably double-spaced; one and a half spacing is also acceptable, but should be consulted with the professor. Font: preferably Times New Roman. Font size: 12. Print: preferably on one side; both sides printing is also acceptable, but should be consulted with the professor. Margins: approximately 2.5 cm (1 inch); the right-hand margin should be ragged (i.e. not justified).

Pages should be numbered.

Additional information

If you choose either the British or the American spelling norm, please make sure you use it consistently.

Style sheet

Please use:

- Intext citations rather than footnotes (viz. below in Referencing). Give list of Works Cited at the end of your text.
- Double quotes, only use singles when enclosed in doubles
- close paragraphs (i.e. do not leave a blank line between paragraphs) and indent, except when starting a new chapter/section
- 60s, 70s, 80s etc, instead of 60's etc.
- 1993–95 rather than 1993–1995, and 1905–06 rather than 1905–6; use 1998/99 for financial and academic years
- Italics for published book titles, names of paintings, titles of films and videos, plays, long poems, musicals and operas, newspapers, magazines and periodicals, scientific names of plants and animals, and foreign words and phrases not in common use
- Quotes for television programs/series, articles, essays and parts of wholes (names of chapters, short stories and short poems)
- Italics for emphasis (sparingly)
- “12 am” and “12 pm” (with one space preceding) not “12a.m.” and “12p.m.”
- En (–) rules (Alt+0150) with space on either side, not em (—) rules (Alt+0151)

Generally:

- Numbers one to nine spelt out, then numeric; numbers that start a sentence must always be spelt out. Use comma in thousands, and no spaces.
- No punctuation between letters in acronyms (ALP, not A.L.P.)
- Indent or italicize long quotes, but do not change lining or font or size or make bold
- Spell out per cent, not % (except in tables)
- Contractions are not punctuated (e.g., Mr, Mrs, Dr, St), but abbreviations are (e.g., Rev., Prof., Ed.)
- Capitals are appropriate for a specific entity (State Parliament), but lower case for job titles, institutions etc. mentioned in a general sense – “Premier Don Dunstan”, but “Don Dunstan was the premier”.

Referencing

The style is a version of the Harvard System, thus

Intext citation

Short quotation

As Shaw says, another “narrative technique Trollope often deploys [...] is double irony” (Shaw 1997: 359).

or just

As Shaw (1997) says, another “narrative technique Trollope often deploys [...] is double irony”.

Long quotation

As Shaw says, another

narrative technique Trollope often deploys in order to capture the complexity of most moral issues is double irony, the simultaneous endorsement of contrary codes. (Shaw 1997: 359)

for the source:

Shaw, W. David (1997) ‘Trollope and Victorian Moral Philosophy’ *Victorian Studies* 40:2 (Winter 1997): 358-360.

If you are using a re-edition of title, use the following form:

Trollope makes clear early in the novel, for Dr Proudie “Toleration was to be the basis on which he was to fight his battles” (Trollope 1994 [1857]: 33).

for the book:

Trollope, Anthony (1994 [1857]) *Barchester Towers*, London and New York: Penguin Books.

Journal articles:

Bhabha, H. K. (1988) ‘The Commitment to Theory’ *New Formations* 5: 5-23.

O'Regan, T. (1992) ‘(Mis)taking Policy: Notes on the Cultural Policy Debate’ *Cultural Studies* 6:3: 409-423.

Journal article in an internet database:

O'Regan, T. (1992) ‘(Mis)taking Policy: Notes on the Cultural Policy Debate’ *Cultural Studies* 6:3: 409-423. JSTOR. Online Database. 15 April 2004 <<http://www.jstor.org/>>.

Essay from a Collection:

Edwards, B. (1994) 'Living the Dreaming' in Bourke, C., Bourke E. and Edwards, B. (eds) *Aboriginal Australia: An Introductory Reader in Aboriginal Studies*, St Lucia: University of Queensland Press: 65-84.

Internet Resources:

'Harvard Style' *Social Communication and Journalism: Points of Friction*, University of Technology Sydney. 12 January 2005

<<http://www.journalism.uts.edu.au/subjects/jres/harvard.html>>.

Please make sure that the list of references in the Works Cited section is complete and contains all the publication details.

Useful and related style guides are at:

University of Technology Sydney

Social Communication and Journalism Resources website

<http://www.journalism.uts.edu.au/subjects/jres/harvard.html>

University of Melbourne

Harvard system online guide

<http://www.services.unimelb.edu.au/lsu/resources/flyers/harvardref.pdf>

A Guide for Writing Research Papers Based on Modern Language Association (MLA) Documentation

<http://webster.commnet.edu/mla/index.shtml>

But please note that there are some formatting differences between sites.