US

University of Sussex

English Language & Linguistics at Sussex

Academic Writing Manual

This manual has information on
- planning and writing essays and other written work
- avoiding some of the most common pitfalls in student writing
- using the styles of reference and of citation preferred in English Language and Linguistics
- formatting and submitting your work

The guidance in this manual applies to all modules offered by the Department of English Language & Linguistics. If you have modules in other departments, they may have other guidelines.

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Introduction: what is an academic essay?

Essay = Communication of an argument

University-level essay assignments generally require you to construct a logical **argument** in order to support a **conclusion**. This means that your essay is judged not just on what you know, but also on how you've used and communicated the information at your disposal.

Your essay must:
- introduce the question that your essay answers
- make clear why it is a question that needs to be answered
- consider the possible answers to that question
- identify the types of evidence that are needed in order to answer the question
- demonstrate familiarity with relevant published work on the topic
- demonstrate that one of the possible answers is better supported by the evidence (or show why that can't be done)
- back up every claim with evidence: facts, statistics, examples, counterexamples
- give evidence of your evidence: cite your sources
- take into account any counter-arguments, and critically assess the strength of the support for your answer
- present the material in a way that is clear and pleasant to read, using the conventions of academic writing described in this manual and used in professional academic writing more generally.

Know what you are and are *not* writing

You <u>are</u> writing an argument for a particular position to an educated audience.

State your conclusion at the beginning, give sufficient evidence for it, and always explicitly explain why that evidence leads to the conclusion.

You are <u>not</u> writing a mystery novel.
Don't leave your research question or conclusions for the end. State them right up front and spend the rest of the essay showing how the evidence leads to that conclusion.

You are <u>not</u> writing a confession or autobiography.
Don't drag the reader to all the dead ends that you reached in earlier parts of your research or reasoning. You may have spent a week reading about something that turned out not to be relevant, but that doesn't mean that you should make your reader read irrelevant material too. Show your current position and support it.

You are <u>not</u> writing an opinion piece.
Phrases like *I think* or *I believe* or *in my opinion* are out of place. The essay should be structured so that the evidence leads logically to the conclusion.

You are <u>not</u> writing a summary of the module.
If your tutor has allowed you to choose your own topic, then you should try to make the topic as narrow as possible. It is usually preferable to demonstrate a deep knowledge, showing that you have researched the issue *beyond* the level discussed in class. If there are entire books on the topic, then it is too broad a subject for an essay to cover.

What to think about when preparing your essay

Think of the assigned *audience.*
Of course, it is your examiners who will read the essay, but you should not write your essay as a message to them — you're learning to write for a more general audience. Write it as if you're speaking to people who are knowledgeable, but not necessarily up-to-date on your particular topic. You might think of your audience as a group of people who know at least as much as you knew in the first week of the module — that is, an informed, but not specialist, audience.

Define all specialist terminology as you go along and make explicit the connections between evidence and conclusions.
Don't make your readers work the connections out; do it for them.

Familiarise yourself with professional academic writing styles.
Besides the advice of this manual and your tutors, the best way to learn to write well is to be an active reader. When you read particularly clear writing in academic journals or books, ask yourself: *what has the writer done right?* Keep attuned to the author's vocabulary, their sentence and paragraph lengths and structures, their 'sign-posting' mechanisms, and their ways of integrating past research with present argumentation. (Equally, you may ask yourself why some articles on similar topics are harder to read. What has the author done to make the reader work harder? How can you avoid that?)

Think about your level.
First-year undergraduate essays should be more sophisticated than A-level ones, 2nd year more sophisticated than 1st and 3rd year more sophisticated than 2nd year. Postgraduate writing should be at or approaching the level of published work. Each term, you should be working towards more and more specific topics for which you're going deeper into the literature and you should be using more sophisticated and specific sources. Your writing should show a stronger sense of your own voice and more polish as you progress through your studies.

Essay-writing develops many of the skills that graduates are expected to have: Take advantage of the learning opportunity!
Your essay is not just an opportunity to put your linguistic knowledge and skills to work; it is also a chance to develop skills that will help you through professional life or continued education in any field. After graduation, you might not need the facts you learned in researching your essays, but you *will* need the writing and editing skills that are suited to professional communication. In the next few years, you'll find yourself writing dissertation proposals or reports to your manager or clients, professional letters and e-mails, press releases or publicity materials, or even a doctoral thesis. Your tutors are committed to helping you acquire skills that will transfer to those new contexts. **So take advantage of this opportunity to learn why some means of expression work better than others and to practise these skills in an environment where your supervisors and peers are able and willing to help you.**

Helpful resources for writing at Sussex

Your tutors will give you written feedback on all your written work — this is meant as the beginning of a discussion, not the end. Bring the feedback to the tutor's student hours if you'd like more clarity on the written feedback, if you'd like to try out some ways of improving your writing, or if you'd like to discuss how to apply the feedback to future work.

The Faculty of Media Arts and Humanities offers academic support for anyone who'd like it. Appointments be booked via the Student Experience Canvas site: https://canvas.sussex.ac.uk/courses/20011/pages/academic-skills-advisors.

The Library offers a lot of online support for research and writing through the Skills Hub. See: http://www.sussex.ac.uk/skillshub/

In addition, the **Royal Literary Fund (RLF)** Writing Fellowship Programme provides support for students who would like to improve their writing skills for their creative writing, essays, or dissertations. Full details can be found on the web: https://www.sussex.ac.uk/skills-hub/starting-at-sussex/workshops

If your first language is not English, specific help on academic writing is available from the Sussex Language Institute. For more information, see https://www.sussex.ac.uk/study/international-students/english-language

There are a number of **study-guides** you might wish to consult, including:
Bauer, Laurie (2021) *The linguistic student's handbook*. (2nd edition) Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Crème, Phyllis and Mary R. Lea (2008) *Writing at university: a guide for students*. (2nd edition) Open University Press.

An overview of good essay-writing practice

Tutors are regularly faced with dozens (sometimes hundreds) of essays to read. You don't want your essay to tire them out, so do your best to write a clear and easy-to-read essay. This means presenting a piece of writing that says what it needs to say concisely and unambiguously while engaging interest. Essays should have an argument signalled by a thesis statement (a statement that you will support and with which one might plausibly disagree). A good thesis statement gives you plenty of scope to deploy evidence that supports your claim and to examine evidence that might be brought against it.

When planning your essay:

- **Leave enough time.** For a standard essay, you should plan to have a complete draft written and edited two days before it is due, in order to be able to make use of all of the suggestions below and to avoid the penalties for late submission. For dissertations and theses, leave longer.

- **Read and take notes** for the content of your essay, the argument you will adopt and the examples that you want to use to illustrate your argument. Summary-based note-taking is recommended over cutting-and-pasting or highlighting, as note-writing requires you to digest the material properly and think about how it fits into your essay. **The following section gives tips for good note-taking.**

- If appropriate to the assignment, **look for new sources of data** in order to support your argument in a way that is truly yours — rather than relying exclusively on examples provided by others. This demonstrates your ability in analysing data and taking a critical approach to it. (Always acknowledge and document the sources of your data.)

- **Prepare an outline** (plan) by thinking about the sources or theoretical concepts you wish to appeal to and the examples that you could use to illustrate them.

  o As you get a clearer idea of what you want to say, **consider using a sentence outline** as a scaffold on which to build your essay. For more on sentence outlines, see: https://www.examples.com/education/sentence-outline.html

- Remember: you need to analyse *and* evaluate. **Be prepared to show a critical attitude to the theories you have read about and the discussions and arguments you have encountered about them.** This includes considering the arguments *against* your own argument and justifying your argument in the face of those criticisms. (*Critical* in this sense means 'rational, thoughtful' rather than 'criticising'.)

- As you write, you may want to **add the sources that you cite to your references list**, so as to ensure that the references list contains all and only the cited sources. You can also consider using a reference management system, like EndNote. See Skills Hub for info: http://www.sussex.ac.uk/skillshub/?id=448

- **After you've finished a draft:**
  - **Re-check the title.** Unless your tutor has assigned you a title, you can change your working title if your essay develops in a different direction. Your reader will expect your essay to be a relevant and persuasive argument directly related to your title.
  - **Re-write the introduction**. You should now know exactly what your essay argues and how you have made the argument, so you can write an introduction that describes the contents of your essay more precisely.
  - **Set aside your essay for a day or two**, then re-read it with fresh eyes. This will give you some idea of the impression your essay will make on other readers.

- **Edit**. Editing is not the same as proofreading. To edit, closely read your prose. Make sure that your meanings are clear, the connections between ideas are clear, and the flow of information is good. You should ensure that:
  - **you've got a good ratio of information to word-count** (get rid of waffle words, empty starts, and any verbose phrase that could be replaced by a well-chosen word).
  - **each paragraph makes <u>one</u> point and illustrates it**, and each sentence is complete.
  - **the reader always knows why** you've included information, i.e. how it contributes to your point.
  - **your references and quotations are properly acknowledged with in-text citations**. See the **Guidance on reference and citations** in this manual for details. Remember that quotations, statistics, graphs and illustrations copied from another source require page-number citation as well as author and date.

  See also **Some advice on writing clearly in academic register** in this manual.

- **Proofread** for accurate punctuation and flawless spelling.
  - Use the spell-checker as a first step. It can find many (but not all) errors.
  - Read through your work word-by-word and, if possible, out loud. It can be difficult to see errors because you've become too accustomed to the text, so take the time to be really conscious of the words on the page.
  - Check your references list. Ensure that it is set out in alphabetical order and uses hanging indentation. Make sure that it contains **all and only** the sources that you mention in your essay and that each entry is **complete** with all information presented in a consistent style.
    - Also check your citations and make sure they match the information (authors' names, dates) in your reference list. Ensure that page numbers are given where needed.

    See the **Guidance on reference and citations** in this manual for details.
  - Check the formatting and numbering of examples, tables, figures. Make sure you've followed the instructions in the **Special formatting for linguistic writing** section below.
  - Do a final page-through to make sure that section titles and captions aren't 'stranded' and short tables or examples don't break in the middle.

- **Get another student to read your work to see if it makes sense to them.** (This is called 'peer critique' or 'peer editing'.) Make arrangements with the student early in your writing process so that (a) you give yourself a reasonable

deadline for having a full draft done and (b) they'll know that and when they need to save time to read it. Make clear to your peer-editor that you care about how easy it is to read and how logical the argument is, as well as small details like spelling and punctuation. Anywhere where your reader gets lost is a place where you need to think about how you can express yourself more clearly. If they say "I thought it was going to be about this, but then it was about that", then your introduction and signposting need more attention. See the **Peer-editing questions** in this manual. **NB: Do NOT exchange reading favours with someone else who is writing an essay with the same title (unless you have the explicit permission of your tutor).** Doing so may lead to charges of plagiarism or collusion.

> o It can be really useful as well to ask someone who's *not* a student on our course to read your work. If there are concepts they don't understand, that's a signal that you need to explain them more clearly.

- Submit your essay **before** the deadline. Check that it has been received properly and (if relevant) if the Turnitin score is over 15%, have a quick look to make sure there are no problems of plagiarism. (Correct and re-submit if necessary.)

Rules on word limits

Rumours abound about word limit rules — don't trust rumour! Here are the facts.

The stated word count for your assignment is a **limit**; try to stay below it. Examiners are required to read up to 10% extra (e.g. 200 extra words on a 2000-word assignment), but they **can mark your work downward** for the extra words if (a) you have gained an unfair advantage over other students by exceeding the word limit, or (b) if the work was unnecessarily long (i.e. the argument could have been made as effectively within the word limit).

For standard essays and dissertations (not theses), it's helpful to state the word count at the end of the text, before the References list. If you 'uncounted' any words (see table below), it is good to let the examiner know, e.g.: '6400 words, not including parenthetical citations'.

Does count toward word limit	Does NOT count toward word limit
The paragraphs of the essay, including quotations from primary and secondary sources.	Title, identifying info, section titles
	Abstract [dissertation only]
	Tables, illustrations, figures & their captions
	References list
	Parenthetical source citation (though it can be hard to 'uncount' all the *(Jones 2002)*s in your essay. It's only worth bothering with uncounting citations if you haven't found another way to stay within the word limit.
	Appendices
	Linguistic example sentences *if* presented using the numbering format prescribed in this manual

Some tips on reading and note-taking for essays

The first stage of reading might be to **find a topic for your essay**. At that stage, **take notes** on questions that might lead to good essay titles and sources that might be good to follow up on. Keep a clear record of which sources you've read already and where they're located (e.g. library shelf number, web URL).

Once you have an essay topic/title, aim to make your reading and note-taking focussed and productive for that topic. Here are some tips for hand-written or word-processed notes:

- **Not every source has to be read in full.** Use indexes in books in order to find the most relevant parts. Read the abstracts of journal articles in order to determine whether the article is likely to be of use to you.

- **Read an entire paragraph before picking up your pen/highlighter/keyboard**, then **summarise** the whole paragraph in your own words. This (a) ensures that you've made sure that you understand the information, (b) keeps you from taking too many notes (which will be hard to sort through later), (c) helps you avoid inadvertently plagiarising through copying others' words into your notes.

- **At the start of your notes for any source, give a bibliographic entry for the source**, so that the information is ready to go into your references list. As you take notes, note the page number for each bit of information (you'll need these later).

- **Use more than one colour**: one for noting what the source says, another for your reflections on the material — e.g. how it will fit into your argument, questions it raises for you.

- **Be alert and attentive to the main points** of the source and any data that may be relevant to your argument. For short essays, you will probably be more interested in the results of a study than in the details of its methodology.

- **If you quote directly from the author in your notes, mark it clearly** as a quotation by using inverted commas. Make sure that you've recorded the page number of the quotation, as you'll need it later. Also make sure that the ideas you're attributing to that author are the author's and not the author's summary of another's ideas.

- **Have a uniform system of abbreviation** that will make sense to you when you re-read your notes.

- **Keep notes in order and in one place.**

DO NOT CUT AND PASTE MATERIAL FROM ELECTRONIC SOURCES into your essay or notes files. This is not note-taking, and it could lead to accidental plagiarism. Remember: it doesn't matter if you've plagiarised accidentally; it's still plagiarism and subject to severe penalties. (Also: plenty of research shows that you learn better if you write out yourself the things you're learning about.)

The structure of an essay

Any essay needs an introduction, a body, and a conclusion. The contents of the body can vary considerably from topic to topic and module to module, so talk with your tutor if you are not clear about the expectations for the assignment.

Sections and subsections

You can divide your essay into sections that have their own titles — in fact, sections are often desirable, especially for long essays. In our field, it is traditional to number these sections and any subsections that those sections have. For instance, the first section after the introduction may be numbered like this (though your titles should be more specific to your essay):

2. Past work on this topic
    2.1 Theory A's approach
    2.2 Theory B's approach
        2.2.1 The tradition in theory B
        2.2.2 Recent changes in theory B

Two decimal points (three levels) is a reasonable limit. (For short essays, one or two levels is plenty.) If you find yourself with section numbering like 2.1.2.1.3, then consider whether your organisation for the essay is the best it could be. Are all those subsections needed? Would section 2 work better as two sections? (Etc.) If one section of the body seems much longer than the others at its level (e.g. if section 4.2 is huge but 4.3 and 4.4 are small), consider whether the long section is doing more than one job. If so, should it be two sections?

Titles of subsections are not a replacement for proper introduction of a topic. Each (sub)section should have some introduction that indicates its purpose and how it fits into the essay structure. When editing, read the essay without the titles and see if it still makes sense.

Don't let page-breaks happen between a section title and the first paragraph of the section. Use the 'keep-with-next' feature in your word-processor (under the Home>Paragraph menu in MS-Word). This is superior to adding manual page breaks, because it ensures that as you write more, the section title will stay with its section. Always do a final check of your work to ensure that examples and tables are not broken in the middle and section titles are with their sections.

Paragraphs

Paragraphs are the building blocks of your essay. Think of a paragraph as having three elements: the topic sentence, the development of that topic, and supporting evidence. Your paragraphs should generally go from general (the topic sentence) to specific (precise explanations, data and examples), and then back to general (summing up how this information contributes to the argument). Remember that each paragraph needs to rest on what has gone before and provide support for what comes afterwards in your essay.

One-sentence paragraphs are a no-no. One-sentence-per-paragraph is often found on websites, but it's no good for essays. Read printed works or 'long reads' online to get a better feeling for paragraphing.

Introductions

The introduction should do more than say what the essay is *about*; it should give an abbreviated form of what your essay says (a **thesis statement**), how it says it (an outline), and why it's worth saying (rationale). Always be as specific as possible in expressing the main point of your essay. The following examples are not complete introductions, but show vague versus specific statements of the essay's purpose (and the latter one outlines the structure a bit, too):

> **Bad**: This essay concerns the politeness mechanisms used in waiter-customer interactions at a pizza restaurant.

> **Better**: This essay uses data collected in a pizza restaurant to show that waiters and customers employ different types of thanking behaviours when they interact. After introducing the data and key concepts from politeness theory, I show that customers and waiters behave differently because of their differing economic investment in the interaction.

> **Maybe even better (less mechanical)**: Expressions of gratitude, like *thank you* and *thanks*, occur often in service encounters, for instance between waiters and customers But are the interactors really all that grateful in such encounters? In this essay, a pragmatic analysis of fifty pizza-restaurant interactions shows that customers and waiters use *thanks* in different ways, stemming from their differing economic investment in the interaction.

Whether an introductory section should be one paragraph or more depends on the length of the essay and the complexity of the material to be covered. Generally, the shorter your essay, the shorter the introduction should be.

Conclusions

Your conclusion section should **make clear that you have reached the end of your argument** — either by reflecting upon what has been argued or by summing up what you have argued. For a short essay (say, < 3000 words), you don't need to do a lot of repetition of what you said in the essay, as it will still be fresh in the reader's mind.

For all essays, this section should have a **very clear statement** of the conclusion of your essay/argument. It should be stated as strongly as it can be, but must be reasonable, given the limitations of your study — that is don't overstate the conclusion, but don't understate it either. What have you *argued,* what do your data *show* and what do they *suggest*? (**Avoid the word *prove*** — which means that there is no other possible interpretation of the evidence. Few things in the world can be proven.)

Besides summarising the argument, you can use a conclusion section **to reflect on the implications** of your findings for the theory or for practical applications. You can also suggest avenues for further research — but make sure that these are well thought out. *More research is needed* is not worth saying — give a specific way that it should be researched further and the reason(s) that further research is needed.

Some advice on writing clearly in academic register

Precision in writing is important because it forces you to think clearly about the subject and helps you to communicate clearly with the reader. The best way to be clear is to **use the right words for the right purpose**, to **make sentences and thoughts complete,** and to **not overcomplicate things**. Remember, it's your responsibility to make your meanings clear to the reader, not their responsibility to decode your writing. Don't write just to be understood, write *so that you cannot be misunderstood*.

The first draft is not necessarily the time to worry about all these things. Writing should be thought of as a process that relies heavily on revision and editing. You might find it most helpful to get the ideas out in a rough sketch or first draft, then use the revising/editing process to pay more attention to the form of the essay and whether it expresses all of your ideas as clearly as possible.

Vocabulary
Use appropriate vocabulary from the module and words that you are comfortable in using precisely. Don't try to make your language 'flowery' or 'special' by using 'big' or rare words where everyday words would do. **Examiners prefer clarity over verbosity.**

Take care with words that you use to describe theories/positions etc. These include terminology like *theory* and *hypothesis* and **speech act verbs** used to attribute ideas/positions/information to a source. For example, if you read X in Smith's book and want to report on it, consider whether it is most accurate to say that:

- Smith **observes** that X (e.g. they reported a fact about language that may not have been reported before)
- Smith **proposes** that X (i.e. it's a hypothesis that can be tested)
- Smith **concludes** that X (i.e. X is the outcome of Smith's consideration of some evidence).

Notice and reflect on such verbs in the reading you do in order to use them more precisely in your own writing.

Skip words like *aim* and *attempt* in contexts like *In this essay I attempt to account for…* This gives the reader the impression that you think you might have failed to account for the phenomenon. Show confidence in your argument.

Often student writers use words like *obviously* when what they're talking about is anything but. If you make your argument clearly, **self-congratulatory evaluative terms and intensifiers** like the following will be redundant:

simply, easily, strongly, clearly, naturally, intuitive(ly), obviously, certainly, very

Sentences
Make sure your sentences are **complete**. (Sometimes it's ok to have incomplete sentences. Like this. For emphasis. But that's rarely appropriate in academic style.) Edit overly long or overly complicated sentences to simplify them or make them into several sentences. Writing is more readable if sentence length and structure varies through the paragraph.

It should always be clear how each sentence within a paragraph relates to the last one, so make use of **signposts** like *also*, *consequently*, *thus*, *in contrast* and so on. Using deictic items like *this/that/these* and *such* (e.g. *such arguments support the hypothesis that...*) also add to **coherence** but make sure that it is clear what these words refer to.

Your mark is more likely to be reduced if you don't have enough information in your essay than if you don't have enough words. Plenty of essays that meet the word limit don't achieve what they need to achieve in terms of information and argument. Make sure to pack as much information as you can into each sentence in order to make the most of the word limit:

> **Try to edit out 'empty beginnings'** such as *it is important to note that* or *it is the case that* or *there is/are*. Such things rarely add to your point. E.g.:

> 9 words: There are several reasons why Smith rejects Johnson's claim.
> 7 words, more info: Smith has three objections to Johnson's claim.

> The **passive voice** is not 'illegal' in academic writing, but in some cases it can make your writing less clear or overly wordy. Note how an 'agentless' passive like the first example has less information than the shorter active-voice example:

> 9 words: Research was conducted on this matter in the 1990s.
> 8 words, more info: Thompson (1992, 1993) conducted research on this matter.

> Look for places where **nouns or adjectives might be replaced by the related verb** in order to save words or make the claim clearer.

> 15 words: Doe (1990) did research on Croydon accents, but Bloggs (2000) was doubtful of Doe's methods.
> 11 words, same info
>   Doe (1990) researched Croydon accents, but Bloggs (2000) doubted Doe's methods.
> 15 words/more info:
>   Doe (1990) researched Croydon accents, but Bloggs (2000) claimed that Doe had ignored age effects.

> A simple approach to all of the above is to **look for 'empty' verbs** like forms of *be* and *do* (as well as 'light' uses of verbs like *have, take, make*).

Use appropriate tenses.
> The **future tense** is rarely appropriate in argument essays. In the introduction, you don't need to say *This essay will demonstrate X*. By the time the reader is reading your words, the essay <u>already</u> concerns X, so: *This essay demonstrates X.*

> In **reporting the work of other people**, keep in mind whether you're talking about the work itself or its author and whether the claim you're talking about is still true or not.

Author-focused, past:

> Bloggs (1995) wrote a paper that argued that apes have senses of humour.

Work-focused, present (usually better):

> Bloggs 1995 argues that apes have a sense of humour.
>
> [Note that the lack of parentheses here indicates that you're referring to Bloggs's book, not to Bloggs the person. See **Guidance on reference and citations**]

Numerals 1 2 3…

Spell out numerals lower than ten when they occur in text. (Personal tastes vary on this. Some prefer spelling any number that is not a compound word — e.g., *twenty* but *23*.) It's also reader-friendly to **spell out any numeral that occurs at the beginning of a sentence** (or re-write the sentence to avoid putting the number at the start.)

Punctuation

Here's a short guide to types of punctuation that are often misused in student work. If you (or your tutors) think you need more help, we recommend *The Penguin Guide to Punctuation*.

Exclamation mark !

In general, exclamation marks are considered to be unnecessary in academic writing, since they imply emotive expression, rather than cool reason. If you absolutely must use one, try to limit yourself to one a year.

Comma ,

The comma is used to break up a sentence so that the reader can see the relationships of the words and phrases within. There are some acceptable stylistic variations on comma use, so we won't try to give too many rules here — but here's a frequent misuse of commas in student writing:

Never use a comma to separate the subject and predicate of a sentence, no matter how long the subject is.

> Wrong: The cat that sat on the rat that lived in a hat that sat on a mat, asked me to say 'hello' to you.

> Right: The cat that sat on the rat that lived in a hat that sat on a mat asked me to say 'hello' to you.

In other words, throw away the 'rule' that you should put commas anywhere where you take a breath. Commas are about grammatical structure, not about lung capacity. If it seems too awkward without the comma, that's a signal that you should try to re-write the sentence.

Semi-colon ;

Semi-colons can be used as an alternative to *and* or *but* (etc.), bringing together two ideas that constitute grammatically complete sentences. They can imply academic neutrality — as when the semi-colon is used in the following sentence, rather than the conjunction *but*:

> Religion is based on faith; science is based on experience.

Semi-colons are also used to separate items on a list when at least some of those items already have commas in them, as in:

> Domestic central heating can take many forms: gas heated boilers serving radiators installed throughout the house; oil-fired central heating, also servicing radiators through heating water in a boiler, but having an external oil supply; electric storage heaters served by 'off peak' electricity and switched on at peak periods; ...

(Note, though, that this list might have been more readable if it were in a bullet-list format.)

Quotation marks (inverted commas) ' ' and " "
Quotation marks must be used wherever someone else's words appear within your paragraphs. However, note that quotations of more than three lines require left- and right-hand margin indentation and no quotation marks. See the **Guidance on reference and citations** section for more information.

The usual British standard is to use single quotation marks 'like this', rather than double ones "like this".

When you have a quotation within a quotation, use double marks for the inner quotation (if you're using single marks on the quotation as a whole):

James said 'Virginia said "Hello!"'

Quotation marks should not be used for emphasis. Sometimes authors use quotation marks as so-called 'scare quotes' — that is, to distance themselves from the words they are using. For example, in

Homeopathic 'science' is popular in Devon.

the author communicates the opinion that homeopathy is not scientific. Such use of inverted commas can seem sarcastic and rather informal for academic writing, where argumentation needs to rest on more than implied opinion. Note, however, that it is okay to use inverted commas after *so-called* or to imply *so-called* when the result is not sarcastic — as in the use of *'scare quotes'* in the last paragraph.

There are also special uses of single, inverted commas in linguistic writing. See **Special formatting for linguistic writing** in this manual.

Dash —
Dashes are useful for marking very pertinent explanations/comments that would be removed one step further if brackets were used instead. For example:

The knight can move in any direction — forwards, backwards or to either side — but it always has to move three squares at a time.

Developments in the genetic engineering of plant reproduction have contributed to an increase in harvests — the so-called green revolution.

Dashes should never follow colons or other punctuation. Try to be consistent about whether you put spaces around the dash or not.

Hyphen -
Hyphens are small dashes used to connect separate orthographic words so that they are treated as a single word. For many hyphenated words, different options are available in dictionaries — for example *pot belly*, *pot-belly* and *potbelly*. Pick one option and stick with it.

Hyphens are added in most cases where a complex unit (e.g. a noun phrase, a multi-word adjective, etc.) is used as a modifier before a noun. So, *The garden is well tended* but *It is a well-tended garden.*

<u>When writing about ages</u>: Note the particular hyphenation for *X year(s) old* and similar measurements of age.

Where it's a description that's not preceding a noun, don't use hyphens. You can tell if it's this type because the *years* will be plural (unless the number before it is *one*; if so, you can change the number to test whether it should be hyphenless).

> Jimmy is four years old

Where it is used before a noun, the above hyphenation rule applies, so:

> my four-year-old cousin

When *year old* is used as part of a compound noun, it is always hyphenated:

> Any four-year-old could do this.

Apostrophe '
As our former colleague Larry Trask once wrote to our students:

> [I]t is a blunt fact that the incorrect use of apostrophes will make your writing look illiterate more quickly than almost any other kind of mistake. If you find apostrophes difficult, you will just have to grit your teeth and get down to work.

There are three uses for apostrophes in English:
- to mark possession on nouns
- to contract a written form
- to mark an unusual plural - *very rarely.*

• Possessives
An apostrophe is used in a possessive form of a noun, as in *Esther's family* or *Janet's cigarettes*. The basic rule is: a possessive form is spelled with *'s* at the end.

There are three **exceptions**:
First, a plural noun that already ends in *s* takes only an apostrophe, not an additional *s*:

> *my parents' wedding*   *the ladies' room*
> *both players' injuries*   *two weeks' work*

Second, a name ending in *s* takes only an apostrophe if the possessive form is not pronounced with an extra *s*. Hence:

> *Socrates' philosophy*   but   *Thomas's job*

Ulysses' companions   but   *Dickens's novels*

The final class of exceptions is pronouns, which never have apostrophes for the possessive:

He lost <u>his</u> book.   *Which seats are <u>ours</u>?*
The bull lowered <u>its</u> head.   *<u>Whose</u> are these spectacles?*

Note in particular the spelling of possessive *its*. **The possessive form of *it* never takes an apostrophe.** (There is an English word spelled *it's*, of course, but this is not a possessive: it's the contracted form of *it is* or of *it has*.)

The same goes for possessive ***whose***: this **cannot be spelled as *who's***, though again there is a word *who's*: a contraction of *who is* or of *who has*, as in *Who's your friend?*

• Contractions
The apostrophe is used in writing contractions, that is, shortened forms of words from which one or more letters have been omitted. In standard English, this generally happens only with a small number of conventional items, mostly involving verbs, e.g.

we will → we'll   *do not → don't.*

It is not *wrong* to use contractions in formal writing, but you should use them sparingly, since they tend to make your writing appear less than fully formal.

• Unusual plurals
Many people feel tempted to use apostrophes when pluralising something that, for some reason, looks strange with an –*s* on the end. But get over it – apostrophes are not correct in these cases. For example:

She's trying to keep up with the Joneses.
There are four Steves and three Julies in my class.
- Do not write things like *Jones's*, *Steve's* or *Julie's* if you are merely talking about more than one person or thing with that name.

This research was carried out in the 1970s.
She owns thousands of DVDs.
- Do not use an apostrophe in pluralising dates or capitalised acronyms.

In the rare case in which you need to pluralise a letter of the alphabet or some other unusual form which would become unrecognisable with a plural ending stuck on it, you could use the apostrophe, if you can't find an alternative way to phrase it:

Mind your p's and q's.
It is bad style to spatter e.g.'s and i.e.'s through your writing.

Guidance on reference and citations

We use reference and citation to give credit where credit is due — to acknowledge the work that's come before ours. **Failure to use references and citations correctly can result in charges of plagiarism** or academic dishonesty, so it is most important that you are careful to present correct and complete information on the sources you use. The guidelines below are general practice in linguistics and are based on the Harvard style of reference. Some stylistic variations (especially in punctuation) can be found in different linguistic publishers' styles. You may use any Harvard-like (author-date) style that is found in scholarly linguistics books and articles, but you must choose a single style that provides all the information discussed below and then follow that style consistently.

Any sources used in your essay must be presented in two places:
1. citation within the text, and
2. an entry in the References list.

In the Harvard-style norm used in general linguistics, citation is stated as AUTHOR (YEAR: PAGE) in the text, rather than as bibliographical entries in the footnotes. (**Please do not use bibliographical footnotes in English Language essays**.) The following pages give detailed instructions on **how to present quotations, citations, and reference lists**.

QUOTATIONS

✍**How are quotations marked/formatted?**
Short, direct quotations from authors should be enclosed in single inverted commas within your paragraph. Always cite the author(s), year, and page references for any quotations.

If the quotation comes at the end of your own sentence (as in the examples below), then it is the British norm to punctuate the end of your sentence but not the end of the quoted sentence. The exception is when the quotation ends with a needed question mark or exclamation mark — leave their punctuation and don't doubly punctuate. So:

RIGHT: Nim Chimpsky wrote 'I love bananas' (1988: 54).
RIGHT: Nim Chimpsky (1988: 54) wrote 'I love bananas'.
RIGHT: Nim Chimpsky (1988: 59) is adamant that 'Saussure rules!'
RIGHT: Nim Chimpsky is adamant that 'Saussure rules!' (1988: 59).

NOT OUR STYLE: Nim Chimpsky wrote 'I love bananas.' (1988: 54).
NOT OUR STYLE: Nim Chimpsky wrote 'I love bananas.' (1988: 54)
NOT OUR STYLE: Nim Chimpsky (1988: 54) wrote 'I love bananas.'.
NOT OUR STYLE: Nim Chimpsky (1988: 59) is adamant that 'Saussure rules!'.

Longer quotations of more than three lines should be in their own paragraph, indented at both margins. This is called *block quotation*. In MS-Word you can do this with the 'Indent' button (among other ways). That button in the toolbar shows a blue rightward arrow 'indenting' some lines. Figure 1 shows an example of block quotation.

> Both Jones (2002) and Mettinger (1994) label the frame "X *rather than* Y" as "comparative." Jones creates a subcategory called a "preferential comparative." Commenting on whether or not this frame should be classed as "negated antonymy," he claims,
>
> X rather than Y still reflects some sort of comparison, especially when considered in its literal sense. It also features *than*, the most reliable lexical signal of Comparative Antonymy. Arguably this makes it more analogous with sentences belonging to the class of Negated Antonymy. (Jones 2002:79)
>
> It is clear that *rather* tends to express preference (as the section on "replacives" shows). However *than* specifically expresses comparison only if conjoined with *more* or *less*.

Figure 1. Example of block quotation from Davies (2012) in *Journal of English Language & Linguistics*

Do not use special font styles, like bold or italic, to mark quotations — no matter what you were told to do at school. Your aim is to create a professional-looking document, and you won't see such formatting changes in most published writing.

You must present the quotation *exactly* as it is written in the original text. **If you must change anything in the quotation** (for instance, in order to make the quoted material fit into the syntax of your sentence or to clarify the referent of a pronoun), then the changed material is inserted in square brackets, as below where *[Chimpsky]* in the quotation replaces *he* in the original.

Koko Gorilla responds that 'clearly [Chimpsky] has gone bananas' (1990: 3).

If you delete anything in the quotation (such as a parenthetical remark), then insert […] in place of the deleted material.

✍When should I use quotations?

Always ask yourself whether the material is worth quoting directly. In essays, you can often make your point **better** by paraphrasing the original (and thereby demonstrating that you have understood it). Use quotations to *support* your argument, rather than to *present* your argument.

Don't just *plonk* a quotation into a paragraph. Instead, make sure that your prose leads into and away from the quotation — just as you would connect your own sentences within a paragraph.

Bad: We should eat more bananas. 'Bananas taste great' (Simian 2006: 12).

Better: We should eat more bananas, since, as Simian (2006: 12) notes, 'bananas taste great'.

(Best would be to not use a quotation for something so trivial.)

An essay that has too many quotations is much harder to read and paraphrasing the original demonstrates your learning much better.

CITATIONS IN TEXT

✎What should be cited?

Whenever you present **an idea that is not your own** or **real-life data** or **a fact that is not common knowledge**, you are expected to cite its source in the text. Citation is **essential where you have given an exact quote, statistics, or examples from a source**, or where you have replicated a procedure described in print.

You need not have quoted directly from the source in order to cite it. Over-quotation in an essay is a sign that the student has not sufficiently understood and synthesised the material. Under-citation is indication of either lack of research or plagiarism.

✎How should a citation look?

The **citation form** is author's surname, followed by the year of publication, and sometimes the page number:

> Proudfoot (1988) argues that few police officers are truly flat-footed.
> Seventy per cent of the world's police officers wear arch supports (Trodd 1995: 66).

See below for more on where the parentheses go and when you need a page number.

Make sure you **cite the author and not the editor** of the work. For example, if Proudfoot wrote a chapter of a book edited by Trodd, you must cite Proudfoot, who is the author of the ideas/words you're citing, not Trodd, who didn't have those ideas, but just did the admin of putting together a book. (There's more about edited sources in **The references section (bibliography)** below.)

If there are **two authors**, make sure that you include both their names *in the order that they occur on the source* — e.g. Smith and Jones (1938). If there are **three or more authors**, then you may use *et al.* (from Latin *et alii*) to mean 'and others'. (Note that *et* is not an abbreviation, but *al.* is.) However, it is good form to list all of the authors' surnames the first time the item is cited — especially if the authors' names are used outside brackets. (Whether or not you use the 'Oxford comma' — i.e. the comma before *and* in a list of three or more items — is a matter of personal choice. Just be sure to practise your choice consistently.)

> Doe, Smith, and Jones (1967) argued that banana peels are inherently funny. In making that argument, Doe et al. broke new ground in the study of humour.

If you cite **more than one item by a given author published in the same year**, then you must distinguish them by *consistently* using a letter (an 'adscript') after the date. The same adscript *must be after the date in the reference list*.

> In three related works, Bloggs (2008a, 2008b, 2008c) argues that…

Do not use an adscript just because a secondary source in which you read about Bloggs 2008c used one. If only one of Bloggs's many 2008 items is in your references list, then you shouldn't use the adscript.

Occasionally, you may need to refer to **two authors with the same surname**. If the works you are citing for them are from different years, then Doe (1997) and Doe (1998)

will suffice to distinguish John Doe's 1997 article from Jane Doe's 1998 book. If you refer to separate **same-year** publications by Jane and John Doe, then they must be distinguished in citations by the use of their given names or initials (if they have different initials), as in:

> Jane Doe (1998) has amassed much data to contradict the Gullibility Hypothesis (as proposed by John Doe 1998).

If the source does not have an identifiable author, you should identify the source by the first thing that appears in the references list for that item (see below). For example, if *Longman Advanced Dictionary of English* is listed under L in your references list, you can cite it with its full name or *Longman* (if there are no other Longmans under L in your references list), since that will allow the reader to find it there. If you use an abbreviation for the source, make sure to introduce the abbreviation the first time you mention the source — e.g. *Longman Advanced Dictionary of English* (henceforth LADE).

✍When should page numbers be cited?

Page numbers are required with citations when material is directly quoted and should also be used where fine details (such as statistics) and verbatim examples are cited. When you are reporting on general aspects of the argument or study that you are citing, page numbers are not needed. (It's generally safer to include them than to skip them.)

✍What punctuation should I use in citations? Where do the brackets go?

Brackets around a citation, or part of a citation, indicate that the information within the brackets is not part of the grammatical sentence. That is, you could read the sentence without reading out the material in brackets and it would still make sense. So:

> Saturn smells like potatoes (Spuds 2007).
> Spuds (2007) has claimed that Saturn smells like potatoes.
> Spuds has gone on record that 'Potatoes are what Saturn smells like' (2007: 38).

One can make a distinction between a work and its author in this way:

> Jackson (2008) has shifted her view considerably since Jackson 1986.

In this case, 2008 is in brackets because it provides information to help the reader know how you (the writer) know what Jackson's position is. On the other hand, 1986 is not in brackets because it is not deletable: to remove it would make the sentence nonsensical since we need the whole of *Jackson 1986* in order to identify the relevant work, not just the person.

With the exception of long, indented quotations, the **citation** should be treated as part of a sentence and included within that sentence's punctuation.

> Right: Saturn smells like potatoes (Spuds 2007).
> Wrong: Saturn smells like potatoes. (Spuds 2007)

In block (indented) quotations, the citation goes at the end, in brackets, but outside the quotation's punctuation. See Figure 1 above.

✍What if the citation refers to most of the material in my paragraph?

If the citation refers to material in more than a single sentence, then it's probably better to introduce it in a non-parenthetical way when you start writing about that source. Otherwise, you may mislead your reader into thinking that the citation refers only to a single sentence. So something like:

> Whitehall (1998) provides a cogent argument for banning bananas. She starts from the premise that...

In this case, any further need to refer to Whitehall in this paragraph can be done in an abbreviated way, providing that no other citation has intervened. For example, if you provide a quotation from Whitehall 1998 a sentence or two after introducing that source, then you could follow the quotation with just the page citation (p. 230) rather than (Whitehall 1998: 230). Just make sure it's clear for your reader whose ideas and whose pages you are presenting.

✍Should I use *ibid.* or *op.cit.* or other abbreviations instead of author's name/date?

Please don't. Using these abbreviations makes the reader do extra work, trying to find the last citation in the text.

✍What if I need to cite a work that I didn't read?

You should aim to refer to primary literature (original works in their original form), not to secondary literature (someone else's summary of the work), particularly by the time you reach the final year of your degree (and definitely if you are a postgraduate student). Sometimes, however, you may be unable to obtain a primary work and thus must make use of a secondary reference. When you do so, you must acknowledge the source of this secondary reference, as in the examples below:

> Colt (1987, cited in Smith and Horse 2008) puts forward the hypothesis that...

> Colt (1987, quoted in Smith and Horse 2008: 45) claims that ...

In these examples, Colt is the name of the author whose work you have not seen but whose ideas or quotation you're using; Smith and Horse are the authors of the work you have read about Colt's work. <u>We ask that undergraduate students using such secondary citations include only Smith and Horse 2008 in their references lists in such cases and not Colt 1987</u>, as the examiner will be interested in seeing the list of what you actually read, rather than what you read plus what you read about. Postgraduate students should include both, when necessary.

Note the distinction between *quoted* and *cited* in the examples above and use *quoted* when you are using the original source's words. Make sure in these cases that it is absolutely clear which words/ideas belong to the primary author (Colt) and which to the secondary one(s). **Do not** just say *in*, rather than *quoted/cited in*, as that would mean that Colt 1987 was a chapter within Smith and Horse 2008.

THE REFERENCES LIST (BIBLIOGRAPHY OF WORKS CITED)

✍What should be listed in the references list?

<u>ALL and ONLY the items that were read by you **and** cited in your text.</u> Do not include all that you have read, only what you have mentioned in text. Do not include sources that you have presented as 'cited/quoted in' other sources. When editing, make sure that all items in the references are mentioned in the text and *vice versa.*

✍How is the references list formatted?

At the end of your document, you must have a section entitled **References** (not 'bibliography'). This should not have a section number, and it does not need to start on a fresh page (except in long works, such as dissertations).

Each item included in your References list should be listed **alphabetically** by the first word in the reference entry, typically the first author's surname, **and then chronologically** (earliest to latest) where there is more than one work by the same author, **then by title** where you have two works by the same author in the same year. If two authors share a surname, then look to the first name or initial to determine which should be alphabetised first. If you have items by an author alone, and also with co-authors, then **that author's co-authored items come after their single-authored ones**, and these are then listed in alphabetical order for the second author's surname.

The list should be presented with **hanging indentation**, as below. That is, the first line of an entry comes all the way to the left margin, and subsequent lines are indented — this helps the reader find the works that you've cited.

> Bloggs, Joseph. 1988. *Having fun with linguistics*. Toytown: Noddy Press.
> Bloggs, Joseph. 1990. How to cheat in exams. In A. Fiddler (ed.), *Beating the system*. Hell: Purgatory Press, 1–19.
> Bloggs, Joseph, and Jane Doe. 1986. Having fun cheating in linguistics exams. *Journal of Dubious Behaviour* 34: 345–414.

Do NOT try to achieve hanging indentation using hard returns, tabs, or spaces. On the MS-Word menu bar, go to Format, then Paragraph, click on the tab for Indents and Spacing and under Indentation, use the drop-down menu labelled 'Special' and select 'Hanging'. (Or click and drag the left-margin markers on the Ruler.) Ask for help if you don't understand how to do this, as it can be really annoying for the examiner if this isn't done right.

✍Should there be sub-headings for different kinds of sources?

Generally, no. Books, websites, journal articles, and recordings should all be listed in one list, alphabetically by first author's surname (or first word where there is no author).

An exception is if you have used some sources as the data for analysis. For example, an essay on the use of pronouns by the Romantic poets might have a first list entitled 'Data sources' that gives the information on the poetry that you analysed, followed by a list entitled 'References' for all of the sources that you consulted for theory, background information, etc.

THE STRUCTURE AND FORMATTING OF A REFERENCE ENTRY

The information in a reference entry should make it easy for anyone to find a copy of the sources you used.

Every reference entry for every type of source is based on the same formula: the following four elements in this order:
- (i) Author's name
- (ii) Date of publication
- (iii) Title of the work that the author wrote (be careful: it might not be the whole book)
- (iv) Source of the work (where/by whom it was published — this is the item that needs most attention when considering different types of sources)

You can devise an appropriate style of reference for any source by thinking about it in terms of these four elements.

Let's look at each of these elements in turn, with attention to how to identify and present the information for different types of sources.

(i) Author's name, with surname first: Bloggs, Joseph P.
Titles like *Doctor* or *Professor* are omitted. In the case of **multiple authors**, keep the names in the same order as they appear on the work. Second and following authors can be presented with surname last (but they are still alphabetised by their surname, as that's how they were cited in the text).

> Bloggs, Joseph P., Hazel Nütz, and Madonna [...]

In Linguistics, the usual style is to give the authors' given names, as they are presented on the publication. (This is the recommendation of the Committee for the Status of Women in Linguistics, because people tend to assume authors are men if they see only initials.) In other fields, particularly Psychology, the style is to use initials only.

If the source is a chapter in a book, an article in a journal, a piece in a newspaper (etc.), you need to give the **author** of the work, not the **editor** of the publication in which the work appeared. In the case of edited books, this means that you are citing the author of the chapter from which your material came, not the editor's name from the front of the book.

If the source has **no author's name**, but is published on behalf of an **organisation** (e.g. a pamphlet for a charity), then the organisation's name can serve as the author. If the organisation's name starts with *the*, do not count the *the* when alphabetising. If it was clearly written by an individual, or from an individual's viewpoint, but the author remains anonymous, then it is acceptable to use **Anonymous** as the name of the author, but do not over-use this. If you can't tell who the author is, you should question whether it's a reliable source.

Some sources, **such as major dictionaries** that have a large editorial staff or news stories without a by-line **may be included without an author**. In this case, put the title first and the publication year after it, and alphabetise by title. If the title starts with *A* or

The, do not include it in the alphabetisation — e.g. *Oxford English Dictionary, The* should be listed under 'O'.

See below for further advice on finding the author for an Internet source.

(ii) Publication year
The publication date is the **copyright date** of the current edition. Some copyright pages also list dates of re-printings. These can be ignored.

Where you have **more than one work by the same author** (or the same group of authors) **published in a given year**, use the 'letter adscript' system (1988a, 1988b, 1988c). If **no publication date is available**, put 'n.d.', which stands for 'no date'. (Be careful about overusing such sources, though. If there really is no date, then it is not likely to be a reputable source. If it is a reputable source, then perhaps you haven't looked in the right place for the date.)

If **the copyright date of a work is much different from when it was actually authored**, you may in some cases wish to acknowledge this. For instance, if a work in German is translated into English in 2002, but it is important to note in your text that it was originally published in 1842, you could indicate this in the following manner, using the (1842/2002) date in the citations as well.

> Deutschmann, Kara. 1842/2002. *Travels with my translator*. Trans. by Ann
> Englishwoman. Oxford: Germanic Press.

Punctuation of the date varies in different publications. Chose one of the following styles and stick to it:

> O'Book, Author. 1902. *Title.* […]
> O'Book, Author (1902) *Title.* […]

It is generally not necessary to include the month or day for a journal article, as the work can be located using the volume and issue number given later in the reference entry. However, **for newspapers, blog postings, correspondence (etc.)** it may be useful to give a full date, e.g. (29 May 2007). If you do that, be sure to use the date in the same form in the citations for that work.

See below for information on finding dates on Internet sources.

(iii) Title of the work you are citing
Capitalise the first letter of the title. After this, capitalisation is a matter of stylistic preference. Some American Styles Capitalise Content Words in a Title; British styles often avoid doing so in titles of articles, but do so in titles of books, and <u>always in titles of journals</u>. Make sure that you choose one convention and adhere to it.

Whole publications — i.e. books, entire periodicals, films: Where the source you're citing is a whole thing unto itself, not part of a bigger publication/source, put the title in *italics* (or <u>underlined</u> if the assignment is hand-written). This style would be used for a whole book (as opposed to a chapter), a whole journal (as opposed to an article in it), a film, a television series (as opposed to a single episode or sketch), an entire website (as opposed to a page, see below) or an album of music (as opposed to a song).

Parts of wholes — e.g. article in a journal or chapter in an edited book: The title of publications-within-publications should be in plain roman font (no italics). You can enclose such titles in single inverted commas, but you don't need to (just use your style consistently). This style also applies to music singles (as opposed to albums), episodes or sketches within a television series, single pages/posts on a website, and so forth.

> Authra, Joanna. 2008. Syntax is the best. In J. Authra and K. Mothra (eds.),
> *Everybody loves syntax* [...]

For a **book review** (in a journal) whose only title is a reference entry for the book under review, use the following format:

> Critic, James. 2008. Review of *Title of book* by Author O'Book. [+ journal/website details]

For **websites**, use the title at the top of the page.

(iv) The source of the work
The nature of the work's source varies according to what kind of work it is:

Authored books: Give the city of publication and the publisher. If there is a list of cities, use only the first or the closest one. An example of a book entry:

> Doe, Priscilla. 1965. *The little adverb that could*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

New edition or translation of a book: If someone else has worked on a book after the author, they are acknowledged after the title and before the source information (as above). E.g.:

> Chimpsky, Nim. 2007. *The complete works of Nim Chimpsky*. Ed. by Oran Gutan.
> London: Simian Press.
> Deutschmann, Kara. 2002. *Travels with my translator*. Trans. by Ann Englishwoman.
> Oxford: Germanic Press.

Articles or reviews in journals/periodicals: Give the name of the journal (in *italics* with initial capital letters on content words), followed by the volume, issue number, and inclusive page numbers of the article. The punctuation depends on the style you have chosen to adopt, but possible styles are:

Colon style:
> Bloggs, Joseph P. 1998. All I know about nouns. *Linguistic Inquiry* 20 (3): 455–79.

Comma style:
> Mouse, Mickey. 1966. Review of *The little adverb that could* by P. Doe. *Language* 67, 234–236.

Note the two styles of writing page numbers above too. You can leave out the 'hundreds' and 'thousands' digits if they are repeated (so *455–79* means 'pages 455 to 479) or not (as in *234–236*). That's your choice; just be consistent.

Chapter in an edited book: Give title of the chapter, the editor of the collection (indicated as an editor), the title of the book (in italics), the city of publication and the publisher, and the inclusive page numbers for the chapter.

> Grommit, Wallace. 1942. Putting Descartes before discourse. In Theodora Banes (ed.), *Linguists at large*. London: Macmillan, 235–53.

If you cite **several articles from the same collection**, you may choose to cross-reference the articles to a single source entry. To do this, list the collection as a separate entry, and then refer to it by editor and year in the entries for the articles, including the page numbers for the article as well. For example, the following articles by Bloggs and Doe are in the collection edited by Redactrix.

> Bloggs, Joseph P. 1998. Why I like nouns. In Redactrix (1998), 23–32.
> Doe, Jane. 1998. Why I like adjectives. In Redactrix (1998), 33–45.
> Redactrix, Marie (ed.). 1998. *Why we like words*. Berlin: Wortliebe.

Websites: For any website reference, the source includes the domain name (URL) *plus* <u>the date that you last accessed the site</u> in brackets, at the end. This is necessary because websites can change — so you need to be explicit that you are only claiming that the info that you found was on that site on that particular date.

> Robot, I. M. 2006-2019. *View from the cogs*. http://viewfrom.blogspot.com [27 May 2019]

If you are referring to a particular page or post from a larger website, then the title of the whole website is part of the source too, much like the title of a journal is part of the source of the article's entry.

> Robot, I. M. 2009 (26 May). My thoughts on androids. *View from the cogs*. http://viewfrom.blogspot.com/androids [27 May 2019]

Film, DVDs, audio recordings, software: The 'publisher' in this case is the production company. For example:

> Pie, Tweety (2003) *The funky sounds of Birdie Song* [audio CD]. London: Capital Records.
> [This one refers to the whole album.]

> Pie, Tweety (2003) Happy birthday. *The funky sounds of Birdie Song* [audio CD]. London: Capital Records.
> [This one refers to a particular song on the album.]

> *Little Britain* (2005). Series 3 DVD. BBC Television.

Television, radio broadcasts: The 'publisher' in this case is the broadcaster. As for websites, if you are citing something that has not been published (in CD/DVD/etc. form), then you should indicate the broadcast date.

> *Just a minute* (2018). BBC Radio Four. 13 September, 20:30.

✍Some notes on internet sources

You are encouraged to use print sources wherever possible, as most work published in print has been subjected to tighter editorial control than that published on the web. <u>Note that print sources accessed on the internet (e.g. through Electronic Journals or eBooks on the Library's website) still count as printed sources.</u> You should give the information in their reference entries as if you read the paper version, because you are not reading a different edition of the work, you're just accessing it in an electronic way.

If you do use websites (because information there is not available in print sources), **do so with a critical eye**. The web has some reputable sources, but you could unwittingly quote from a student project (which might have failed) or marketing information passing itself off as 'news' or personal tirades.

On the web, it can be harder to find information on authors or dates of publication. In general, <u>if this information is hard to find, it is a good sign that the site should not be treated as a reputable source</u>. If you have landed on a site via a search engine and can't find the author or date, <u>try stripping back parts of the URL</u> in order to see if a page that is higher in the site's hierarchy has the information. For instance, if the URL that you've reached is http://abc.com/def/ghi/xyz, delete everything to the right of the rightmost slash / (so you have http://abc.com/def/ghi) and see if the information is there. Keep stripping off bits until there are no more slashes to the right of the domain name (at .com in this case). Take care in interpreting the information you find about authorship, though. For instance, if something is on Jane Bloggs's site, it doesn't necessarily mean that Jane wrote it.

And other types of sources?

The information here should give you basic guidelines for customising references for the sources you use. Some sources not discussed explicitly here (e.g. newspaper articles, reference works) might require that you tweak the format a bit. Just be sure that you include author-date-title-source and model the formatting after that used in the other entries. Remember that the point is to enable a reader to consult your source as conveniently as possible. If you're in doubt about how to do a reference, ask your tutor for advice.

Formatting your work for submission

Make sure your work is **easy to read** and leaves **plenty of space for feedback**.
Follow these instructions **unless** you have specific other instructions from your tutor.
Note: We strongly recommend that you use MS-Word for your submissions, which is available free for all students from:
https://www.sussex.ac.uk/its/services/software/owncomputer/office

- Use a standard (nothing 'fancy'), 12-point font in black.

- Use double line spacing and leave ample margins for comments. (The more space, the more helpful feedback you can get.) In MS-Word line spacing is under Home>Paragraph.

- Do not justify the right margin. (i.e. use left justification only; this makes it easier to read). The left-justification button in MS-Word is the one on the left here:

- Make sure page numbers appear at the top or bottom of every page (with the allowable exception of page 1).

- Make sure the first page has your identification (name or candidate number, depending on the assignment), the title of the piece, the name of the module, your seminar group (if it's coursework; e.g. 'Monday 11:00'), the tutor and the submission date.

  - You only need a separate title page for dissertations — for shorter essays, it's fine to put all this info at the top of the first page.

- **After you submit, double-check** that all figures (e.g. tree diagrams), special symbols (e.g. IPA) or formatting has come through. Turnitin transfers your work into a PDF, and we have occasionally had trouble with problems in the transmission of formatting. If there is missing formatting, contact your tutor as soon as possible.

Submitting your work

Most work is submitted electronically via Canvas. Occasionally (because of the format of the work), work may need to be submitted physically or via another platform. In those cases, you'll receive more specific instructions from your tutor.

When submitting work on Canvas:

- You'll find a link for submitting in the '**Assignments**' section on Canvas — see the menu on the left of the screen. The link to your submission may appear in other places on Canvas too — for instance, in your 'to-do list' in the right margin.

- There are **different types of submission** on Canvas. You might not notice the difference when submitting, but they are important to note for seeing your feedback:
  - **Canvas Online**: This is where non-contributory (formative) work is often submitted, and also what we use when the assignment has more than one part (e.g. a portfolio that requires you to submit many files). The tutor can comment on your work in the Canvas window or download it and re-upload it with feedback in the file. In the latter case, you'll receive the file back in the 'comments' section of the Canvas assignment page, and can download the file to see further feedback.

  - **Canvas Turnitin**: This is how most assignments are submitted. Submissions are meant to be anonymous, so leave your name off. When your work is submitted to Turnitin (a separate service from Canvas), it is converted into a PDF.

  - Check your work after submitting it. Make sure that diagrams, formatting and special fonts (e.g. IPA fonts) have been transferred correctly in the pdf. If there is a problem, let your tutor know immediately.

    Turnitin will give you a similarity report, which will show whether your work is 'too similar' to other student essays (from lots of universities) or to published work that Turnitin 'knows' about. Leave time so that you can make use of this information. Once you get the report you can explore the parts of your essay that were found to match another source and check if the material is properly quoted and attributed to a cited source. If you've submitted before the deadline, you can then make changes to the document. **Note that if you are submitting during the late period, you will not be able to replace your document.** You can submit a draft to Turnitin without submitting it to your module by using the Turnitin Draft Check Canvas site: https://canvas.sussex.ac.uk/courses/6596

- The Skills Hub has lots of resources on the technicalities of how to submit. See: https://student.sussex.ac.uk/assessment/submission

Submission deadlines

For most (not all) assignments, late work is accepted up to 7 days after the deadline, but that comes with a 10-mark penalty. That means that your work will be a whole classification level lower than it could have been. So, submit on time. If issues beyond your control are going to keep you from submitting on time, talk to your tutor or the Student Centre as soon as possible. Note that your tutor may be able to give you advice on what may be in your best interests in relation to the specific module/assessment, but they cannot grant extensions or penalty waivers – only the Student Centre can help you with that. For more on exceptional circumstances, see: https://student.sussex.ac.uk/assessment/exceptional-circumstances

In some cases where students have a "reasonable adjustment" due to disability, they may have a "lateness penalty waiver". This is not the same as having an extended deadline (although some students treat it as if it is). If you have a penalty-waiver, then you may submit work within the 7-day late period without a mark penalty. However, you cannot re-submit work then, for instance, if you've found that its Turnitin score is high or you forgot to include your references. So, keep in mind that submitting late does not have the same benefits as submitting on time, even with a penalty waiver.

Special formatting for linguistic writing

Here are some general pointers on how to format linguistic essays in a professional manner. Note that the formatting of linguistic examples as described here is required in all English Language modules.

This includes:
* How to format examples
* How to present examples in other languages/alphabets
* Appropriate ways to use *italics*, 'inverted commas', SMALL CAPS
* How to indicate different types of linguistic entity (words, meanings, sounds, features)
* How to use your word-processor efficiently in doing all of the above

Giving numbered linguistic examples (in their own 'paragraphs'):

When to do it:
* if the example is long (e.g., a sentence)
* if the example is complex (e.g., requiring translations, morphological marking, etc.)
* if you wish to refer to the example more than once
* if you want it to stand out to the reader for other reasons
* if you don't want to count it in your word count

How to do it:
The golden rule
Be consistent in style and consecutive in numbering across all examples.

Font style
Do not use special font styles like italics or bold, unless you are highlighting a part of the example for discussion or contrast. Just use plain roman font (or whatever font is appropriate to the language).

Spacing
Numbered examples that go on for more than one line can be single-spaced (unlike the rest of your essay). If the examples are well formatted, then it is probably not necessary to add blank lines before and after the examples.

Don't let page-breaks happen at crucial points inside the example (for example, between an example and its gloss — see below). Use the 'keep-with-next' feature in your word-processor. (Under the Home>Paragraph menu in MS-Word. Use this advice also for keeping section titles with the first paragraph of a section.)

Indenting examples
Whether you indent the first (numbered) line of an example is up to you. Subsequent lines of the example should be indented to where the first line of the actual example (not the number) begins. So:

    (1)   exampleexampleexampleexampleexampleexampleexampleexample
              exampleexampleexampleexampleexampleexampleexampleexample

Not:

> (1) exampleexampleexampleexampleexampleexampleexampleexampleexample exampleexampleexampleexampleexampleexampleexampleexample

This is called a *hanging indentation*, and your word-processor can be set to do it automatically for you. See the Format/Paragraph menu on MS-Word.

Numbering examples

Every example is numbered in sequence. Use Arabic numerals (1, 2, 3) and enclose the numbers in parentheses (round brackets). The number is separated from the example by a tab.

When discussing the example in your text, refer to it by its bracketed number. Avoid starting sentences with the bracketed number, by saying things like *Example (4) shows...* (rather than starting with *(4) shows...*).

When proof-reading, make sure:

- that the numbers are still in sequence. You can do this automatically in MS-Word by using the numbering feature and making sure that it 'continues from previous list' (see the formatting menu for Bullets and Numbering).
- that the numbers in the text still refer to the right examples. It is possible to have the example numbers (nearly) automatically update if you use a special feature of MS-Word: **Cross-references** (in the Insert menu — if not there, you must add it through the Customise feature). For instructions on how to do this, see: https://support.office.com/en-gb/article/create-a-cross-reference-300b208c-e45a-487a-880b-a02767d9774b

Multi-part examples

If you have several examples that you want to discuss as a unit (perhaps because they are all examples of the same thing), then you can put them together under the same number, and then separate them by using another numbering system (typically, lower-case letters), as below.

> (4) a. The man is happy.
>   b. The woman is happy.
>   c. The child is happy.

Now you can refer to all of these as a unit (*The examples in (4) are about happiness*), or you can refer to them individually: *As (4b) shows,* happy *does not have a particular feminine form in English*. While the letters are not in brackets in the example, they should slip into the brackets when you refer to them in the text.

Example with free translation

A free translation is a rough translation into a grammatical expression in another language (English in our case). Use this if the example and its meaning (but not the details of the meanings of the parts) are all that is relevant.

Put the free translation in single inverted commas underneath or next to (if it's very short and fits on the same line) the example. For example,

(5)   Je t'aime. 'I love you.'

or

(6)   Je t'aime.
       'I love you.'

Example with interlinear morpheme-by-morpheme gloss
Use morpheme-by-morpheme glosses if you want/need to give the reader specific details of the structure of an expression in a language other than the language of the essay. It consists of three parts, each on different lines: (i) example, (ii) morpheme-by-morpheme gloss, (iii) free translation:

(7)   Je   n'   aim-e   rien.
       I.NOM   NEG   love-1SG   nothing
       'I love nothing.'

- Each morpheme in the example must be separated by a space (if it's at a word boundary) or a hyphen (if not).
- The morphemes in the example must line up with their translations in the next line. It is best to do this by setting appropriate tab stops for all the lines of the example, or by formatting your example in a table without borders.
- Content (referential) morphemes are translated in plain roman font. Grammatical morphemes/information are labelled with abbreviations and presented in small caps. The above example gives the information that the -*e* verb suffix signifies 1st-person-singular agreement.
- When a single foreign morpheme must be glossed by two or more English words, put full stops between those English words, as for the 'go up' in the following Basque example:

(8)   igan-go
       go.up-FUT
       'will go up'

- It is not always necessary to give full grammatical detail (e.g., breaking down *aime* to *aim-e*). Use your judgement based on what is relevant to your essay.
- Make sure that you provide a 'List of Abbreviations and Symbols' for any such things that you include in your translations. Put this after your title page (and table of contents if you have one).

For more information on interlinear glosses, see:
http://www.eva.mpg.de/lingua/resources/glossing-rules.php

Using examples within your text (as part of your paragraph)

When referring to a	*Use*	*Example*
linguistic expression (phrase, word, morpheme)	*italics* (or <u>underscore</u> if handwriting)	The word *lizard* has six letters.
meaning	'single inverted commas'	The Spanish word *perro* means 'dog'.
features (phonetic, grammatical, semantic) and psychological concepts	SMALL CAPITALS [features are often also put in square brackets]	The meaning of *cow* can be represented as [BOVINE, FEMALE, ADULT].
phonemes (in IPA)/ phonemic form	/slash/	The phoneme /t/ has many phonetic variations.
phonetic form (phones)	[square brackets]	The English phoneme /p/ is pronounced [pʰ] in some contexts.
bound morphemes	- non-breaking hyphen at the point where it binds to stem (plus italics, as above) [find non-breaking hyphens in the 'insert symbol' menu]	Adding *-ed* to most English verbs gives their past tense form.

Note:
- Sometimes words that are already italicised need to be marked in italics for another reason. For example, if the title of a book (which must be italicised) contains mention of a linguistic example (which must be italicised). In this case, you *undo* the italics to show the difference between the non-example words in the title and the example words.

  For example, Claudia Brugman's famous thesis about the word *over* is written as:
  The story of over: *polysemy, semantics, and the structure of the lexicon*.

- When presenting a foreign word, follow it immediately with its gloss in single inverted commas. Do not add commas or brackets. For example:
  Spanish *perro* 'dog' is of unknown origin.

Symbols used before linguistic examples

When an example is referring to something that's	Use	Example
ungrammatical, non-existent, or impossible	*	*happiestness
of debatable grammaticality/acceptability	?	?This book is very good, but it's worse than that one.
semantically ill-formed or pragmatically odd/inappropriate	#	#The colourless object is green.
a hypothesised proto-form (historical linguistics)	*	*ghel-

<u>Notes on using other alphabets (including the International Phonetic Alphabet)</u>
If your examples are in a completely different font (e.g., Greek, Russian, Japanese characters) from the language in which you are writing your essay (English, presumably), then it may not be necessary to put the examples into italics or underline them. Just make sure that they are visually distinguished from the rest of the text.

IPA characters are available with most standard MS-Word fonts. They can be accessed using Insert>Symbol and selecting 'IPA extensions'. Make sure that you select the same font in the Insert>Symbol box as you are using for the rest of your text. If you need to use a lot of IPA then it is easier to use an online site for typing IPA characters, such as ipa.typeit.org, and copying and pasting it into your document. You will still need to check that it is the same font style as the rest of your text.

Dissertation guidelines

Dissertation

A dissertation is a substantial piece of work on a single topic that gives evidence of independent and original work. The word limit for a University of Sussex BA dissertation in English Language is 8000 words and for an MA dissertation 10,000 words. You will determine your topic and method after discussion with the Research Proposal tutor.

For initial suggestions about possible topics for a BA dissertation, and for guidance about how to plan and carry out an independent research project, the following book is helpful:

> Wray, Alison and Aileen Bloomer (2013). *Projects in linguistics: a practical guide to researching language*, 3rd edition. Abingdon: Routledge.

Most dissertations in our field involve original analysis of some data. You formulate a **question** that your dissertation sets out to answer. The question may well form the title of the dissertation.

All dissertations are expected to show thorough familiarity with and understanding of a body of theoretical knowledge and to demonstrate **original thought/analysis.**

Preparing for the dissertation

You should start thinking about possible topics for your dissertation as early as possible and discuss them with your tutors. **Keep notes on possible research questions throughout your degree**. You will receive guidance on selecting your topic during the Research Proposal sessions. You will submit a preliminary topic for your dissertation during the Research Proposal module (by the date advised by the tutor), after which you will be assigned to a supervisor who will work with you.

Your supervisor will give advice on topic, reading, methodology, organisation of material, layout, and so on, but will not read drafts of your dissertation.

The parts of a dissertation document
- A **title page** that includes
  - the dissertation title
  - your candidate number. <u>Do NOT include your name</u>
  - module name and/or code
  - term of submission (e.g. Spring 2024)
- An **abstract** of 200–250 words that summarises the argument of your dissertation. This can sit on its own page between title page and body.
- The **body of the dissertation**. How this is internally structured will depend on your course and your topic. You should discuss this with your supervisor. <u>This is the only part that counts toward the word limit for the dissertation.</u>
  - Linguistic dissertations are divided into numbered, titled subsections.
  - You are allowed to use images, diagrams, tables, etc. if they support what you are saying in your writing. Any such illustrations should have numbers (e.g. Figure 1, Table 1) and captions and be discussed in the text.
- **References list** (bibliography). This should include <u>all</u> and <u>only</u> work that is cited within the dissertation. Use the Author (Date: Page) citation style recommended in this manual.

o Some students like to include an acknowledgements section, in order to thank those who helped with the dissertation in some way. This can appear before the references list. Inclusion (or not) of acknowledgements will not affect the mark. Take care not to compromise your anonymity or that of your participants. It might be more effective to thank those people in person.

- **Appendices** (if needed): Appendices are only needed if there is a data set or an element of 'showing your work' that is necessary to demonstrate the work behind the argument in the dissertation. Your supervisor will be best placed to help you judge whether an appendix is needed. If you do have an appendix or appendices, make sure that:
  - o No element of the argument is in the appendices. The dissertation should make absolute sense without the reader consulting the appendices.
  - o The appendices are titled and (if more than one) lettered or numbered (e.g. Appendix A : Data collection questionnaire).
  - o The appendices are each mentioned in the dissertation, so the reader knows why they are there.

  If your appendices cannot be included in the dissertation text file, they may be submitted separately to an assignment point in Canvas.

Other elements, like tables of contents, tables of figures, etc. are not required and will not be marked.

Formatting requirements

Your examiners have to read a lot of work in a short time. Please format the dissertation so that it is as easy to read and mark as possible. If you do so, the examiners are in a better position to consider the content of the work without negative distractions.

- Include page numbers (starting on the first page of the body of the dissertation).
- Double-space the body of the dissertation.
- Use 12-point font.
- Indent new paragraphs (half an inch, or 1.3 cm, is ideal).
- Use hanging indentation (not blank lines or bullet points) in the bibliography, so that the author's names line up on the left margin.
- Make sure to proofread the dissertation. And then proofread it again.

Proofreading

Print out your dissertation in order to proofread it. It's much harder to see errors on the screen. Reading your work out loud or having it read to you can also help in spotting where things have gone slightly wrong.

Submission

You will submit your dissertation via Canvas. Please do so with good time before the deadline. Keep in mind that personal computer problems do not constitute 'extraordinary circumstances'; if, for instance, work is late because your internet has a glitch, it will be marked down for lateness. The 10-point penalty for lateness can be the difference between a good degree classification and a poor one.

Academic integrity

The University takes academic integrity seriously. This means using sound ethics in preparing and submitting your work. All work presented for marks must be your work alone, unless it is a group assignment for a group mark (in which case it must only be your group).

If it is suspected that a student's work has involved **plagiarism** (using another's words or ideas without giving proper credit), **collusion** (working together when you're supposed to be working alone), or **personation** (submitting work entirely produced by another human or AI generated), then the examiner will raise the alarm with the Faculty's Investigating Officer (IO), and if the work is found to lack integrity, then penalties will usually be applied. For a minor first case, the penalties will be small, but the misconduct will go on the student's record, and any subsequent cases will go before a Misconduct Panel and may incur more painful penalties, such as failure of the module (or in extreme cases, withdrawal from the course).

Unintended plagiarism (caused by being careless with source materials, for instance) is still treated as misconduct. Be careful to keep track of your sources and cite them properly.

SkillsHub provides detailed information specifically dealing with academic integrity and misconduct:

- definitions of plagiarism and collusion;

- examples of plagiarism;

- advice on how plagiarism can be avoided;

- a student checklist to prevent plagiarism;

- the penalties applicable for those found guilty of misconduct;

- online exercises to test students' understanding of plagiarism.

For more on academic misconduct in general, see:
https://student.sussex.ac.uk/complaints/against-you/misconduct

For more on referencing and plagiarism, see:
http://www.sussex.ac.uk/skillshub/?id=287

Questions for (self-)editing and peer-editing

Content:

1. What is the main thesis of this essay?

2. Are the main points/arguments supported with sufficient evidence?

3. Are key terms and ideas clearly defined and exemplified?

4. Can you identify any logical fallacies in the essay?

5. Do any sections of the essay leave you feeling confused?

6. Are general statements made specific (through evidence, examples, or further explanation), and is specific information related back to general points that are being made?

7. Are data presented clearly and explained sufficiently?

Organisation of information:

1. Does the essay have a clear introduction, body, and conclusion?

2. Do the arguments coherently lead to the conclusion?

3. Does the essay read smoothly or does it need more effective transitions? (If so, where? Between sections? Paragraphs? Sentences?)

Use and citation/reference of sources:

1. Are sources used effectively and citations made correctly?

2. How well does the author integrate source material into the argument and the flow of the essay?

3. How well is information from a variety of sources integrated? Does it seem like the author is needlessly over-dependent on one or two sources?

4. Are quotations used appropriately? Are they integrated into the flow of the argument, or do they stand alone, unexplained? Does the author quote material that s/he could instead paraphrase? Are inverted commas used where necessary? Are page numbers given in quotation citations?

5. Is it immediately clear where the author got any particular information from? Is it clear which information came from the author's own reasoning/data and what came from other sources? Is it clear which information is from primary or secondary sources?

6.	Did the author use a variety of source types? Has s/he consulted original, academic sources as well as secondary textbooks or popular audience sources?

7.	Does the references list contain <u>all</u> and <u>only</u> the items cited in the essay? Does each entry have <u>complete</u> information on the source? Is it presented alphabetically in a consistent format?

Usage:

1.	Is the writing style appropriate for an academic audience? (I.e., clear and not too casual)

2.	Are there any consistent errors in grammar, especially ones that obscure meaning?

3.	Are words used effectively? Are there 'empty' or vague words that could be removed or clarified? Is there over-complicated phrasing/wording that could be simplified?

4.	Does the writer have any annoying habits that might distract the reader from their message? (E.g., phrasing statements as questions, over-using a particular word or phrase.)

Formatting and proofreading (later drafts):

1.	Are formatting conventions (e.g., section titles/numbering, use of special fonts/bold/italic, presentation of examples) used consistently and for a clear purpose?

2.	Has the document been spell-checked <u>and</u> proofread? Does it conform to all the rules for submission (page numbering, spacing, etc.)?