English Language and Literature
Åbo Akademi University

The English Department Style Sheet

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1. Introduction

Welcome to the English department. Whether you are an undergraduate or a senior professor, one of the most important aspects of academic work is writing. For staff and researchers, it is the most important way to get their work across to other scholars; for students it is the main way they will be assessed during their studies. In fact, you cannot possibly get a degree from Åbo Akademi, or any university for that matter, without mastering academic writing. In other words, being able to write in an academic manner is very important for all university students.

As many students realise, academic writing is slightly different from any other type of writing they have done before. It is done in a specific style and certain principles must be followed which are not necessarily equally important in other contexts. Academic writing is therefore something students often need to learn and that is why the English department has compiled this style sheet. The style sheet is meant to be an easy yet comprehensive guide to the basic principles of academic writing in English.

The style sheet has three main sections. They are interrelated, but each focuses on a distinct aspect of academic writing. Section 2 is a short guide to effective essay writing. It aims at giving some helpful guidelines on how to present a personal opinion in academic essays: what style of language to use and how to relate it to the work of other scholars. The section also has a few hints on how to keep your text coherent and your argument easy to follow. It ends with a few words about plagiarism.

Section 3 is a basic guide to referencing in academic texts. It deals with references to scholarship in your discussion and the different ways of presenting other peoples’ thoughts and ideas. It also gives detailed descriptions of how to present the most common sources in the list of references. It concludes with a brief guideline on what to remember if you want to include tables and figures in your essay. Section 4 will show you how an essay at the English department is expected to look. It will give you a detailed description of the technical requirements.

We hope that you will find this style sheet helpful in your studies. If you do not, please do not hesitate to tell us how we could improve it. Until that happens, you are welcome to consult some of the numerous books and manuals that have been published on academic writing in general. Section 5 contains a brief list of suggested further reading and useful links.
2. Guide to essay writing

Most of the written assignments in our department take the form of an essay. When this is not the case, the teacher will give special instructions and advice. So what follows here relates mainly to essay-writing. In principle, it also applies to degree essays and master’s theses. You should be aware, however, that when it comes to the layout there are different criteria than those put forward here (cf. section 4 and 5).

There are two things which a reader of an essay expects above all else: a personal touch and coherence. If the essay is supposed to be a more scholarly piece of work, there are two further points to bear in mind: the essay should give some indication of how it relates to previous scholarship on the particular topic; and it should have a helpful scholarly apparatus, i.e. references, notes, and a list of references. English Department essays are expected to be scholarly in this sense, although an essay of six or eight pages will, of course, have far less scholarly detail than a pro gradu thesis of fifty or eighty pages. Reports and essays on linguistic topics tend to follow a fairly strict structure in organizing the contents, called IMRAD (cf. section 2.4).

2.1 A personal touch

Writing an essay is a chance to say what you think about something, to state your own opinion, your own response, to present an idea you have, or explain your way of looking at a set of facts. That, of course, is why an essay is such a good educational device: it means that you actually have to work out what you think! It goes without saying that a piece of writing that does not embody personal thought can never be interesting in quite the same way as a piece of writing that does.

Some people are overjoyed at being able to write what they really think and feel, and as teachers, we are simply delighted when students become enthusiastically interested in the things they study. Obviously, though, you shouldn't let your enthusiasm carry you away. Do not forget the other requirements for a scholarly essay: you still need to be coherent, and you would be unwise to write as if you were the first person in the world to have said something on the topic in question.

In particular, at the beginning of their studies, students sometimes fear that they might not have a personal opinion. They feel they do not know enough, or that everything worth saying
on the topic has already been said by somebody else. If you ever feel this way, take heart! Nobody expects you to know everything, and your teachers have a pretty fair idea of what can be done in the limited time at your disposal. Nor can they possibly expect you to have totally original ideas on everything you write about. After all, when human beings discuss things with each other they usually find that they hold quite a lot of views in common. So although an essay must be based on a personal opinion, this does not mean that you have to be the first person to have had that opinion. The main thing is that your reader should be left in no doubt that, regardless of how many other people share it, it is your own opinion: that you have thought about it, weighed up the pros and cons, and can make detailed arguments in its favour.

The personal nature of an English essay is reflected in its style. This does not mean that you are free to indulge in strange idiosyncrasies. But there is absolutely no objection to a little wit or humour now and then, and the more abstract or technical language you sometimes may have to use can be interspersed with somewhat more colloquial expressions. These things are largely matters of taste, judgment and practice, and one way to get a feel for them is by regularly reading the English quality press. The general point is that the tone of academic writing in English is one of affable discussion, and a good deal less formal than in some other languages. It reads less like a monologue than (one half of) a dialogue: the writer shows an awareness of the reader and of the text as an offer of communication.

2.2 Coherent expression

Coherence in writing is partly dependent on an adequate command of the language being used. At this stage in your studies you will hardly need to be reminded of basic points of grammar. But there are three language tips which students often find helpful:

- **Try to avoid even momentary ambiguity.**
  In particular, make sure that the referent of all pronouns is immediately clear. The following little passage, for instance, is not quite as helpful as it might be: "Wordsworth was much more sociable than is sometimes thought, and one of his oldest friends, commonly known as Bill the Blower, lived in Keswick and often used to go to the races. He made time for his own spiritual development as well, of course, but .....". Who is the "he" in the second sentence?

- **The principles of "end focus" and "end weight"**
Don’t forget that sentences have a main stress, and that in the normal English sentence the position of main stress is at the end. That is the place where you normally put the new information. For example, *The cat* [i.e., the cat already mentioned] *sat on the mat*. The only exception is when you want to give quite exceptional stress to something, in which case you bring it right to the front of the sentence and use a construction of the type *It is/was....that/who/which.....*, e.g. *It was on the mat that the cat sat*. When you *speak* the language, you’ll probably get this right in a perfectly natural way because your feel for the intonation guides you. So try to *hear* what you write. If you’re not quite sure about a sentence, try reading aloud the whole passage in which it occurs.

- **Coherence is not incompatible with a rich and interesting use of language**

  Coming back to the question of style: while it is never a good idea to beat about the bush and avoid plain speech, being as plain as a pikestaff has its risks as well. In particular, you may end up saying less than you really need to say, and you may even lose your reader’s attention. Coherence achieved by a long string of short sentences with very simple vocabulary just will not work. The average sentence length in English academic writing is around 22 words. So avoid sentences that are much longer than 30 or 35 words, and let shorter and longer sentences alternate. As for vocabulary, it is perfectly true that verbosity and ostentation are vices of style: you do not want your essay to read as if you have been hunting for difficult words in a dictionary. But your writing will always be more attractive to your reader if you use the full range of language at your command, and perhaps you should actually try to stretch yourself sometimes. This will be important for your continued language development, since it is the only way to convert your passive knowledge of English into active knowledge. It may mean that teachers sometimes have to correct your usage, but that is the way you learn, and it is part of what teachers are for.

Moving from points of language to the selection of materials and arguments; the main thing is to say only the things that are directly relevant to your overall topic and general line of argument. If, for example, you are talking about Gothic features in the work of a particular novelist, there would normally be no point in telling your reader when the novelist was born, unless, for example, you wanted to point out that Gothicism was popular or unpopular during the novelist’s impressionable years.

Then there is the question of what order you should give your materials. In spoken language, a lot of the things we say come out in the form of story-telling, and sometimes a narrative
passage can also liven up an essay. Indeed, if your essay is supposed to be the report of some experiment or survey you have carried out, the entire structure of what you write may be predominantly narrative. In most other cases, however, the normal thing would be for the coherence to come from a process of argument. Basically you are stating a case or justifying a particular point of view. And one special note of warning is in order here: if you are writing a literary essay, it is absolutely fatal to start re-telling the story of a novel or play. For one thing, you can usually assume that the reader of your essay will know it already and will therefore be bored. Still more important, in retelling the story you are simply describing, whereas the characteristic work of an essay is to analyse in order to substantiate a personal opinion.

One way to think of coherence is as your argument's "sense of direction". To help both you and your reader see where things are going, it is important to have clear "signposts". Right from the beginning, it should be clear what you are talking about, and you can already arouse your reader's interest by hinting at the general drift of your argument. This is the "path" you are to follow throughout, and each new paragraph can be thought of as a new stage in the journey. To make this clear, each paragraph needs to be clearly signposted by means of a so-called topic sentence, that is, a sentence which contains the main point of the paragraph, and to which all the other sentences in the same paragraph are clearly related. As you progress on your journey, most of the signposts will be pointing along the same direction in which you are travelling, towards your conclusion. In other words, if you strung all the topic sentences together, the connecting link between them would be in the nature of an and. Sometimes, though, you will arrive at places where there seem to be objections or alternatives to your argument: you will have to include some such word as but, or or however in order to indicate a temporary twisting back upon your general line of argument. This "counter-movement" may even go on for several paragraphs, but sooner or later you will have to get back on your original track, which you can only do by means of another but, or, or however. When you finally reach your conclusion, there should be no doubt that this was the goal of your journey all along. There should be a clear link back to the opening paragraph. If you think of everything which points in the direction of you main line of argument as a plus, and of everything which points in the opposite direction as a minus, you will be able to diagram the progress of an essay from one topic sentence to the next:

A(+) and B(+) and C(+) but D(-) and E(-) and F(-) but G(+) and H(+) but I(-) but J(+)

Please note: you have to end on a plus!
Incidentally, this last piece of advice ties up with a fundamental principle of rhetoric. For lack of a tidier term, we might call it the "dispose-of-objections-early principle" or the "never-finish-down-beat principle". If you wish to state your opinion as persuasively as possible but are aware of a strong objection that might be made against it, say what the objection is as soon as possible, discuss it, make your arguments against it, and then continue with positive arguments in support of your own side of the case. If you do things the other way round, there is always the danger that what sticks in your reader's mind will be, not your opinion, but the objections to it. Needless to say, though, if you have genuine doubts about the position you are stating and do not wish to be so categorical, you can choose whatever order seems to be more natural. There may actually be a cultural difference here. Perhaps British and American writers are more persuasive and categorical than Finns, who may be more "honest".

One other little rhetorical tip: Don't let your argument have too many twists and turns. It becomes tiring and confusing for your reader. This applies both to the overall structure of your argument and within individual paragraphs. So if you notice that you keep using *but, yet, however, nevertheless, or on the other hand*, that is a sign that you need to rearrange things a bit. Group the "pluses" and the "minuses" together more.

Over and above the sentence-to-sentence and paragraph-to-paragraph type of coherence, there is a structural dimension to coherence, as well. Your reader will feel more sure that you know where you are going if your essay has recognizable parts which fulfil customary functions. The simplest sort of division is into "beginning", "middle", and "end". A beginning not only indicates the general drift of the essay, but tries to arouse the reader's interest in it, and establishes communication by indicating some of the assumptions you hope your reader will share. A middle carries out the detailed discussion. An end rounds things off, giving a final and succinct statement of your opinion, hinting at the new avenues of discussion that could now be opened up. But a beginning or a middle may also contain other stages: some background information about the topic, its general nature, scope, causes, relevance; an indication of earlier views on the subject; definitions of important terms. For essays on language and realia topics, your teachers may prefer you to give separate headings for the different parts. If in doubt, ask!

One last dimension of coherence has to do with the relationship between more abstract and more concrete statements. There has to be a coherent balance between the two. Some of the most important things you say on any topic will be in the nature of generalizations, sometimes
at a fairly high level of abstraction. You will need to size up a whole complex range of impressions or phenomena in a way that can be readily stored in your reader’s memory and related to other things that might already be there. But for this to work, and for your generalizations to actually carry meaning, you will have to back them up by discussing some of the particular features of whatever you happen to be talking about, and by doing so in considerable detail. One of the marks of a really good literary essay, for example, is the ability to choose an apt quotation and to get the maximum mileage out of it. You have to show why you think that things are the way you say they are. The only thing to avoid is the opposite extreme. Too much detail, with too little generalization, means that your reader will not see the wood for the trees.

2.3 How your work relates to previous scholarship

Even if you were writing a book, it is unlikely that you would have read all the previous scholarship on your topic. But even the shortest scholarly essay should clearly indicate how what it says relates to what other people have said on the same topic, or on closely related topics. In other words, a piece of scholarship does not just come out of the blue. It is a contribution to an ongoing discussion, and you owe it to your reader to explain what main lines of argument you are agreeing with, disagreeing with, adding to, or qualifying. This creates the context necessary for an understanding of what you are saying.

The most natural place for references to previous scholarship is in a paragraph or two at the beginning of the essay (or perhaps a whole chapter at the beginning of a master’s thesis). But from time to time throughout your writing you also need to refer to previous scholars, since it will help your reader keep a sense of bearings. Further references can be made in the concluding paragraphs, as a way of confirming the general trajectory of your contribution.

In deciding what previous scholarship to mention, you will again have to think about relevance. Often it is possible to see oneself as working within some general scholarly field (e.g. nineteenth century fiction) which is sub-divided into smaller areas (e.g. Dickens), and it always gives a sense of perspective if one can indicate some awareness of what is going on at these levels of generality. But this should not get out of proportion. In a short essay, in particular, it is important to refer mainly to discussions of the exact topic being treated (e.g. "Money in Dombey and Son"), and it is necessary to mention only the main trends in discussion, with references to one or two of the most important statements of each of them.
You can find out the books and articles you ought to read and mention from a careful reading of descriptive bibliographies and general introductions to the subjects you discuss. Your teachers will also offer suggestions.

Sometimes it is a good idea to quote a passage from a previous scholar, especially when he or she says something in a particularly striking way, or in a way which has profoundly influenced subsequent discussion of the topic. If you are picking holes in a scholar’s detailed arguments, courtesy requires that you quote verbatim, that is, word-for-word (cf. section 3.1.3). You have to allow the views you disagree with the right of fair trial, and there must not be the slightest suspicion that you are misrepresenting them.

If you are basically agreeing with somebody, an extensive and slavish reliance on their wording, particularly if it is pretty run-of-the-mill, will detract from the personal character of your essay, and may also give a rather jerky impression. In such cases it is better to paraphrase the previous scholar's views in your own words (cf. section 3.1.4). Here scholarly courtesy takes the form of acknowledging borrowings and of explicitly recognizing similarities. If your teachers detect plagiarism, they will not accept your work.

2.4 IMRAD structure

Reports and linguistic essays tend to follow the IMRAD structure, which is the most common structure for scientific papers. IMRAD is an acronym for Introduction, Methods, Results, and Discussion. When your essay task or thesis topic involves an empirical study, this structure is an excellent guideline for organizing the content of your work. According to the IMRAD structure, you put the following kinds of information in the different parts of your written work:

- **Table of Contents**
  
  Note that the section headings are numbered both in the table of contents and in the text.

- **Introduction**
  
  Tell your reader what the essay or thesis is about, i.e. what your research question is, and why this topic is interesting and relevant to study. Present earlier research and show how your study fits in the research field. If you present many previous studies, you may want to do so in a separate section called, for instance, “Previous Studies”.
- **Methods and Materials**
  Describe how you are going to study your topic and what materials you have chosen for the investigation. Motivate the choice of methods and materials.

- **Results**
  Report what you have found in your study. In quantitative studies, give exact numbers of cases, that is, do not say that something is frequent without saying how many times it occurs in your materials. Tables and figures are a good way of presenting quantitative information. Illustrate your findings with examples. Note that this part is usually presented in the past tense.

- **Discussion and Conclusion**
  Briefly restate the aim of your study and what materials you used, then analyze and comment on your findings. What do your results show? How do the results of your study connect to previous work, e.g. to the studies you mention in your introduction? Do your findings raise new questions that should be studied? What are the implications and/or applications of your study?

The type of written work and the level of studies of course determine how much each part contains and how extensively you need to deal with each and how deep you need to go.

### 2.5 Plagiarism

Both when you quote other scholars verbatim and paraphrase their thoughts it is very important to follow the Golden Rule of referencing: *Give credit to whom credit is due!* In other words, you must respect that the thoughts and ideas of other scholars are their intellectual property. And you must recognize this by making clear and unambiguous references to their work. If you do not, you can be accused of plagiarism. For academics at all levels, plagiarism can have serious consequences.

Åbo Akademi has clearly defined rules and processes for dealing with plagiarism (cf. section 5). In short, the university officially distinguishes between *intentional* and *unintentional* plagiarism (i.e. “plagiat” and “oförsiktig användning”). The first type includes purposely passing off other people’s material, results, manuscripts or articles as your own; or, in short, stealing someone else’s work. The second type, as the phrase implies, is not deliberate, but
often a result of carelessness. While intentional plagiarism is the most severe both types are considered serious offences.

For avoiding intentional plagiarism, there is no other advice than “don’t do it!” For your teachers it is relatively easy to detect and if it does not lead to greater inconveniences for you it will at least mean you have to cram the rewriting of the essay into an already busy schedule.

As for unintentional plagiarism, it is usually the result of sloppy referencing (e.g. forgetting to place your verbatim quote in quotation marks). Though usually a harmless mistake, it is an annoying inconvenience in the busy schedules of teachers and students that you should do what you can to avoid. Also the display of such carelessness is not likely to increase your grade. Luckily, it is fairly easy to avoid if you pay attention to a few things (cf. also section 3):

- Whether you are quoting verbatim or paraphrasing always give clear and unambiguous source references.
- When you quote verbatim make sure you use quotation marks.
- When you paraphrase do not have the source text in front of you. Then it is easier to rephrase something in your own words.
- Make sure when you take notes to always make it clear from which source you got the information.
- You should check and double-check any verbatim quotations you have included in your essay to make sure that you have not misquoted.

As a final note on plagiarism, you should know about Urkund, Åbo Akademi’s tool for detecting plagiarism. In brief, Urkund is an electronic database which includes various internet search engines, numerous academic publications and a large corpus of old student essays. When an essay, or academic publication, needs to be checked for plagiarism it is submitted to Urkund (usually by email) after which it will be compared to the content of the system’s database. Urkund will then compile a report on the essay which indicates whether plagiarism has taken place or not. Even if you are not suspected of plagiarism, your teacher might ask you to submit your essay to Urkund. At the time of writing, students are not obliged to submit their work to Urkund, and have the right to refuse. (cf. section 5 for further information about Urkund).
3. Guide to referencing

As mentioned in the previous section, when you write an academic essay, you will need to refer to research done within the field. The sources in an academic essay are often referred to as the scholarly apparatus.

The scholarly apparatus is a courtesy which you owe your readers, mainly in order to help them follow up on the things you are discussing. They need to know the exact titles of the articles, books and literary texts you are referring to and quoting, and what particular edition or reprint you are quoting from. In an essay with a historical slant, it is especially necessary to give the date and place of first publication as well. Sometimes it is also helpful to give a short footnote on some particular detail, but the style of academic writing nowadays tends to keep such notes to a minimum and to incorporate all necessary information in the body of the text. If an extensive explanation of some background point seems necessary, the way to avoid disrupting the coherence of the essay is to write a separate appendix, to which reference is made in the essay when appropriate.

There are several widely used models for a scholarly apparatus, proposed by various scholarly bodies: the Linguistic Society of America (LSA), the American Psychological Association (APA), the Chicago Manual of Style, the Modern Language Association of America (MLA), and the Modern Humanities Research Association (MHRA). All but the last one are closer to the style used in the hard sciences in that they incorporate references in the body of the text, have a concluding list of references, and do not have footnotes. The MHRA style is more typical of the humanities in that it has footnotes or endnotes.

It is a good idea to get some practice in these types of apparatus. While you will find detailed handbooks about them in the library most are also available online (cf. Further reading). You should always make sure you know which type your teacher is expecting. The "hard science" type is usually expected for essays in linguistics, but either type will usually be all right for literary topics. The following "hard science" model can be used for all essays at the English department.

In short, referring to other peoples’ research works on a two-stage system: you will have brief references in the body of the text (cf. section 3.1) which will give enough information to help your readers to find the full details of each source in the list of references at the end of your essay (cf. section 3.2).
3.1 References in the text

3.1.1 References to literary texts and films

When you refer to a literary work or film in your text, use the title of the work. You may use abbreviated titles, but these must be explained at the first occurrence of the title or, if there are many, in an "Abbreviations" section.

Use the following punctuation for titles: italics (or underlining) for a long poem, a play, a novel, or some other book; quotation marks (or inverted commas) for an essay, an article, a shorter poem and unpublished texts.

In referring to specific passages in novels and short stories, you may use page references to a specified edition. When you refer to poems, use line references; if the poem is divided into sections or books, refer to both book and line number. Passages in the Bible are referred to by book and verse. For plays, the common practice is to refer by act, scene and line.

Chaucer shows in *Troilus and Criseyde* (III:994) that ...

"To be, or not to be" (*Hamlet* III:1:56)

... a message of love (*John* 15:17)

At the beginning of *Pride and Prejudice* (henceforth *P&P*) Elizabeth ...

The symbol of the thistle in *Braveheart* ...

3.1.2 References to scholarship

For all references to scholarly sources in a text, cite the surname of the author(s), the year of publication of the text or edition you are using, and page numbers when necessary.

Rabin (1986) says that ...

... divergences are not very numerous (Hopper & Thompson 1980).

... concept of aspect, as discussed by Jakobson (1971).

... other lexical links (Hoey 1986a).
If there are more than three authors, use the name of the first-mentioned author followed by ‘et al.’ (Note that ‘et al.’ can only be used for references in the text and not in the list of references! There all authors must be mentioned.)

But Quirk et al. (1985: 893) classify ...

If you refer to an article in an edited collection of papers, you refer in the text to the writer(s) of the article itself, not to the editor(s) of the whole book.

For works not written by specific authors, such as dictionaries and encyclopedias, use the title and refer to the entry preceded by ‘s.v.’ (sub verbo "under the word"). If the author of an article in a newspaper or magazine is not given, refer to the article by its title (you may abbreviate the title).

... since 1945 (Encyclopedia Americana, s.v. Finland)

In case you need to refer to sources at second hand indicate as follows. Both sources (in the example below, Jones 1874 and Smith 1989) should then also appear with full details in the list of references. You should avoid, however, second-hand references whenever possible.

… which resulted in utter devastation (see Jones 1874 as cited in Smith 1989: 403).

A final stylistic tip: Don't make every paragraph end with a cluster of references. It makes for easier reading if you introduce a source first and then paraphrase or discuss it.

3.1.3 Quoting verbatim

There are two ways of quoting someone else’s research within the body of the text: sometimes you will quote verbatim, that is, word-for-word; sometimes it is enough to paraphrase what somebody else has said (cf. section 3.1.4). Whichever type of quotation you are using, you must refer to the source of the quotation in the text by giving the author's name with the date of publication. When you quote verbatim, you must include a page number. When you paraphrase it is not necessary to include page number, but, nevertheless, it is not a bad idea to do so and it makes easier for your readers to find the ideas you refer to.
Quoting verbatim can be done in two ways depending on the length of the quotation. It has to be either indented or placed inside quotation marks (called a running quotation). A quotation is considered long if it is three lines or longer and must therefore be set apart from the rest of text. This is done by having a blank line before and after, indenting the text and giving it line spacing 1. The source (including page number) is given in brackets after the quotation. Shorter verbatim quotations are incorporated in the running text inside quotation marks. The source is given either after or before the quotation, depending on how the quotation is introduced.

In particular, Ackroyd’s novel, *Chatterton* (1987), vigorously tackles the idea of the death of the author. Most of the novel’s characters have to deal with imitations, forgeries, parody or pastiche, and there are direct references to various theories of intertextuality:

[Philip Slack] had once attempted to write a novel but he had abandoned it after some forty pages: not only had he written with painful slowness and uncertainty, but even the pages he had managed to complete seemed to him to be filled with images and phrases from the work of other writers whom he admired. It had become a patchwork of other voices and other styles, and it was the overwhelming difficulty of recognizing his own voice among them that had led him to abandon the project.

*(Chatterton: 70)*

Here Philip Slack stands for the true meaning of the death of the author. Through him Ackroyd shows that Barthes’ (1977: 146) idea of the "modern scriptor" through whom language and texts write that which is already written, "without origin", is an impossible idea: an author without a personality or his own ‘voice’ cannot exist.1

If you should wish to make omissions or changes to the original text, however minor, you must mark them with square brackets [ ]. If you omit a word, a phrase, or a sentence or two from one and the same paragraph in the original text, you must indicate the omission with three dots inside square brackets: [...].

Original:

“MR. GRADGRIND walked homeward from the school, in a state of considerable satisfaction. It was his school, and he intended it to be a model. He intended every child in it to be a model – just as the young Gradgrinds were all models” *(Hard Times: 11).*

With omission:

“MR. GRADGRIND walked homeward from the school, in a state of considerable satisfaction. […] He intended every child in it to be a model – just as the young Gradgrinds were all models” (Hard Times: 11).

If you omit large quantities of text, linking together sentences from different paragraphs in the original text, then you must indicate this omission with three dashes inside square brackets: [-- -].

If there is a mistake or a somewhat odd spelling in the original text (e.g., in subject-verb agreement or Dickens’ use of American spelling in the example below), then you must NOT correct the mistake but quote it as it is and add [sic] (Latin for ‘thus’ or ‘so’) immediately after the word which is incorrect. This is to indicate that the mistake is not yours.

David’s own intuition that Micawber “is” something he himself represses at such points emerges as a déjà vu experience: “‘If you had not assured us, my dead Copperfield, […] that D. was your favorite [sic] letter,’ said Mr Micawber, ‘I should unquestionably have supposed that A. had been so’” (David Copperfield: 483).²

If you make running quotations of texts in which line divisions are important (e.g., poems), use slashes (/) to indicate line breaks. In poetry, stanza breaks are indicated with double slashes (//).

This is essentially the first thing that happens in the passage: “In each she marks her Image full exprest, / But chief in B A Y S’S monster-breeding breast”. (The Dunciad I: 107-108) Not only is her image reflected in Cibber, but it is reflected most strongly in him. He is the most characteristic representative of Dulness, the prime idiot by none.

If you need to quote sources in languages other than English and there is no translation available, you should translate the quotation into English and indicate after the translation that it is yours by writing: [my translation].

Finally, remember to check and double-check any verbatim quotations you have included in your essay to make sure that you have not misquoted!

3.1.4 Paraphrasing

If you do not wish to quote verbatim, you can paraphrase what somebody else has said, that is, say the same thing in your own words. But you still need to provide the source in the text in order to indicate that you have picked up the thought or idea from somebody else. When giving the source of a paraphrase, you need to include, in brackets, the last name of the author (unless mentioned in your text) and the year of publication. It is also good to include page numbers, but it is not necessarily required.

The Mariner’s unconscious blessing of the water-snakes is indeed a crucial turning-point, which William Christie (2006: 11) perceptively links to moments, or hopes, of loving reconciliation in the human relationship dealt with in the conversation poems, even if there, I would point out, the motif can be marred by the importunately personal vibration.³

Cruse (1986) suggests that a collocation is a sequence of habitual co-occurring lexical items, and he stresses the fact that the lexical items have semantic cohesion, as the items are mutually selective to varying degrees.⁴

When you paraphrase someone else’s work, it is important to clearly differentiate between your own opinion and those you present. Both when you agree or disagree.

3.2 List of references

Full references to the literature cited are given in the "References" section at the end of the work. The final list of references contains every item referred to and no others. If you wish to indicate your background reading you can have a separate list of "Other Works Consulted". When appropriate, the list of references can be divided into "Primary Sources" and "Secondary Sources". Primary sources are your materials, that is the linguistic data, literary texts and historical documents that you are actually writing about. Secondary sources are publications in which previous scholars discuss them.

The following instructions show the order in which the different pieces of information are presented and how punctuation is used in the list of references. The instructions are divided into two sections: the first deals with more traditional sources (books, articles, etc.) and the


second with electronic sources. Each set of instructions are followed by one or two typical examples. At times, the instructions will also refer to particular examples in parenthesis. These are illustrated in the sample "References" section (cf. section 3.2.3).

The "References" section is an example of a list of references. As you can see, the sources in the list of references should be ordered alphabetically.

You should be aware that what follows is not an exhaustive set of instructions, a guide to the most common sources. It is not unlikely that you will come across sources for which these instructions are insufficient (e.g. audiovisual material and social media). In such a case, you can consult a more comprehensive guide such as the Chicago Manual of Style or the American Psychological Association (APA) which are both available online (cf. Further reading) or ask your teacher!

3.2.1 Traditional sources

Books: monographs and edited volumes

- A reference to a monograph and an edited volume of collected articles should include the following information:

  a) surname comma first name or initial(s) of the author(s) or the editor(s).
  - if the work is edited, add (ed.) or (eds.)

  b) year of publication of the edition used.
  - if you are using a new (revised) edition of a work, always use the date of the new edition and give the number of the edition after the title (cf. Li & Crane 1996)
  - if you refer to several works published during the same year by one author, list them in alphabetical order by title and separate them by using letters after the year (cf. Hoey 1986a, 1986b)
  - as additional information you may give in square brackets the year of the first edition after the year of publication (cf. Austen 1978 and Jakobson 1971)

  c) title and subtitle in italics (or underlined)
  - if the work consists of several volumes, give the volume number(s) and possible volume title
d) if relevant, in brackets give series title comma, number of volume
   - if the work is a translation, give the name of the translator(s) and the source language (cf. Eco 1989)

e) place of publication (i.e., the town where the publisher, not printer, has its office): name of publisher.


**Articles**

- A reference to an **article in an edited volume** should include the following information:

  a) surname comma first name or initial(s) of the author(s).
  
b) year of publication.
  
c) title of the article in quotation marks (or inverted commas).
  
d) ‘In’ and surname of the editor(s), followed by (ed.) or (eds.):
  
e) pages where the article occurs.

**N.B.** If you refer to several articles from the same edited volume follow the above procedure, but make a separate entry for the entire volume in the list of references (cf. Cooper & Greenbaum 1986, Hoey 1986a, Rabin 1986). If you only use one article, however, you can incorporate the references to entire volume following the title and end with the page numbers of the article (cf. Hoey 1986b).


- A reference to an **article in a journal** should include the following information:
a) surname comma first name or initial(s) of the author(s) of the article.

b) year of publication period.

c) title of the article in quotation marks (or inverted commas).

d) name of the journal in italics and the number of the volume (issue):

e) pages where the article occurs.


- A reference to an article in a newspaper or magazine should include the following information:

  a) surname comma first name or initial(s) of the author(s) of the article.

  b) year of publication period.

  c) title of the article in quotation marks (or inverted commas).

  d) name of the newspaper or magazine in italics (or underlined) and the number of the volume (issue):

  e) pages where the article occurs.

  **N.B.** If the article does not have a specific author(s) include c), b), d) and e) in this order.


**Films**

- A reference to a film should include the following information:

  a) title and subtitle in italics (or underlined).

  b) year of publication.
c) director(s) followed by (dir.) or (dirs.).

d) country of origin.


Unpublished works

- For unpublished works give the following information:

  a) surname comma first name or initial(s) of the author(s) or the editor(s).

  b) year when the work was finished or for theses and dissertations when the work was accepted.

  c) title in quotation marks (or inverted commas).

  d) the type of work (see Back 1998).

  e) institution, e.g. department and university, place and university, or place and company (unless given in point c).


Works not written by specific authors

- For works which are not written by specific authors (such as many dictionaries, encyclopedias and certain newspaper articles):

  a) title and subtitle in italics (or underlined).

  b) year of publication.

  c) if relevant, number of edition

  d) if relevant, comma, and volume(s) used.

  e) for books, give place of publication: publisher.
Things to notice

- If there are several authors or editors, give the name of the first author in the order surname, forename and the names of the following in the order forename surname, the last in the list preceded by and or &. (cf. Quirk et al 1985).

- Literary works are listed according to the author when the author is known, but under "anon." (anonymous) or according to the editor if the author is not known.

- For some literary works it might be relevant to indicate the editor(s). If so give the name(s) followed by (ed(s).) after the title (cf. Chaucer 1954)

- When the date of a publication is not available write n.d. (No date)

- Use capital initials for content words in titles and subtitles

- When several places are given in the book as the "hometown" of the publisher, indicate them both if there are two, but if there are more than two, only the first-mentioned place followed by etc.

- If you use a source published by the same author in the same year, add a, b, c etc. after the year (Hoey 1986a, Hoey 1986b).

3.2.2 Electronic sources

- Generally, a reference to electronic sources should include the following information:

  a) surname comma first name or initial(s) of the author(s)/editor(s), if available.

     - If no author is given for a web page or electronic source, start with and alphabetize by the title of the piece and use a shortened version of the title for parenthetical citations.

  b) year of publication, if available.
If no year of publication (posting or revision) is given, write n.d. (for no date) instead.

c) title and subtitle in italics period.
   - If no title is given, give the work a descriptive title and do not put it in italics (as you would a complete published work, like a book) or between quotation marks (as you would other kinds of titles)

d) If relevant, indicate the type of medium in square brackets.
   - For example, [CD-ROM], [E-Book], [MP3]

e) Available: supplier/database identifier or number/URL.
   - Be sure to include the complete address for the site.
   - Avoid dividing an electronic address at the end of the line.

f) Access date (i.e. when you have consulted the source) in square brackets.
   - It is necessary to list your date of access because web postings are often updated, and information available at one date may no longer be available later.

**Online articles**

- **Article in an online journal, magazine or newspaper**
  
  Author(s). Year. "Title of Article". *Title of Journal* Volume (Issue): Pages/Paragraphs. Available: Electronic address. [Date of Access]

  **N.B.** Some electronic journals and magazines provide paragraph or page numbers; include them if available. This format is also appropriate to online magazines; as with a print version, you should provide a publication date in addition to volume and issue number.


**Websites**

- **A web site**
  
  Author(s). Year. *Title*. (Name of institution/organization affiliated with the site.)
  
  Available: Electronic address. [Date of access]


- **Article on a web site**
  
  Author(s). Year. "Article Title". *Name of web site*. (Name of institution/organization affiliated with site.) Available: Electronic address. [Date of access]


**Emails and bulletin boards**

- **E-mail**
  
  Author (e-mail address). "Title or subject of the message (if any)". E-mail to the author. [Date of the message]

  **N.B.** Note that you must have permission from all parties involved for citing private correspondence or conversations.

  E-mail to you:

  Lindgrén, Inna (inna.lindgren@abo.fi). "Inträdesprovet". E-mail to the author. [23 April, 2004]

  Email communication between two parties, not including the author:
Gill, Martin (martin.gill@abo.fi). "Module III deadlines". E-mail to Brita Wårvik. [20 August, 2004]

- **A posting on a mailing list or bulletin board**
  Author. Date. "Title of Posting". Name of listserv/mailing list/bulletin board. Electronic address or address for retrieval if the messages are archived. [Date of access ]


**Electronic databases**

- **Electronic database**
  Author. "Title of Article". Relevant information for the database. Available: Electronic address for retrieval. [Date of access]

  **N.B.** Provide the bibliographic data for the original source as for any other of its genre, then add the name of the database along with relevant retrieval data (such as version number and/or transcript or abstract number).

3.2.3 List of references: an example

**References**


3.3 Tables and figures

You might at one point feel that the discussion in your essay will benefit from the inclusion of one or more tables and figures. Should you wish to include such visual material, you are welcome to do so, but keep in mind that in academic writing there are certain ground rules for how to do it (cf. the following page for examples):

- **Always give a title**
  Each table and figure must have a title which briefly informs your readers of the content.

- **Always give a number**
  Tables and figures should always be numbered according to the order in which they appear in the essay. The number should be given as the first thing in the title.

- **Tables and figures must always be self-explanatory**
  In academic texts, tables and figures must contain sufficient information regarding their properties so readers can get a clear idea of what is displayed without necessarily having to refer to your discussion. In other words, make sure that it is easy for readers to understand what your tables and figures are meant to display.

- **If the table or figure is not your own, indicate the source**
  It is possible to include tables and figures compiled by other scholars. But, as with other types of sources, you must give them credit for their work by providing detailed references. Below the table, or figure, you borrow indicate where you have taken it from by writing “Source:” followed by detailed information about the source. The reference must also appear in the list of references.

- **Tables and figures must be there for a reason**
  Do not include tables and figures simply for the sake of it. There should be a point to it. In other words, you must analyse, evaluate or reflect on them in one way or another. They must serve a purpose in your overall discussion or else they should be left out.
Example 1

Figure 1: Distribution of the world's population by continent


Example 2

Figure 2: Average weekly expenditure per family in Britain (1996)

Example 3

### Table 1: TBE incidence in Russia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Incidence</th>
<th>Per 100 000</th>
<th>Death cases</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Per 100 000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>6310</td>
<td>4.25</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>7520</td>
<td>5.08</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>5593</td>
<td>3.78</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>5982</td>
<td>4.04</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>10298</td>
<td>6.97</td>
<td>166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>6702</td>
<td>4.60</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>7520</td>
<td>5.10</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>9955</td>
<td>6.79</td>
<td>134</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. Style and layout

When you hand in an essay at the English department it is important that the layout follows a few basic stylistic principles. First, all essays should have a title page as the very first page (cf. sample model in section 4.1). Beginning in such a manner will not only ensure that your essay looks neat and presentable, it also makes sure that, if it should get misplaced, there is enough information for others to know whose essay it is and which department, course and teacher it is relevant for.

Second, the layout of your essay should look as the example below (cf. section 4.2). The technical specifications for the layout are:

- Font: Times New Roman
- Font size: 12
- Line spacing: 1.5
- Margins: 3cm (1.25 inches) to the sides; 2.5cm (1 inch) above and below
- To make you text look neat and orderly, both sides of the text should be aligned (or “justified” as it is called in Microsoft Office)
- Paragraphs should be separated by an indention and not by a blank line.
- As already mentioned above (cf. 3.1.3), quotations longer than three lines should be separate from the rest of the text by blank lines, should be indented and have line spacing 1.

Following this standard layout is important because it relates to teachers’ instructions on the length of the essays you will be writing. According to these specifications each page should contain 450-500 words, so if a teacher asks you to write and ten-page essay you will know they mean roughly 5000 words.

A few further points regarding essay layout should also be mentioned here. The usage of **bold** and **italics** is restricted to certain very specific situations:

- **Bold** is only used for headings.
- **Italics** are used:
  
  a) in linguistic examples. But note that overuse of italics can cause confusion.
Faucet is more common in American English than tap.

b) for foreign words and phrases:

His writing exudes a certain *joie de vivre*.

c) for highlighting new terminology. But only when presented the first time.

The significant elements of a given word are called *morphemes*.

d) for book titles:

Bakhtin elaborates this theory in *The Dialogic Imagination*.

e) to give special emphasis to a word or a phrase (especially in literary essays). But if you highlight with italics in quotations remember to state clearly that the emphasis is yours.

I wandered lonely as a *cloud* (Wordsworth 2001: 1478; my italics)

f) *never* for translations. When you need to translate a word or a term, put the translation inside single inverted commas.

Old English *geong* ‘young’

Finally, you should be aware that when you go on to write your bachelor’s and master’s theses there are slightly different requirements for the layout (mainly due to the fact that your theses will be printed and bound). Åbo Akademi’s homepage has detailed information about the style, layout and many other things relating to writing a thesis (cf. Further Reading).
Language Transfer in Second Language Acquisition
4.2 Page layout: example

Page Layout
The English Department has agreed on a standard layout style, which is recommended for your essays. The teachers may ask you to do otherwise for specific essays, but unless they do so, you should follow the instructions on this sheet.

You should use Times New Roman font size 12 throughout, with line spacing 1.5. In an ordinary essay, the margins should be c. 3cm/1.25 inches to the sides and 2.5cm/1 inch above and below. In a pro gradu thesis, the left margin should be wider, at least 5 cm, so that none of the text is lost under the binding. Both sides of the text should be aligned in order to make the page as neat as possible.

The first line of each new paragraph should be indented. Traditionally, the first line of the first paragraph after a heading is not indented, but if you prefer, you may indent it as well. The length of your paragraphs depends on how much you have to say on a certain point, but normally you should be able to fit 3-4 paragraphs on each page.

Short quotations are marked with quotation marks. Please note that the opening mark is inverted in English and should look like “this”. (Source 2002:00). Immediately after the quotation, you should give the page reference in parenthesis (Author Year: page number). The full stop comes after the reference.

A long quotation (four lines or more) should be separated from the other text by a blank line. As it is important to be able to see clearly which part of the text is quoted from somewhere, the quotation should be single-spaced and indented from the left. A page reference should again follow the quotation immediately.

(Source 2002: 00)

If the text following the quotation is a new paragraph, the first line should be indented. It is also possible to have a quotation inside a paragraph, in which case there is no indentation.

*Italics* are used to mark linguistic examples, foreign words, new terminology and book titles. They can also be used to put special emphasis on something, especially in literary essays. **Bold,** on the other hand, is used in headings. When you need to translate a word, put the translation inside simple inverted commas: Old English *geong* ‘young’. And as a finishing touch, remember to number your pages.
5. Further reading

What follows is a brief list of suggested further reading and useful links. Needless to say, numerous books and manuals have been published on academic writing in general. Should you find this style sheet lacking in certain aspects or maybe you would just like to know more then feel free to consult some of the many other sources out there. Those books mentioned below are only a small pick from the rich and valuable material on the topic available through Åbo Akademi’s libraries.

Guides to academic writing


Useful links

- **American Psychological Associations (APA) Style** ([www.apastyle.org](http://www.apastyle.org))
  Standard model for academic writing and referencing. The style guide is available in book form, but also online.

- **The Chicago Manual of Style** ([www.chicagomanualofstyle.org](http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org))
  Standard model for academic writing and referencing. The style guide is available in book form, but also online.

- **English Department Guidelines** ([www.abo.fi/student/engeguide](http://www.abo.fi/student/engeguide))
  All you need to know about studying at the English department at Åbo Akademi.

- **Linguistic Society of America** ([www.lsadc.org/info/pubs-lang-style.cfm](http://www.lsadc.org/info/pubs-lang-style.cfm))
  Standard model for academic writing and referencing. The style guide is available in book form, but also online.

- **Modern Humanities Research Association** ([www.mhra.org.uk](http://www.mhra.org.uk))
  Standard model for academic writing and referencing. The style guide is available in book form, but also online.

- **Online Writing Lab** ([owl.english.purdue.edu/](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/))
  A rich source of tips and exercises related to academic and other sorts of writing from Purdue University.

- **Urkund** ([www.urkund.fi/](http://www.urkund.fi/))
  Åbo Akademi’s tool for detecting plagiarism. (For more information about Åbo Akademi’s usage of Urkund and plagiarism in general see below and [www.abo.fi/student/etik_plagiat](http://www.abo.fi/student/etik_plagiat))
- Åbo Akademi’s Guides for BA and MA Theses ([www.abo.fi/student/gradu](http://www.abo.fi/student/gradu))
  Here you will find useful information for writing your bachelor and master’s theses including the template layout for master’s theses.

  Contains useful information. For example, on what grounds and according to what criteria theses are graded.

- Åbo Akademi and Plagiarism ([www.abo.fi/personal/stuforf](http://www.abo.fi/personal/stuforf))
  Åbo Akademi’s rules and procedures regarding plagiarism.