



DEPARTAMENT DE FILOLOGIA ANGLESA I DE GERMANÍSTICA

**PRACTICAL GUIDELINES FOR WRITING
PAPERS IN LITERATURE AND CULTURE**

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1. Content

Always start with a draft outline and work on it until you have the one you think is the best. Use your own criteria and your own words. *Always keep notes about where you found the quotations you are using and do not reproduce them without referencing the source.* Remember that *plagiarism* (even just a few words) is a serious offence that will result in you failing the exercise.

Always follow the teacher's instructions. Respect the required word (or page) count teachers set, and quote from as many bibliographical sources as teachers ask for.

Bear in mind that careful editing will not hide a badly researched exercise (paper/project/assignment/TFG/TFM) or one that contains concepts or ideas that you have not understood. However, remember that faulty editing is inexcusable and a discourtesy towards your reader.

2. Organization and sections

The **title** of your paper or TFG dissertation must present the thesis you will discuss and the name of the author and/or the title of the text you analyse. Ideally, the title should have two parts: a main title (presenting the thesis) and an explanatory subtitle, separated by a colon. For example: "A Gentleman on the Surface: Pip in Charles Dickens's *Great Expectations*."

Research papers should always include an **abstract** (150-200 words), presenting your topic and objectives, your research question and thesis statement and your main arguments, followed by between four and six keywords. The first section of the paper proper is the **Introduction**, in which you need to clearly identify the aims you pursue. In other words, you must define the topic or object of the study (what is the paper about?)

and the objectives (what for?); also, how it connects with previous research on your topic. The longest part of the paper should be the **development**, which can vary depending on the kind of paper you are writing. In most cases (but follow the instructions of your teacher or supervisor), it includes two sections in which you analyse the main arguments in support of your thesis statement on the basis of textual evidence from the work studied. The paper finishes with a **Conclusion**, in which you summarize what you have discussed (**never add new information**). It can also include issues for further research.

The sections must be balanced and proportionate, that is, for example, in a ten-page paper, the introduction should not occupy more than 2 pages at the very most, and the main body of the paper should be about 6/7 pages. The conclusion should be even shorter, about half the length of the introduction (1 page).

3. Edition: Basic instructions

All papers must have a **cover page**, with the following information: your name, title of the paper/project/assignment/TFG/TFM, name of subject/degree, teacher's/supervisor's name, date and [UAB logo](#). After the cover page come the **Statement of Intellectual Honesty** and the **Table of Contents**,¹ which is a list of the sections of the paper together with the page numbers. An **Index of Tables and Figures** must be included, if necessary, on the page following the Table of Contents. If you use illustrations, there is no need to include an index. This is followed the **Acknowledgements** (if present) and the **Abstract**.

Papers must be written with **double spacing** (except for the abstract, long quotations, the reference list and the notes, which are single-spaced). Use **Times New**

¹ The Tables of Contents must be created automatically in *Word* using the Title styles for your section titles.

Roman font, **size 12** for the text (section titles included) and the references, Times Roman **size 18** for the title on the cover page, and Times New Roman **size 11** for the abstract, long quotations and notes. The title of the paper and the main section headings (e.g., **2.2.1 Neologisms**) should be in **bold**, and all sections must be **numbered**.² **Margins** should be left on both sides of the page (3 cm), and at the top and the bottom (2.5 cm). The text should be fully **justified**.

Page numbering is a little complex. The cover page, Statement of Intellectual Honesty, Table of Contents, Acknowledgments page (if present) and Abstract are not numbered. Numbering starts on the first page of the Introduction.³ Leave a **blank space** before a new section, but not between paragraphs. The first line of paragraphs must be indented (1.25 cm) (in *Paràgraf > Especial > Primera línia*) **except** the first line of each section.

You may use **footnotes** but restrict them to giving extra information (do not use them for referencing secondary sources). The following are examples of useful notes:

- Additional examples of the concept or idea you are discussing.
- More evidence to support the statement you are making.
- Notes to draw reader's attention to other works dealing with a similar concept.

Notes must be numbered by superscripts, **after punctuation marks**. Use the tool *Referències* in *Word*.

² If the Introduction has sub-sections they must be numbered, too: 0.1, 0.2. You can only number sub-sections if there is more than one (you cannot have a subsection 1.1 if there is no subsection 1.2).

³ This can be a bit daunting, but do not get discouraged. You can do it using *Salts de secció + desvincular* in *Word*.

Diagrams, tables, graphs, figures, maps and illustrations must be labelled and numbered. Place a descriptive caption underneath in font size 11 (e.g., Table 5. Statistics for literacy in Australia 1905-1925).

The list of works you quote from or refer to in your paper must be included in the section **Works Cited**, which occurs after the Conclusion, and before the Appendix (if there is one). There is more information about this issue in Section 9.

4. Paragraphs

A paper should be written in full and well-developed paragraphs. The idea dealt with in each paragraph is announced in the initial sentence, called *topic sentence*. The sentences in a paragraph should be well connected: develop your ideas and link them up correctly with the help of words and phrases such as *however*, *in spite of*, *on the other hand* or *besides* (but try to avoid *moreover*). Use connectors sensibly, however, never in excess. If you have doubts about when and how to use them, you can consult a reliable English grammar. Please note:

- Do **not use bullet points** unless they are absolutely justified.
- Avoid short paragraphs and never write **one-sentence** paragraphs.
- Do not begin paragraphs (or sentences) with the conjunctions *and*, *or* or *but*.
- Do not start a paragraph with a quote.

5. Sentences

All sentences must have a **subject** and a **finite verb**. In English it is not possible to join two independent clauses by a comma; (1) is ungrammatical and (2) is grammatical:

- (1) *Students often join two separate clauses with a comma, this is incorrect.

(2) Students often join two separate clauses with a comma, which is incorrect.

In (2) we can see subordination; other options are coordination (with *and*) or the use of colons and semi-colons. Try to vary the structures you use, and avoid unnecessarily long sentences, particularly those with several embedded clauses (quite frequent in Catalan or Spanish). As for **punctuation**, bear in mind that the word right after a colon must be capitalised.

6. Language (register and tone)

The language used should be formal both in register and tone:

- Avoid informal or colloquial expressions such as *stuff like that, anyway, a lot of*.
- Avoid all-purpose words such as *thing, fact, idea*. Find more specific vocabulary.
- Do not use contractions.
- Do not use abbreviations.
- Use ONLY black ink.
- Do not use ... to indicate *etc*.
- Do not use informal expressions such as *I think, I suppose* (you may use *In my view, From my point of view, etc.*).
- Do not use *he* as a generic pronoun (use the plural instead).
- Be careful with unclear pronoun references.
- Do not rely on the same words all the time (e.g., *important* or *interesting*). Use the Thesaurus function (Shift+F7) in *Word* for variety.
- Proof-read your paper, to make sure that there are no typing mistakes, well in advance of the deadline.

7. Metalanguage

Metalanguage is language used to talk about another language, called the object language.

It is marked with **italics**. If it is not clearly marked, confusion may arise. If the object language is not marked, this clause is ungrammatical: see the difference between (3) and (4). Italics is also used when mentioning words in another language, as in (5).

(3) If you say the word and make sure that you pronounce the final sound.

(4) If you say the word *and* make sure that you pronounce the final sound.

(5) The French word for pencil is *crayon*.

8. Quotations

A good scholar always refers to other scholars' work. However, a large number of quotes and references does not imply that it is automatically a good paper. Include only those quotes and references which you have understood and are related to what you are discussing.

The quotations in your paper prove that you have engaged in the on-going debate around the topic of your choice. You may use them to include information you yourself cannot know, to support an opinion you present, or even to contradict it. It is very important to acknowledge other people's words and ideas, in order to avoid **plagiarism**. Acknowledgement is carried out, as you can see in the following examples, by including the author's surname (+ optional comma) and the page number(s) in parentheses: (Smith 98).⁴

⁴ If you use this simpler format and quote from different works by the same scholar, you should use an abbreviated form of the title: (Said *Orientalism* 175), (Said *Culture* 83).

8.1 Direct quotations

When using a direct quotation (i.e., the author's exact words) you must consider its length.

- If you quote **fewer than 50 words**, the quotation should be embedded in your text and placed between double inverted commas (“...”), with the same type and line spacing.

EXAMPLE

There can be no doubt that “Kipling was a historical being as well as a major artist” (Said 135).⁵

- If the quotation is **longer than 50 words**, these should be separated from your text by one space before and after, indented (1 cm both sides), single-spaced and size 11. They are introduced by a colon and preceded by some remark such as “As Hobsbawm argues”. In this case you do not need to use quotation marks (except for dialogue).

EXAMPLE

We may have to take into account important class factors:

The truth is that the foundations of a British society dominated by the landed classes all collapsed together with and during the Great Depression. Landownership ceased, with some exceptions, to be the basis of great wealth, and became merely a status symbol. Trade and finance maintained their façade. (Hobsbawm 202)

- If you quote an author, **not by direct consultation** but because you have found them quoted in another source, you should indicate this as in:

EXAMPLE

In Louis Zukofsky's “Sincerity and Objectification” (qtd. in Costello 78)

⁵ The full stop must be placed after the parenthesis.

- You may **skip some words** in quotations that might be irrelevant to the point you are making. Indicate this with (...).

EXAMPLE

We may have to take into account important class factors: “The truth is that the foundations of a British society dominated by the landed classes all collapsed together with and during the Great Depression. (...) Trade and finance maintained their façade” (Hobsbawm 202).

8.2 Indirect quotations

- If instead of using the author’s exact words you are using their idea or theory, the reference to the author and their work should be included in parentheses as follows:

EXAMPLE

According to Said, Kipling is not only a historical being, but also an artist (Said).

OR

EXAMPLE

Kipling is not only a historical being, but also an artist (Said 135).

- If you refer to the work of various scholars, order them alphabetically and separate them by semicolons.

EXAMPLE

To continue, the tropes of silence and sensory explorations are brought to the fore by reference to non-Western approaches to trauma healing presented (Craps; Ekine; Norridge).

8.3 For all kinds of quotes and paraphrases

- Work by **three authors** (or more) should include only the author's surname followed by "et al." Page number(s) should always appear between parentheses.

EXAMPLE

According to Smit et al. the influence of the social media on contemporary literature has been understudied (532).

OR

EXAMPLE

The influence of the social media on contemporary literature has been understudied (Smith et al. 532).

- If there are two or more authors, use *and* between the authors' names within the text and use the ampersand (&) in the parentheses.

9. Works Cited

The Works Cited list names all the sources from which you have borrowed direct and indirect quotations and information. Do not include sources you may have read but do not quote from. They must be organised with the author's surnames in **alphabetical order**. Each type of source (book, book chapter, journal, etc.) follows particular conventions.

Please use the ones presented here in your work, and also use *Sagnia francesa* at 1.25 cm for text in the References (an option within *Paràgraf > Especial in Word*).

- **BOOKS:**

Basic format: Author's Surname, Full first name. *Title of Book*. City of publication, Publisher, Year of publication.

[Please note that the city of publication should only be used if the book was published before 1900 and the publisher has offices in more than one country.]

EXAMPLE

Noble, David W. *The End of American History*. University of Minnesota Press, 1985.

Books with one author: Author's Surname, Full first name. *Title of Book*. Publisher, Year of publication.

EXAMPLE

Said, Edward W. *Orientalism*. Pantheon Books, 1978.

Books with two authors: Author's Surname, Full first name, and Full first name Surname.⁶ *Title of Book*. Publisher, Year of Publication.

EXAMPLE

Gillerspie, Laura, and Neal Lerner. *The Allyn and Bacon Guide to Peer Tutoring*. Allyn and Bacon, 2000.

⁶ This is valid for all types of references: books, chapters in books, articles in academic journals, etc.

Books with three or more authors: Author's Surname, Full first name, et al.⁷ *Title of Book*. Publisher, Year of Publication.

EXAMPLE

Wysocki, Anne Frances, et al. *Writing New Media: Theory and Applications for Expanding the Teaching of Composition*. Utah State UP, 2004.

Books by a corporate author or organization: Name of organization. *Title of Book*. Publisher, Year of publication.

EXAMPLE

American Allergy Association. *Allergies in Children*. Random House, 1998.

Books with no author: *Title of Book*. Publisher, Year of publication.

EXAMPLE

Encyclopaedia of Indiana. Somerset, 1993.

Edited books: Author's Surname, Full first name & Full first name Surname (Ed./Eds.). (Year of publication). *Title of Book*. Publisher.

EXAMPLE

Hill, Charles A., and Marguerite Helmers, editors. *Defining Visual Rhetorics*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2004.

E-books: Author's Surname & Full first name Surname. (Year of publication). *Title of Book*. E-book. Publisher.

EXAMPLE

Silvia, Paul. *How to Write a Lot: A Practical Guide to Productive Academic Writing*. E-book. American Psychological Association, 2007.

⁷ This is valid for all types of references: books, chapters in books, articles in academic journals, etc.

- **CHAPTERS IN COLLECTIVE VOLUMES:**

Basic format: Author's Surname, Full first name. "Title of Chapter". *Title of the Collective Volume*, edited by Editor's Full first name Surname, Publisher, year of publication, pp. page range.

EXAMPLE

Crush, Jonathan. "Post-colonialism, De-colonialism, and Geography". *Geography and Empire*, edited by Anne Godlewska, and Neil Smith. Blackwell, 1994, pp. 333-350.

- **ARTICLES IN ACADEMIC JOURNALS:**

Basic format: Author's Surname, Full first name. "Title of Article". *Title of Journal*, vol. volume, no. number, year of publication, pp. page range. doi: doi number (if available).

EXAMPLE

Mulvey, Laura. "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema". *Screen*, vol. 16, no. 3, 1975, pp. 6-18.⁸

EXAMPLE

Robbins, Michael. "Paul Muldoon's Covert Operations". *Modern Philology*, vol. 109, no. 2, 1975, pp. 266-99. doi: 10.1086/663233.

Articles in academic e-journals that also appear in print: Author's Surname, Full first name. "Title of Article". *Title of Journal*, vol. volume, no. number, year of publication, pp. page range, URL. Accessed Day Month Year.

EXAMPLE

Wheelis, Mark. "Investigating Disease Outbreaks Under a Protocol to the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention." *Emerging Infectious Diseases*, vol. 6, no. 6, 2000, pp. 595-600, www.nc.cdc.gov/eid/article/6/6/00-0607_article. Accessed 8 February 2009.

⁸ Remember that if the article title includes the title of a book, film, TV series or videogame, it must be in italics.

- **ARTICLES IN WEBSITES:**

Basic format: Author's surname, Full first name. "Title of Article". *Title of Website*, date of original publication Day Month Year. URL. Accessed Day Month Year.

EXAMPLE

Berardinelli, James. "Casablanca". *Reelviews*, 14 May 2003. <https://www.reelviews/casablanca>. Accessed 16 November 2020.

- **INTERNET RESOURCES:**

An entire website: *Name of Website*, URL. Accessed Day Month Year.

EXAMPLE

David Perdue's Charles Dickens Page, <http://charlesdickenspage.com/>. Accessed 21 May 2010.

Section in website, without author: "Title of Section", *Name of Website*, URL. Accessed Day Month Year.

EXAMPLE

The Arts in Victorian Britain. *The Victorian Web*, <http://www.victorianweb.org/art/index.html>. Accessed 21 May 2010.

Section in website, with author: "Title of Page", *Name of Website*, URL. Accessed Day Month Year.

EXAMPLE

Lundman, Susan. "How to Make Vegetarian Chili." *eHow*. www.ehow.com/how_10727_make-vegetarian-chili.html. Accessed 6 July 2015.

- **THESES (doctoral or masters):**

Basic format: Author's Surname, Full first name. *Title of Thesis*. Year of elaboration. University, type of document. URL (if available).

EXAMPLE

Bishop, Karen Lynn. *Documenting Institutional Identity: Strategic Writing in the IUPUI Comprehensive Campaign*. 2002. Purdue University, PhD dissertation.

EXAMPLE

Espejo Navas, Cristina. *The New Fairy Tale: Subverting Genre and Characterization in Diana Wynne-Jones Howl's Moving Castle and its Film Adaptation*. 2021. Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, M.A. dissertation. <https://ddd.uab.cat/record/255182?ln=en>.

Before you hand in your paper take the time to proofread it carefully and make any necessary corrections. Careless typing errors and obvious misspellings will not dispose the reader towards you favourably.