Undergraduate Study Skills Guide

2016-17

- BA History of Art
- BA History of Art Major/Minor
- BA History of Art and English
- BA Film Studies and Visual Arts
- BA Film Studies Major/Minor
- BA Film Studies and English
- BA Film and Media Studies
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Introduction

This Study Skills guide is designed to give you information on how to present your work at the standard undergraduate study requires. There are guidelines on how to format your essays correctly and how to cite and reference other works you might be called on to use. Alongside these notes, you will find information on assessment and the marking process. We include tables of marking criteria to show the ways in which different types of work are graded, and information on the university regulations on submitted work. We hope that this guide proves accessible and helpful, but please do not forget that your seminar tutors and Personal Tutor are always available to give you further advice.

Students taking degrees with subjects in other departments will also be provided with handbooks (hard copy and/or electronic) from those departments.

Undergraduate Student Handbook

This guide should be read in conjunction with the History of Art and Film online Undergraduate Student Handbook which can be found on the School’s website http://www2.le.ac.uk/departments/arthistory/staffandstudents It is vital that you follow all instructions contained in both books to give you the best chance of success in your studies.

Notes on the Writing and Presentation of Written Work

General

Subject

Think carefully about the question you are being asked to answer. Do you understand what the question means? What tone does the form of words imply? Do you agree with the statement you are asked to discuss or not (assuming it is that kind of question)? Adopt a critical attitude to the question. It will matter less which way you incline than that you support your argument well.

Organisation

The introduction should analyse the issues raised by the question; the main body of the essay should discuss these issues one by one, perhaps paragraph by paragraph, giving examples to support your argument. The conclusion will pull together the various strands of argument and contain a final and extended statement of your position on the question posed. In order to achieve this degree of organisation a rough copy, or at least preliminary notes, should be made.

Length

The word length for essays is stated in the module guides: it may vary from one module to another. Essays significantly over or under the prescribed length may be penalized. In view of this, ponder carefully what to bring into the essay and what to leave out: are those extra facts you wish to add pertinent, or are they
superfluous? Is your answer balanced, or is it lop-sided? The shorter the essay, the more vital such points become.

**Spelling**

If you are unsure of a word – whether the spelling or the meaning – look it up. Make sure you can spell the names of filmmakers, artists, and other people correctly, and that you can spell technical terms both in English and in foreign languages (e.g. quattrocento, mis en scene, chiaroscuro or quadratura). It is conventional to italicise such foreign words where they have not become part of everyday usage in English. Thus, for example, café, and cliché are not usually italicised but arrondissement and Weltanschauung are. You are strongly advised to **spell check and proof read** all written work before submitting it, preferably more than once, particularly given the easy availability of spelling functions in word processing programmes.

**Presentation**

1. Make sure you put your student number on each page along with the page number. The module number and title should appear on page 1.

2. Maintain a margin of about 2.5 to 3 cms; indenting the beginning of paragraphs a further 1 cm.

3. Any quotations longer than two or three lines of text should be treated as separate paragraphs and indented an additional 1 cm. on either side so that they look like this:

   Any quotations longer than two or three lines of text should be treated as separate paragraphs and indented an additional 1 cm. on either side so that they look like this.

4. Titles in the text, whether of books, films, or works of art, should be italicised. Titles of articles, essays or chapters in books or periodicals should not be italicised - but should be in quotation marks. Here are four examples:


5. Film titles should be in italics. The first time you refer to a specific film in any essay or other written work, you should identify the surname of the director and the year of release in the film’s country of origin in brackets immediately after the title itself (it is only necessary to do this once for each film, for the first reference only, and not subsequently throughout the essay). For example:


   The title of a television programme should be italics but use single quotation marks for the title of an individual episode. If citing the whole series give the give its start and end dates, for example:


   If citing an individual episode give the relevant series and episode number and date, for example:

   ‘The one with the routine’ (SE6, EP 10, 1999).

6. For works of art, the date should be given in brackets. For example:

   Gustav Klimt’s *Portrait of Hermine Gallia* (1904).
Where pertinent (for example, in a list of illustrations), the location of the work must be given (museum, gallery, collection, etc.), together with the date, medium and dimensions (with height preceding width). For example:


7. Especially when writing about motion pictures, you may have occasion to discuss large numbers - for example, audience statistics or box office revenues. In such cases it is acceptable to abbreviate “million” to “m.” and “billion” to “bn.” For example:

In 1946 weekly admissions to US cinemas averaged 100 million. This figure fell to 46 million by 1955 and to 15 million in 1969. Film production, in line with this fall, dropped from the 1930s average of 500 features per year to 383 in 1950, 254 in 1955 and less than 100 in 1969. Box office receipts fell from $1.8bn. to $900m. from 1946 to 1962 and to $350m. in 1970.

8. All coursework must be typed. All typing must be double-spaced (with the exception of indented quotations, footnotes or endnotes, and bibliographies, all of which may be single-). Handwritten work is not acceptable except under exceptional circumstances and with permission in advance from your tutor.

References and Bibliography

It is generally true that the more books you read, the better you will be able to arrive at a balanced point of view. Any balanced essay, therefore, will require consultation of books (this does not necessarily mean reading them from cover to cover) and articles which you should read critically in the light of the visual evidence.

It is vital that you acknowledge the sources of your information both in references (footnotes or endnotes) and in a bibliography, and that you abide by the departmental conventions. Otherwise you may be committing plagiarism.

The Library provides general help on referencing and more information can be found here [http://www2.le.ac.uk/library/help/referencing/referencing](http://www2.le.ac.uk/library/help/referencing/referencing) and here [http://www2.le.ac.uk/library/help/referencing/footnote](http://www2.le.ac.uk/library/help/referencing/footnote). You can also arrange one-to-one help or chat online.

Footnotes/Endnotes

When you include a direct quotation or a paraphrase in your work, or where you borrow an important idea from another source, you must give a reference for it, in the form of a superscript number in the text, with a corresponding numbered note either at the foot of the page [footnotes] or at the end of the essay, before the bibliography [endnotes]. You should not use footnotes and endnotes together in the same essay. The footnote or endnote must give the following details in precise order, to enable the reference to be checked. For example, to refer to an essay by Douglas Tallack in a book edited by Maria Balshaw and Liam Kennedy:

For Douglas Tallack, the emergence of New York as paradigmatic of a distinctive American modernity was effectively ensured in 1898 with the consolidation of the five boroughs into one city, New York City.¹ ...


Here the order of information in the footnote is: author (first name, surname), title of essay (in quotation marks), “in”, editors, title of book (in italics), place of publication, publisher, date of publication, and pages.
(Note that, wherever possible, it is preferable to give the first name of an author rather than just an initial). This is called the 'first full reference'. Subsequent references in your essay to the same book need not give all of this information again and again: instead subsequent references may be of the 'short reference' type. For example, a later reference to Tallack would simply look like this:

Tallack, p.34.

Note the following main types of reference:

1. **To books**: Give author/editor, title (in italics), the place of publication, the publisher, the date of publication, and page(s). Here is an example of a full reference and a short reference:


   Gadol, p.63.

2. **To essays in edited books**: Give author, title of essay (in quotation marks), "in" editor, title of book, place of publication, publisher, date of publication and page(s). For example:


   Heydenreich, p.223.

3. **To articles in periodicals**: Give author, title of article (in quotation marks), title of periodical (in italics), volume, issue number (if any), date, and page(s). For example:


   Fulks, p.30.

4. **To distinguish works by the same author**: If, for example, you refer to three books (or articles, essays, etc.) by the same author in your essay you will need to give a little more information in your short references to avoid confusing them. For examples, three books by Gombrich:


   Short references to these might be distinguished as follows:


   Gombrich, *Ideals and Idols*, pp.100-104.


5. **To distinguish authors with the same surname**: Though it is not usually necessary to give the author’s first name in short references, it is necessary to do so if you refer in your essay to two or more authors who share a surname.

6. **To websites**: You may well consult sites on the Internet. Below are some guidelines for you to follow. Useful sources on the Internet include scholarly projects; reference databases; the texts of books; articles in

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periodicals; and professional and personal sites. If you have consulted any of these, references should be cited as follows:

(a) Name of author, editor, compiler, or translator of the source.
(b) Title of an article within a scholarly project, database or periodical (in quotation marks); or title of a posting to a discussion list or forum, followed by the description Online posting, or title of a book (in italics).
(c) Title of the scholarly project, database, periodical, or professional or personal site (underlined); or for a professional or personal site with no title, a description such as Home Page.
(d) Date of electronic publication, of the latest update, or of posting (where known).
(e) The number of pages, or other sections (if they are numbered).
(f) Name of any institution or organization sponsoring or associated with the website.
(g) Date on which you viewed the site (e.g. 1 August 2014).
(h) Electronic address, or URL, of the source (angle brackets); for example:

Be careful when you use the Internet, discriminating between well-documented sites and badly written ones with poor references. Speak to your tutor if you are unclear. You are strongly advised not to rely on non-referenced and general information websites such as Wikipedia.

Bibliography

Works cited should be listed in a bibliography at the end of the essay, arranged alphabetically by the surname of the author or editor. For example:


Illustrations for Essays and Dissertations

Illustrations may be used in written work unless the topic chosen does not require them - for example, an essay on theory. Illustrations should be used only where the content of your essay or dissertation requires it, rather than for their own sake or simply for visual impact.

It is important to remember that the whole essay will be examined, which includes the presentation of illustrations. Particular care is required when presenting illustrations. Illustrations should be placed together at the end of the work in a section with the heading “Illustrations”. Each illustration must have its own caption. You should also number the illustrations and refer to these numbers in your text, where applicable, so that your reader may refer to the appropriate illustration. The standard system of numbering
illustrations is “Fig.1”, “Fig.2”, “Fig.3”, etc. Finally, you should provide a list of all your illustrations - either at the end of your essay, before the illustrations themselves, or (in the case of a long essay or dissertation) at the beginning of the work, just after the title page and the table of contents.

For your illustrations you may use scanned images, postcards, photographs, digital video grabs, or any other illustrative material you choose. If you need to make your own reproductions, scans or photocopies will generally provide you with consistent, good quality colour and black/white images.

If you need further advice on how to use illustrations, please ask your tutor.

**Dissertation Presentation and Submission**

A separate Dissertation Handbook will be made available to you for the dissertation module.

**Assessment and Examinations**

**Frequently Asked Questions**

**How do I submit assessed work for History of Art & Film?**

You must submit your assessed work through Blackboard, please see individual module details for information. Click on ‘Assignments’ for the relevant course. Essays and assignments should be submitted by **12.00 noon** on the deadline date.

Turnitin software accepts the following file types: Word, Text, Postscript, PDF, HTML, and RTF. You should make sure that you submit your assignments by their due date to avoid any marks being deducted for lateness. Penalties for late submission of coursework follow the University scheme defined in Regulations governing the assessment of taught programmes (see [www.le.ac.uk/senate-regulation7](http://www.le.ac.uk/senate-regulation7) or [www.le.ac.uk/sas/assessments/late-submission](http://www.le.ac.uk/sas/assessments/late-submission)).

**When are my assignments due in?**

Information on individual module assignments is available on Blackboard. You are urged to plan your work in advance of the deadline in order to avoid any last-minute problems with printers, travel etc.

**How can I improve my essay marks?**

For a general description of the characteristics of 1st, 2nd- and 3rd class work, please see the [Marking Criteria](#) later in this Guide. It is vital that you read through (and act upon) any feedback given to you, whether written on your marked essays by your tutor or delivered verbally. Should you require any additional feedback you may consult with your [Personal Tutor](#). Another useful resource is the [Learning Development Team](#); contact them on [studyhelp@le.ac.uk](mailto:studyhelp@le.ac.uk).

**What happens if I have problems with my work?**

If you are experiencing problems that you are unable to solve for yourself it is important to report them promptly. If the problems are strictly academic (i.e. you are experiencing difficulties with the course content or with modes of assessment such as essay writing) your seminar tutor would be the most likely reference point. Failing that you should contact your [Personal Tutor](#).
Mitigating Circumstances

The University recognises that students may suffer from a sudden illness or other serious event or set of circumstances which adversely affects their ability to complete an assessment or the results they obtain for an assessment. In such cases the mitigating circumstances regulations and procedures may be applied. These regulations are designed to ensure the fair and consistent treatment of all students.

You must keep your department(s) informed at all times of any personal circumstances that may impact upon your ability to study or undertake assessments. Tell your department(s) or Distance Learning Hub about any such circumstances at the time they occur. You need to supply supporting documentation (e.g. a medical certificate) as soon as possible and no later than the deadline relevant to the assessment(s) affected. Normally, the deadline for submission of a mitigating circumstances claim will be no later than five working days after the assessment deadline to which it relates.

See www.le.ac.uk/sas/regulations/mitigation for full details of the mitigating circumstances regulations and procedures, including the University’s definition of a mitigating circumstance.

A student may submit a mitigating circumstances claim if they feel that the submission of one or more pieces of work has been or will be affected by a serious or significant event. You will be automatically enrolled on a Blackboard site titled Mitigating Circumstances through which you should submit your form and evidence.

If a student has submitted a mitigating circumstances form along with supporting evidence, their case will be considered by the Mitigating Circumstances Panel. Our Mitigating Circumstances Panel meets weekly during term-time. Its membership comprises colleagues from the School of Arts, which allows us to schedule regular Mitigating Circumstances Panel meetings so as to present timely responses to our students. Please note that student confidentiality is of utmost importance to the Mitigating Circumstances Panel, and specific information will never be disclosed outside of the Mitigating Circumstances Panel.

The Mitigating Circumstances Panel has the power to make one of the following recommendations:

a. To waive a lateness penalty automatically applied to a piece of coursework will be or has been submitted after the submission deadline
b. To be provided with an opportunity to take a piece/pieces of assessment again, as if the first time, with the full marks available (i.e. not capped at 50) rather than imposing a cap
c. determine that there is sufficient evidence of the achievement of the intended learning outcomes from other pieces of assessment in the module(s) for an overall mark to be derived;
d. The mitigating circumstances be noted against a module so that the Board of Examiners can take this into account when making a decision about the degree classification being awarded

Students should submit evidence of mitigating circumstances within five working days of the relevant assessment deadline. You can expect to receive a decision (via email) in relation to your form and evidence within ten working days of this having been submitted.

We do not change your marks or set a lower attainment level.

Requirements and Degree Classifications

Academic Obligations: A Summary Statement

Students joining the school of Arts undertake:

- to attend all seminars, classes, and tutorials. Classes start on the hour and finish 10 minutes before the published end time to allow time for travel to the next class
• to attend lectures
• if unable for any reason to attend a seminar, class, or tutorial, to provide the relevant tutor with an explanation – preferably in advance – of the reasons for absence and also to complete the online absence form.
• to perform all reading and other preparatory work set by tutors
• to contribute in a well-prepared and constructive manner to seminar discussion
• to produce all written work set by tutors by the deadlines laid down
• to present all written work in a clear and legible form according to the Department’s requirements, outlined earlier in this Guide
• to ensure that the university has their current term-time and vacation addresses
• to remain in attendance during the full period of each term
• to be available during the September resit period, if required

**Mark Scheme**

The official marking scheme for University examinations is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mark Range</th>
<th>Degree Class</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>70% or above</td>
<td>First Class Honours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60% - 69%</td>
<td>Upper Second Class Honours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50% - 59%</td>
<td>Lower Second Class Honours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40% - 49%</td>
<td>Third Class Honours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35% - 40%</td>
<td>Pass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34% or below</td>
<td>Fail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade</td>
<td>Fail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
<td>---------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fail</td>
<td>Little relevance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Little subject knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Little analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Little evidence of independent thought, derivative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Little or no logical agreement or thought about the problem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Widespread lack of intelligibility, inarticulate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The conventions of referencing have not been learned; the work has not been proofread</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marking Criteria for Oral Presentations</td>
<td>Relevance to the question</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upper Second</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence of careful and resourceful</td>
<td>Evidence of some careful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reading and thought. Directly</td>
<td>reading and thought.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>relevant to the topic</td>
<td>Mainly relevant to the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>topic</td>
<td>topic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orderly and clear structure. Systematic</td>
<td>Fairly clear structure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>signposting</td>
<td>Substantial effort made in signposting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Detailed and thorough analysis. Clear</td>
<td>Usually thorough analysis, going into some detail.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>effort made to weigh up evidence</td>
<td>Fairly clear structure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>carefully</td>
<td>Substantial effort made in signposting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>very good command of critical language</td>
<td>clarity. Largely accurate use of critical language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good time keeping and well paced</td>
<td>An ability to keep to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>delivery</td>
<td>agreed time and an attempt to keep the delivery paced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very good ability to establish eye-</td>
<td>Good ability to establish eye-contact, to directly address and to engage the audience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>contact, to directly address</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and to engage the audience</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assured use of aids, which are well</td>
<td>Fairly confident use of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>integrated, directly relevant to the</td>
<td>aids, which are largely well integrated, relevant to the presentation and clear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>presentation and very clear</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge, and relevance of content</td>
<td>Evidence of systematic, independently-minded reading and thought. Directly relevant to the nuances of the topic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisation of material</td>
<td>Remarkably meticulous and clear structure. Skilful and subtle signposting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical analysis and evaluation of material</td>
<td>Subtle, detailed and independent-minded analysis. Confident and balanced evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clarity and range of expression</td>
<td>Highly articulate, fluent, wide-ranging expression with strong command of critical language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pace and timing</td>
<td>Excellent time keeping and excellent delivery pace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engagement/rapport with audience</td>
<td>Excellent ability to establish eye-contact, to directly address and to engage the audience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of handout, visual and other aids</td>
<td>Highly confident use of aids, which are fully integrated, thoroughly relevant to the presentation, and entirely clear</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

You must always be sure that you credit ideas, data, information, quotations and illustrations to their original author. Not to do so is plagiarism: the repetition or paraphrasing of someone else’s work without proper acknowledgement.

The University expects students to conduct their studies with exemplary standards of academic honesty and will penalise students who submit work, or parts of work, that have been:

- plagiarised;
- completed with others for individual assessment (collusion);
- previously submitted for assessment, including self-plagiarism;
- prepared by others;
- supplied to another for copying.

Plagiarism and collusion

Plagiarism is used as a general term to describe taking and using another’s thoughts and writings as one’s own. Examples of forms of plagiarism include:

- the verbatim (word for word) copying of another’s work without appropriate and correctly presented acknowledgement;
- the close paraphrasing of another’s work by simply changing a few words or altering the order of presentation, without appropriate and correctly presented acknowledgement;
- unacknowledged quotation of phrases from another’s work;
- the deliberate and detailed presentation of another’s concept as one’s own;
- reproduction of a student’s own work when it has been previously submitted and marked but is presented as original material (self-plagiarism).

Any student who prepares or produces work with others and then submits it for assessment as if it were the product of his/her individual efforts (collusion) will be penalised. Unless specifically instructed otherwise, all work you submit for assessment should be your own and should not have been previously submitted for assessment either at Leicester or elsewhere.

Penalties

The University regards plagiarism and collusion as very serious offences and so they are subject to strict penalties. The penalties that departments are authorised to apply are defined in the Regulations governing student discipline (see online Student Handbook for link to current regulations).

Avoiding Plagiarism and Poor Academic Practice

If you are in any doubt about what constitutes good practice, ask your personal/academic tutors for advice or make an appointment with Learning Development for individual advice.

Remember that the Department requires that you upload all coursework to Turnitin, plagiarism checking software that will automatically identify any uncredited material in your essays. Submission information is shown for each module on Blackboard.