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Important

By the end of your second undergraduate year, you should have made contact with your allocated dissertation supervisor and, in consultation with him/her, have identified your topic. During the summer vacation before your final year, you should have begun the reading of the related secondary literature (in some cases, depending upon the nature of your topic, you may also have started researching primary sources).

If you still do not have a supervisor or topic, you must immediately contact the School’s Dissertation Officer, Dr. Richard Butler (rjb86@le.ac.uk).
Module Requirements and Deadlines

Progress Report
The progress report, containing a summary of the independent work which you have done so far and a plan for the dissertation’s development, must be submitted by midnight on Monday, 17 October 2016. In order to ensure that all students are under way with a viable topic, submission of the progress report is a mandatory requirement. It must be submitted in the same way as other coursework, i.e. in electronic form via the module Blackboard site. You will receive feedback on the report, but it is not given a numerical mark and does not contribute to the module mark.

Workshop
The workshop is a group meeting with your supervisor which will focus on the planning and writing of the dissertation. This may take place either during the final weeks of the autumn term or during the examination period of 9-20 January 2017, as convenient. If any preparatory documentation is expected, this will be explained by your supervisor.

Dissertation
The dissertation, of maximum 10,000 words, must be submitted by 12.00 noon on Wednesday, 3 May 2017. Instructions on the submission procedure to be followed are on the next page.

THE WORD LIMIT OF A MAXIMUM OF 10,000 WORDS APPLIES TO THE MAIN BODY OF THE TEXT – THE INTRODUCTION, THE CHAPTERS AND THE CONCLUSION – AND INCLUDES ALL CHAPTER HEADINGS, QUOTATIONS, REFERENCES (i.e., FOOTNOTES), AND APPENDICES; ADDED TOGETHER THESE MUST CONSIST OF NO MORE THAN 10,000 WORDS. The word limit does not apply to the title page, abstract, acknowledgements, contents page, further contents pages, list of abbreviations, and the bibliography. The word limit also does not apply to any tables, graphs, diagrams, charts, maps, pictures or other illustrative material in the text or appendices, or to their captions and sources (provided that both of these are brief and purely descriptive).

Mitigating Circumstances and Problems Meeting the Deadline Date
Under University Regulations, the School’s Mitigating Circumstances Panel may set a revised deadline, provided that appropriate evidence is submitted to the Mitigating Circumstances Panel before the deadline. If you are encountering difficulties and wish to apply for consideration of a revised deadline, it is essential that you inform the School Office who will facilitate your application. However, if you are unable to obtain the necessary evidence before the deadline but there are mitigating circumstances which were a contributory factor in the failure to meet the course deadline, then you can apply to have the late submission penalties removed. We want to work closely with you to ensure you do not incur late submission penalties unnecessarily if you have mitigating circumstances. The dissertation contributes so substantially to your degree that it would be very unwise not to seek advice about your specific circumstances, even if you are confident that you will have sufficient and suitable evidence of mitigating circumstances to substantiate a case for the waiver of any late submission penalties. It is therefore important that if you are encountering difficulties, you should inform your Supervisor and the School Office.

Whatever the reasons for late submission, it is important to stress that we cannot guarantee that a dissertation can be marked if it is submitted after the start of the Midsummer examination period, which is Monday, 15 May 2017. It is therefore essential that you consult the School Office (history@le.ac.uk) if you think that you may not meet the deadline.

Submission Procedure
The procedure for submitting the dissertation is different from that of other coursework, as you are required to submit a hard copy as well as an electronic copy. Both of these must be submitted by the deadline notified on
page 4, and late submission penalties according to the standard system will apply if either the paper or the electronic copy is submitted after this time will be subject to late submission penalties according to the standard system.

You are very strongly advised to take no risks with the submission deadline, as the lateness penalty applies to the mark given to the dissertation as a whole, which then becomes your mark for the two 20-credit modules HS3501 and HS3502. The loss of ten marks (or more) from two modules could have a very detrimental effect upon your degree result, and you should therefore give yourself a good safety margin for the printing it out and bringing in the hard copy (including not relying on travelling in from outside Leicester on the submission day).

After submitting the dissertation, you must retain your notes and working files until you are notified of your mark, which will be after the meeting of the Board of Examiners and at the same time as your degree classification. This is in case any queries arise during the marking process, particularly in relation to plagiarism

The submission procedure is as follows:

**Hard Copy**

The paper copy of your dissertation must be enclosed in a red folder, which can be collected from the School Office (the dissertation should not be bound). You will be notified when these are available for collection.

Complete a coursework coversheet as usual and place this on top of your dissertation, inside the red folder. Do not physically attach the coversheet to your work.

The paper copy must be submitted in person at the School Office on the 7th floor of the Attenborough Building. The School Office is open during normal office hours on Monday to Friday, except for bank holidays, when the university is closed.

**Electronic Copy**

The file size limit for the electronic submission of your dissertation to Turnitin is 20MB. If there are images in your dissertation, the file size may exceed this limit. If this is the case and you are unable to submit your dissertation, then:

(a) make a second copy of your dissertation under another filename (for example, add ‘images removed’ in brackets to the original filename), and then delete the images in this copy and submit it as normal through Turnitin*, and

(b) and also email a copy of the original dissertation, with images included, to histsubmit@le.ac.uk.

*NB: It is important to ensure that only the actual images are removed, but all captions and sources remain.

If you experience any problems with this, contact the School Office as soon as possible (history@le.ac.uk, 0116 252 2587). Do not leave it until after the deadline to let us know of any problems, as you then might still be subject to late mark penalties.

Please note that when a large number of people upload documents at the same time to Turnitin, the submission process may take longer than usual. However, the electronic receipt should be sent to your inbox within a few minutes from submission - if you do not have the receipt, you cannot guarantee that your submission was successful. If you do not receive a receipt and are concerned as to whether the submission has been successful, please contact the School Office for confirmation.
Information on the Progress Report, the Workshop and the Draft Chapter

The Content of the Progress Report

The School is not prescriptive about the length, content or structure of the progress report, which should follow the guidance given by your supervisor. Its format will vary according to the dissertation’s topic and period, but it is appropriate that the report should outline the subject matter of the topic, the research questions that will be investigated, the reading and/or research already undertaken and its results, and the agenda for the remainder of the first semester’s work. There should also be an appended bibliography giving full details of the secondary works and primary sources which relate to the dissertation topic, and indicating which of these have already been researched.

The Role of the Workshop

The workshop, which is held either in December or in January, will address a range of issues about how best to organize your collected research material, formulate your ideas, and plan and write your dissertation. It is likely that the workshop group will consist of all of your supervisor’s dissertation students. Your supervisor will tell you what (if anything) he or she expects by way of preparation for this meeting, and you may be asked to prepare material which you either submit in advance or deliver orally at the workshop. However, preparation of such material is not a School requirement, and it is not assessed. If you have confidential matters that you want to raise about your progress, or follow-up issues resulting from the discussion at the workshop, you should arrange an individual supervision meeting at another time.

The Provision of Feedback on a Draft Chapter

The submission of a draft chapter for feedback is not a mandatory requirement, but you are strongly advised to make use of this facility. You should plan to deliver a draft chapter of up to 2,500 words, fully written and properly referenced, by a date arranged in consultation with your supervisor (you need to bear in mind that your supervisor may not be available during the Easter vacation to read or advise on dissertation work due to their contractual obligation to carry out research). Do not use the normal coursework submission system for the draft chapter, but deliver it directly to your supervisor, by an agreed method. It may either be sent as an email attachment to your supervisor, or brought to the School Office and placed in your supervisor’s pigeonhole (if using the latter method, you should also send an email to inform your supervisor that you have done so).
Assessment and Marking Scheme

Assessment is based only on the final submitted dissertation. You will be awarded a single overall mark for the piece as a whole, which will then apply to both modules, HS3501 and HS3502, and which will therefore count as two 20 credit elements in your final degree assessment.

Your dissertation will be marked independently by two members of staff. They will arrive at an agreed internal mark, which will then be subject to moderation by the appropriate external examiner. The dissertation will be assessed according to the following criteria:

- use of primary sources
- use of secondary sources
- quality of argument and analysis
- quality of communication
- quality of presentation

and the mark scheme below will then be applied:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mark band</th>
<th>Related characteristics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-34</td>
<td>The dissertation is seriously flawed and represents a fail. It contains very little or no primary evidence, and makes inadequate and uncritical use of a limited range of secondary sources. The presentation may be very poorly presented, and may be substantially less than 10,000 words in length.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-39</td>
<td>The dissertation is very limited. It contains little primary evidence, which it fails to successfully engage with. It is purely descriptive with very little or no critical analysis, and is heavily dependent upon a limited range of secondary sources. It is not presented adequately accorded to the stated guidelines.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-49</td>
<td>The dissertation is adequate, but no more. It contains some primary evidence but this is rarely deployed effectively. It is mainly descriptive, with little critical analysis and is based upon a limited range of secondary sources. It is not presented according to the stated guidelines.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-59</td>
<td>The dissertation is generally competent and well-constructed. It strikes a reasonable balance between the use of primary and secondary sources. A fairly sustained commentary is provided, but this tends to be more descriptive than analytical. The argument is supported by an adequate amount of evidence and a satisfactory reading of the secondary literature. It is generally adequately presented, but with some errors or inconsistencies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60-69</td>
<td>A good, well-crafted, dissertation. A developed argument is sustained throughout the dissertation, which is supported by relevant and well-selected primary evidence and a wide reading of the secondary literature. It is presented according to the stated guidelines to a good professional standard.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The mark scheme is continued on the following page.
### Related characteristics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mark band</th>
<th>Related characteristics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>70-84</td>
<td>A very good piece of original work. A highly developed argument is sustained throughout the dissertation. It is supported by a wide range of relevant and well-selected primary evidence which is skilfully deployed, and by a very thorough and critical reading of the secondary literature. It is presented according to the stated guidelines to a very good professional standard.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85+</td>
<td>An excellent piece of original work, showing all the qualities of a 70-84 mark but with more extensive research and/or greater independence of thinking and mastery of the literature, concepts and evidence. It is presented according to the stated guidelines to an excellent professional standard.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Penalties for Excess Word Length

The normal system of penalties for excess length applies to the dissertation: for every 100 (or part of a 100) words above the limit, one mark will be deducted. Thus a dissertation of 10,001 to 10,100 words will receive a penalty of one mark; a dissertation of 10,101 to 10,200 words will receive a penalty of two marks, and so on. **The penalty is applied to the overall dissertation mark, and therefore affects the marks recorded for BOTH modules, HS3501 and HS3502, in the final degree assessment.** Please note that penalties for excess length may result in a fail mark for both of the dissertation modules, with serious consequences for your degree class.

The electronic copy of all dissertations will be checked for length by the following method:

*using Microsoft Word, the main body of the text and its footnotes/endnotes will be selected and its number of words will be counted by means of the ‘word count’ tab, with ‘Include textboxes, footnotes and endnotes’ selected in the dialogue box.*

You should use the same method for producing the required word count on the title page of their dissertation. You are also strongly encouraged to use this method to monitor your word length when you are drafting chapters, and especially to ensure that you have selected the option to ‘include textboxes, footnotes and endnotes’ in the dialogue box.
What to Aim for

Learning Outcomes

On completing the dissertation, worth 40 credits, a student should have:

- acquired experience of planning a research project, which has involved: establishing a research topic; devising an argument; writing an abstract and collaborating with a supervisor;
- undertaken bibliographical searches for primary and secondary literature;
- assessed critically the secondary literature related to the dissertation topic;
- identified, selected and assessed primary source material;
- located the dissertation’s argument within its historiography;
- mastered the scholarly apparatus required for a dissertation;
- written up the outcome of research in no more than 10,000 words, which develops an argument supported by the analysis of primary and secondary literature.

Basis for the Dissertation

The dissertation should be substantially based upon your own research in primary sources, whether through examination of published primary texts or first-hand consultation of archives, or a combination of both. The types and extent of the primary material that you explore will be determined by the nature of your topic and the advice of your supervisor. Use only primary sources that you have read yourself; you should not normally employ material which you have only seen quoted in secondary sources.

Primary materials are normally contemporary to the events described or based on first-hand experience of those events. They can be diaries, letters or other private documents; speeches, public statements and official reports; newspapers and other contemporary publications; memoirs written later by persons involved in the events, and oral and pictorial sources. Primary materials are held in archives at national and local institutions, which may be either public or private bodies. Some important primary materials have been published, either as printed volumes or as a resource on the World Wide Web.

Do not neglect illustrative sources: maps, paintings, photographs and film. These can be very relevant, and how something is being portrayed can be even more important than what is portrayed.

When collecting primary data, be clear about your purpose, your analysis and your methodology. Therefore, question yourself about why you are selecting this particular material, and why you are only transcribing that material in one way rather than in another. This self-questioning will clarify your intent. Equally, it may helpful to take fuller notes and transcriptions during the early stages of your research, as you may not have your topic and argument fully in focus.

Furthermore, understand why and how the source material was initially created: its provenance, its audience, and its intended purpose. This is important for assessing it as evidence and the extent to which it will support the arguments and interpretations that you advance.

The secondary sources may include some textbooks and will certainly include a combination of research-based monographs, biographies, journal articles, essays and other publications. Secondary sources are useful for giving you an introduction and context for the topic, and – most importantly – to establish critically your topic’s historiography.
Research, Planning and Working Practices

Your Supervisor

Your supervisor has a key role to play in your dissertation. It is important that you establish at an early stage the best procedure for working with your supervisor, in a way that suits your topic and your style of learning, in order to produce a dissertation of the best possible quality by the stipulated date for submission.

You can expect your supervisor to provide:

• a supportive, but not overbearing, role in the development of the dissertation;
• opportunities for regular consultation to discuss progress;
• written comments on your October progress report; and
• comments on the draft of one chapter (of up to 2,500 words).

You should aim to see your supervisor early in the first semester, as soon as it is mutually convenient; you do not need to wait until after you have submitted your Progress Report. Thereafter, you should contact your supervisor on a regular basis, normally every fortnight. Please note that you are responsible for requesting and arranging supervision meetings.

*If you are concerned about the level of supervision that you are receiving or have other worries, you should contact either the Dissertation Officer or the School Office (7th floor of the Attenborough Tower; telephone: 0116 252 2587; email: history@le.ac.uk).*

Ethics

If you are researching a contemporary or near-contemporary issue, you may wish to employ oral history evidence and undertake interviews to obtain it. This can be very fruitful but you must be aware that research projects involving ‘living human subjects’ can raise ethical issues. Therefore, your research must comply with the university’s Research Ethics Code of Practice, which can be accessed at

www2.le.ac.uk/institution/committees/research-ethics/code-of-practice [accessed 12 August 2016].

At the beginning of your research, you should discuss fully with your supervisor what you propose to do and how you are going to undertake it. Your supervisor is responsible for ensuring that your project complies with the University’s Code of Practice. For further information about the protocol for ethical approval of your research you will need to view the following link:

www2.le.ac.uk/institution/committees/research-ethics/protocol-for-ethical-approval-of-student-work-non-clinical-research-on-human-subjects [accessed 12 August 2016].

More generally, you will find it useful to read Alan Ward, ‘Is your oral history legal and ethical?’,

www.concernedhistorians.org/content_files/file/ET/187.pdf [accessed 12 August 2016].

Once you have spoken to your dissertation supervisor, you will need to gain ethical approval for your research, this can be done by completing the form found at:

www2.le.ac.uk/institution/committees/research-ethics/review [accessed 12 August 2016].

*Please note that the ethics form must be completed and submitted before you undertake the research, and also that it must be submitted together with the dissertation.*

Note-Taking and Plagiarism

As the researching and writing of the dissertation is a long-running project, it is extremely important that you have an effective system for managing your notes. Ensure that you have the full citation for every source that you have consulted. If you do not, you can waste days tracing references, which will cause a major problem, especially during the critical period immediately before the submission.
As with all your other work, take great care with note-taking to ensure against any possibility of plagiarism. If you are still unsure what constitutes plagiarism, read again the University’s statement on Academic Honesty, found in the School’s Assessment Handbook. You should not repeat material that was submitted as part of your HS2500 assignment. Your supervisor will expect the analysis to have advanced and to have become more sophisticated in the final dissertation, and so cutting and pasting text from your HS2500 assignment is bad practice as well as constituting self-plagiarism. It is important to rethink what you previously wrote and to rewrite it accordingly.

**Direct repetition of text from HS2500, or any other previous coursework, will be detected and penalized as plagiarism.**

In your notes, make sure that you have a full record of the page and/or folio numbers of all material. Furthermore, ensure that you carefully distinguish between your own summaries and paraphrasing on the one hand and direct quotations on the other. Remember that sources should be fully acknowledged as providers of ideas and approaches as well as of factual material and narrative. Your adoption of others’ ideas and approaches can be indicated in either your text or footnotes as in the following examples:

As noted by Smith in his article, agricultural output can be determined by taxation returns.\(^{14}\)

where footnote 14 reads:

This approach was advocated by J. Smith in ‘Rumbles in the rice fields; a re-assessment of estimates of Japanese agricultural productivity during the Meiji period’, *Tools and Tillage*, 24 (1966), pp. 23-9.

Students who engage in plagiarism, or who use a source without acknowledgement in the hope that it will not be recognised, run the almost certain risk of discovery. Your student number on your dissertation implies that its contents are the product primarily of your research and thoughts (with the obvious exception of full acknowledgements in the text or footnotes). By signing the coursework cover sheet, you are confirming that this is the case.

### Security and Back-up Copies of your Sources and Notes

You must make secure back-ups of your dissertation notes, plan and draft chapters: save your work regularly every few hours, and always have **at least two back-up copies in secure locations**. The best way to do this with any Word or Excel file is to attach it to an email and send this to your university email address, as the university file store is very secure. Please note that you should treat these only as a back-up, and continue to do all further work in the original file. You must also have back-up copies if you have taken digital photographs of any source materials. However, digital images usually have too large a file-size to store in your university account, and in these cases you should make **at least two back-up copies on a hard media** such as blank CDs or a memory stick. Please note that such back-up copies should be kept in a safe place and not left in your computer or on your desk, where they would be vulnerable to burglary; it is recommended that for security you should keep one copy of your source materials at your family home.

If you observe the above routine, the most that you can be in danger of losing to either breakdown or theft is a few hours of work. Therefore, the loss of more material than this is due to a lack of prudence and bad working practices. **It is essential that students are aware that, because of this, failure of computer equipment or loss of data (for any reason) is not normally an admissible ground for the waiver of late submission penalties.**

### Time Management

The dissertation is a major piece of work. Consequently, its production will be very demanding of your ability to manage time. Plan your research, reading and writing carefully. These are inter-related, as an important point in your argument might not crystallise until you have made progress with drafting your text. If this occurs, it may mean not just going back to the secondary literature but also undertaking further work on the primary sources.

Remember that the dissertation is a ‘double’ module, it carries 40 credits. Therefore, give the same time to working on your dissertation in each semester as that for each of the other two modules that you are taking: i.e., it should receive approximately one-third of your working time. Get accustomed to working regularly on it, and remain committed to the periods that you have allotted. It is of the utmost importance that you continually resist
the temptation to put your dissertation ‘on the back burner’ because of other demands. Work on your dissertation must continually run alongside preparation for seminars and tutorials and completing the assignments required by your other modules. Remember too that the demands of the dissertation will change over the academic year, particularly so with the drafting of sections and chapters, and therefore be prepared to adjust your time allocation accordingly.

Once writing is underway, it is important that you read through a printed copy of your developing draft every now and then. You will discover that reading a print-out is far more effective than reading on screen. Reading through a printed text will enable you to assess how well your argument is developing and whether it can be followed easily by another reader. It will also help with correcting typing mistakes and checking the footnotes.

Planning

The dissertation should have a central thread – an argument, a thesis, an evaluation of an interpretation – that runs from its introduction to its conclusion. You should consider the central thread as an issue that you are exploring and attempting to resolve. You should keep this central thread at the forefront of your mind as you consult your topic’s related secondary literature, as you research in the archives and when you write.

Trying to establish a focus for the dissertation and maintaining that focus is also aided by identifying at an early stage a manageable set of primary sources. This will also assist you in transforming your topic into an undertaking that can be successfully approached within the limit of 10,000 words. In these terms, the issue that you analyse in your dissertation will probably be one aspect of a topic. Consequently, think in terms of what is manageable and feasible, even if that should mean reigning in your initial aspirations.

Consider the central issue as the catalyst for generating your argument. Questions can then be used to refine and develop your argument, with major questions helping the framing of chapters and lesser questions developing points expressed in either blocks of paragraphs or, perhaps, just one paragraph.

As points emerge and develop, consider whether they are either central to your argument or tangential. Such a review will assist in keeping you focused on your argument, your central thread.

The dissertation consists of three main elements:

- the introduction
- the main chapters which present the argument and the supporting evidence
- the conclusion

The introduction outlines the dissertation topic and places it in its wider context; sets out the questions, themes or issues that are going to be explored; explains any issues relating to the methodology or primary sources, and presents a critical analysis of the published historiography. It is often best to leave the writing of the introduction to the last, after your argument and conclusions have become established.

The argument, divided into chapters, must be coherent and logical so that it is easy to follow. Analysis and interpretations must be reasoned and justified; otherwise, they may be considered as unsubstantiated assertions. Each chapter should mark out a major step in your argument and analysis. Consider also whether your argument would benefit more effectively developed by employing charts, diagrams, graphs, illustrations, maps or tables or any other illustrative material and, again, explain their importance for your argument.

The conclusion provides of a summary of the arguments presented in the chapter conclusions. However, it should be more than a repetition of these, and should add value by developing the argument or interpretation further.

You may find it helpful to look at one or two of the dissertations that are available on Blackboard. All of these have been awarded high marks, as they are very good pieces of original work. They provide examples of investigations into topics across the range of historical periods from the medieval to the contemporary. However, they should be read only for general guidance, as although they are work of good quality, they have not always in every respect followed the School Style Guide (the content of which has also evolved over the years).
Presentation and Text Format Requirements

Failure to observe the requirements set out below may lead to penalties and, in extreme cases, the dissertation will not be accepted. It should be realised that one important element of this exercise is the demonstration of your ability to present work to a professional standard: neatly, consistently, and in accordance with the established academic conventions. These are set out in the full version of the School Style Guide, which is available on the School website and from the Blackboard site ‘Undergraduate Information and Resources’, under the tab ‘Coursework Guidance & Style Guide’. It is essential that you make yourself familiar with its provisions and follow them exactly, as failure to do so will negatively affect the mark which you are awarded.

The sections which follow are presentational requirements which apply ONLY to the dissertation. For all other matters – and especially the format of references – follow the guidance in the full version of the School Style Guide. If the point is not covered there, you should consult your supervisor.

The following sequence must be used within your dissertation; the items listed as ‘optional’ can be omitted if you do not have any need for them:

1. Front Title page (see below for layout).
2. Abstract: a summary of not more than 300 words which outlines the topic studied and provides a short summary of the argument presented.
3. Acknowledgements (optional).
4. Contents page: the dissertation should be divided into a number of chapters, and their titles and page numbers should be listed here.
5. Further contents pages (optional), providing lists of tables, maps, charts, diagrams, graphs, illustrations, and any other illustrative material within the text, with their respective page numbers.
6. List of abbreviations used in the text and/or references (optional).
7. Main text of the dissertation – introduction, chapters and conclusion – not exceeding 10,000 words in length (remember that the references are included in the word limit). References should be presented as footnotes on the relevant page. Dissertations where the text is longer than the specified maximum will be subject to the normal penalties for excess length.
8. Appendices (optional).
9. Bibliography: a list of all primary and secondary sources should be given at the end of the dissertation. This should include any item consulted during your research, even if it was not found to be helpful and does not appear in any of the references. The bibliography is not included within the word limit, as its length will depend upon the subject being studied. The correct structure for the dissertation bibliography is set out later in this guide.

The main text should be divided into a suitable number of chapters; it is recommended that chapters should not be less than 1,500 words and not more than 3,000 words in length (including references). Longer chapters may benefit from having sub-headings, but having too many of these at short intervals can interrupt the chain of argument and make the work appear disjointed.

Title Page

The front title page must give the following information, in this order:

(a) your student number
(b) the full title of your topic
(c) your supervisor’s name
(d) the precise total word length of the text (including quotations and references)
Do not put your name on the dissertation at any point: whilst your supervisor will be aware of which topic you are doing, the second-marker and external examiner will not.

Abstract

The abstract is a summary of the main features and conclusions of your dissertation. It is not an introduction to your dissertation.

It is difficult to summarise 10,000 words and a year of work in 300 words. Nonetheless, it is important to do this exercise well, since the abstract is the first part of your dissertation that the examiners will read. You need to ask yourself: what is my dissertation’s central argument? This is one place where you have the opportunity to stress what is novel and original about your dissertation and how your conclusions relate to the existing literature. You should avoid including any of your evidence, and concentrate on your argument, approach and conclusions.

Layout of Pages and Chapters

Each page must have a header containing your student number and the name of your supervisor (positioned at the left-hand margin), and the page number (which should be placed at the top right-hand corner). The normal convention is to number the preliminary pages (items 1 to 6 in the list above) in lower case Roman numerals, (i, ii, iii, iv, etc.), and change to the normal format (1, 2, 3, etc.) from the first page of the dissertation’s introduction (i.e., from item 7 in the list above).

A document showing you how to apply multiple page number formats within a document is available on the dissertation Blackboard site, under the tab ‘Dissertation Guidelines’. This includes screen shots which will guide you through each stage of the process. However, if you have further difficulties with this, please contact the School Office.

Each chapter must begin on a new page, and have a heading which includes the chapter number and its title – these are normally centred on the page. The text of a chapter should begin about one-third of the way down the first page. The first paragraph of each chapter, and the first paragraph after any sub-heading within a chapter, should start at the left-hand margin (and not be indented). Thereafter, the start of each paragraph must be clearly indicated by either inserting a blank line or by indenting the first word by at least 20 mm (the latter is recommended as the clearest method, because a blank line can fall at the bottom of a page and therefore not be apparent).

Bibliography

This consists of a list of all the sources, both primary and secondary, that you have consulted during your research. You must append a complete Bibliography at the end of your dissertation; it is not an alternative to footnotes - you should have both. The Bibliography is a list of the primary and secondary sources which you have actually consulted in the course of your work - do not include items which you have only seen indirectly by a mention or quotation in another work. However, you should include all of the items that you have looked at, even if you did not find some of them sufficiently helpful that you wish to refer to them in the text or footnotes.

Primary Sources should always be listed in the Bibliography, and clearly differentiated from secondary sources. Due to the scale of both primary and secondary research involved in the dissertation, your bibliography is likely to be extensive, and for clarity would be best organised under a number of sub-headings. The sub-headings for primary sources will naturally vary according to the nature of those used; the primary source categories in the list below are examples, and you should only use those which are relevant to your work (and add any others, if necessary).

Online primary sources should be included under the sub-heading appropriate to the type of source, and not placed in a separate section. However, online secondary sources should be listed separately.

In each category, of both primary and secondary sources, items should be listed in alphabetical order. The format for citing different types of secondary and primary sources is set out in the full version of the School Style Guide,
which is available on the School website and from the Blackboard site ‘Undergraduate Information and Resources’, under the tab ‘Coursework Guidance & Style Guide’.

**Primary Sources**

1. Unpublished Manuscript Collections
   - (a) Official Records (of national and local government)
   - (b) Private Collections (these may be of individuals or of non-government organisations, such as political parties, trade unions, pressure groups, charities, businesses, clubs and societies).

2. Published Editions of Documents

3. Contemporary Published Sources
   - (a) Official Publications (such as parliamentary debates, reports of Royal Commissions)
   - (b) Newspapers and other Periodicals
   - (c) Other Contemporary Published Sources (such as pamphlets, songbooks, posters, etc.)

4. Memoirs and Autobiographies (this section would include oral history interviews)

**Secondary Sources**

1. Books, Articles and Essays (in a single alphabetical list)

2. On-line Secondary Sources

3. Unpublished Secondary Sources (such as unpublished PhD theses)
## Final Check List

Before handing in your dissertation, you should ensure that you have fulfilled each of the requirements by ticking off the boxes in the following check list.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Ticked</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Is the length of your dissertation no more than 10,000 words?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>(make sure that the checkbox to include footnotes in the word count has been ticked)</td>
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<td>Have you ensured that you have avoided plagiarism?</td>
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<td>Have you done a spell check all through the text?</td>
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<td>Have you proof-read a printed copy of the text?</td>
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<td>Have you included a title page, which has a precise word count?</td>
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<td>Have you included an abstract?</td>
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<td>Have you included the contents pages?</td>
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<td>Has your dissertation got an introduction?</td>
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<td>Has it also got a conclusion?</td>
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<td>Are your footnotes in the correct format, as set out in the full version of the School Style Guide?</td>
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<td>Have you included a bibliography?</td>
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<td>Are the pages consecutively numbered?</td>
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<td>Have you collected a red folder from the School Office?</td>
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