Styleguide

Formal features of academic texts

01. Notes on academic writing

This style guide describes what is expected from students in the English Department (*Institut für englische Sprache und Literatur*). The style guide is **based on** the APA Style Guide, the documentation style usually used in the social sciences. Other departments might have their own style guides. For further information, please consult the *Concise Rules of APA Style*. Copies can be found in the Media Centre (Room LN 119) and the library. Information on APA Style can also be found online, for example on the Purdue University Online Writing Lab (OWL) website.

02. The structure of the paper

Your final paper should consist of:

- Title page –   name of the university;
  semester;
  title of the subject;
  title of the paper;
  your name;
  your student matriculation number;
  your email address
  name of tutor;
  date of submission.
  (NB: The University-logo and/ or pictures **SHOULD NOT** appear on the title page)
- Table of Contents (not always obligatory)
- Acknowledgement page (not obligatory)
- Main text
- References
- Appendices (if you have any)
- Statement of Authorship (*eidesstattliche Erklärung*), (when necessary)

03. Layout

- All work must be typed unless otherwise specified.
- Use 1,5 line spacing, left-aligned.
- Use Times New Roman or Arial, size 12.
- Paragraphs must be clearly marked. You may indent each new paragraph or leave a line free. Do **NOT** always start a new paragraph every 2 or 3 sentences. The spaces between paragraphs should be uniform.
- Do not arbitrarily leave spaces at the end of sentences.
- Margins should not be greater than 30 mm or smaller than 25 mm.
- Number your pages.
- Number your sections (when sections are required).

04. Organisation of the body of the text (main text): Empirical research

The following describes the four stages of an SPRE (Situation, Problem/Purpose, Response, Evaluation) analysis. This is often used for empirical research, but, in general, describes the structure of an academic paper. The notes on the SPRE analysis draw heavily on the work of Edge (1999: 40-61).
(NB: These stages **should not** necessarily be used as chapter headings.)

Stage 1: **Setting/situation**
Give a brief contextualisation by highlighting relevant local conditions *and/or* a brief review of current thinking *and/or* practice in your chosen field of work. This gives the reader a context in which to place the writing.

Stage 2: **Problem/purpose**
Identify the specific problem, question, difficulty, lack, and so forth which you will concentrate on *and/or* outline the specific aim or objective you will be pursuing.

Stage 3: **Response**
Present the principles or arguments which would indication a solution (response) or solutions to the problem(s) previously discussed and how the solution(s) could be implemented *and/or* include any procedures and suggestions on what should be done.

Stage 4: **Evaluation**
State the criteria, or arguments, according to which the worth of your solution(s) can be judged *and/or* the evidence according to which you can demonstrate the worth of your solution(s). The evaluation stage would also include the conclusion which links back to the introduction of your work.

> Note that these stages reflect the organisation of the analytical content of your paper. This does not preclude, conflict with, or replace the classic three part structure of academic writing: **Introduction, Main Part, Conclusion**.

05. Length

Each individual tutor, lecturer or professor will tell you how long your assignment should be. Your final word count/page count should not deviate significantly from the required amount stated. As this is one of the skills required of any writer in most academic disciplines, failure to adhere to the required word count/page count may result in a lower grade.

You will be given a margin of plus or minus 5% (i.e., target=500 words→ 475~525 words margin).

The following DO NOT count towards your word or page count:
• Any empirical data presented in the body of the text
• Title page

- Acknowledgement page
- Table of Contents page
- Reference section
- Appendices

06. Plagiarism

"When someone uses another person's words, ideas, or work and and pretends they are their own" (LDCE4, 2003: 1246). You must ONLY use your own words and ideas unless you show that you are quoting or paraphrasing (where both the words and the structure must be changed) from another source. If you are not sure, ask a tutor or reference the section you have doubts about. Any words that are not your own must appear in quotations marks, with the source acknowledged (and page number if available) and full details provided in the reference section. If paraphrasing, you should provide the name of the author, the year and specific page you are paraphrasing from. If you paraphrase several sentences from another source, EACH SENTENCE MUST BE REFERENCED. If the next reference is from the same work and the same page the abbreviation, (ibid.), can be used. To emphasise this important point, **plagiarism is cheating and will result in a failing grade and a note in your transcript of records**.

(Sections 07. and 08. provide explanations and examples of how to reference.)

07. In-text referencing

Direct quote
Tudor (2001: 18) states "students' and teachers' identities are in part the result of factors of a purely individual nature", but he does not state precisely what these factors could be.

Paraphrasing
Teachers' and students' characters are formed partly by factors which affect them as individuals (Tudor, 2001: 18). However, he did not state precisely what those factors could be.

Direct quotes of over 30 words
Longer quotes should be indented by 5 spaces. The quote is not in italics or quotation marks and the indented quote should be single-line spaced.

Tudor (2001: 18) explains that

> Students' and teachers' identities are in part the result of factors of a purely individual nature, but they are also influenced by aspects of the context in which they live and work.

He did not, however, describe which aspects.

Referencing more than one page
If a quote or a paraphrase is taken from more than one page, it should be referenced as follows:

Smith (2011: 21-23) states …

08. Referencing

Your reference page(s) must contain the list of all the sources, that is, books, articles, online materials, and so forth, that you have directly used in the main body of your work. This enables the reader to identify the source of your reference and find exactly where and what you have quoted or paraphrased. The reference list should be in alphabetical order. The reference page should be single-line spaced and no spaces between the individual references.

The following referencing system is based on the APA Style Guide (2005).[1] The in-text citation is shown first and the reference that would appear at the end of the paper is directly underneath. (See Appendix 1 for a sample Reference page.)

American Psychological Association. (2005). *Concise Rules of APA Style*. Washington: American Psychological Association.

8.1. Referencing books

8.1.1. Referencing an entire book

In-text citation:	Landau (2001) demonstrates that lexicography is a very complicated art.
Reference list entry:	Landau, S. I. (2001). *Dictionaries: The art and craft of lexicography* (2nd ed.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Please note the formatting details:
- The name of the author is inverted.
- The year of publication is in parentheses.
- The title of the book is in italics.
- The above referenced book is the second edition of the book.
- The location of the publisher and the name of the publisher are separated by a full colon.
- The second and subsequent lines of the reference are indented by a tab stop.

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[1] There are many different acceptable referencing styles. These include: American Psychological Association (APA); Modern Languages Association (MLA); Harvard; Chicago, and so forth. Many publications have their own system of referencing. Therefore, if you are submitting a paper for publication, it is better to check with the publication what system is preferred. One of the most important aspects of referencing is, once you have decided which style to use, to be consistent. Do not move from one style to another within one paper.

8.1.2. Referencing a direct quote from the book

In-text citation:	Thumb (2004: 65) states that "by increasing the amount of data, more operations could be identified".
Reference list entry:	Thumb, J. (2004). *Dictionary Look-up Strategies and the Bilingualised Learner's Dictionary*. Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag.

8.1.3. One work by more than one author

When a work has two authors, always cite both names in your paper.

In-text citation:	According to Mitchell and Myles (2004: 15), the utterances produced by second-language learners are often judged negatively.
Reference list entry:	Mitchell, R., & Myles, F. (2004). *Second Language Learning Theories* (2nd ed.). London: Arnold.

8.1.4. One work by more than two authors

When a work has **three**, **four** or **five** authors, cite all the authors the first time you refer to the work. If you cite the work again, only write the surname of the first author and follow it with 'et al.' (The 'et al.' is not italicised. There is a full-stop after 'al.' because it is short for the Latin 'et aliae/et alii', meaning 'and others'.)

In-text citation:	Altrichter, Posch and Somekh (1993: 45) demonstrate that one starting point for action research in the classroom is what they call *first impressions*. However, if Altrichter et al. (1993) are correct in their assumptions…
Reference list entry:	Altrichter, H., Posch, P., & Somekh, B. (1993). *Teachers Investigate their Work*. London and New York: Routledge.

When a work has more than **six** authors, cite only the surname of the first author followed by 'et al.' in the body of your work. In the reference section, after the sixth author's name, write 'et al.' (The following citation and reference are fictional.)

In-text citation:	Brown et al. (2001: 27) have shown that it is very difficult to learn a foreign language in less than six months.
Reference list entry:	Brown, J., Cann, G., Peters, S., Wright, C., Lesser, L., Moore, E., et al. (2001). *Learning Languages.* Harlow: Plymouth Press.

8.1.5. Referencing a chapter in an edited book

The name of the editor **is not inverted**. The title of the book, not the title of the chapter, is in italics. After the (Ed.) or (Eds.) and the title of the book there is a comma.

In-text citation:	Pinter (1999: 1) explains that "the other line of research is related to task structures".
Reference list entry:	Pinter, A. (1999). Investigations into task-related strategy use with young learners of English. In S. Rixon (Ed.), *Young Learners of English: Some Research Perspectives*, (pp.1-17). Harlow: Pearson Education Limited.

8.1.6. Referencing authors cited in another publication

A direct reference from a book is a citation from a primary source. It is sometimes necessary to cite a secondary source. This **should only be done** when you cannot access the original, as it is common academic practice to read and cite the original source. Citing from a secondary source too often might lower your grade.

In-text citation:	Yule and Powers (1994: 81; cited in Pinter 1999) also argue that this line of research is important.
Reference list entries:	Pinter, A. (1999). Investigations into task-related strategy use with young learners of English. In S. Rixon (Ed.), *Young Learners of English: Some Research Perspectives*, (pp.1-17). Harlow: Pearson Education Limited. Yule, G., and Powers, M. (1994). Investigating the communicative outcomes of task-based interaction. *System*, 22 (1), 89-91.

The book in which the original author is cited is mentioned **after** the original reference.
Both the above entries would then appear in the reference list, in alphabetical order.

8.2. Referencing journal articles

Many journals nowadays are not only available in hard copy, but also on disc, or online as PDFs from the journal website or the *Elektronische Zeitschriftenbibliothek* (EZB). **The referencing would be the same for all types of media.**

In-text citation:	Assinder (1991: 219) noticed that the children not only asked each other, but they also used dictionaries.
Reference list entry:	Assinder, W. (1991). Peer teaching, peer learning: One model. *ELT Journal*, 45(3), 218-229.

In the above reference, **the name of the journal is in italics**, not the title of the article. The 45 refers to the volume number and the (3) to the part number. The numbers 218-229 refer to the page numbers of the article. This information should appear on the Table of Contents page or the front page of the journal.

8.3. Referencing electronic media
The information contained here is subject to change so please always check.

There are two basic rules when citing Internet sources.
• The reference should ensure that the reader is directed as closely as possible to the information cited in the body of the work;
• The address that you provide in your references (the URL) should work.

8.3.1. Referencing electronic sources with a title and an author

In-text citation:	According to Hartmann (1994: 4), "explicit attention to teaching referencing skills is needed in the curricula for foreign language teaching."
Reference list entry:	Hartmann, R.R.K. (1999). Case Study: The Exeter University survey of dictionary use. In R.R.K. Hartmann (Ed.), *Dictionaries in Language Learning: Recommendations, National Reports and Thematic Reports from the TNP Sub-Project 9: Dictionaries (TR2)*. Retrieved Month Day, Year, from http://www.fu-berlin.de/elc/TNPproducts/SP9doessier.doc

All retrieval dates **have to be checked** just before handing in your work. They should never be more than a few days old before submitting your work. The full URL has been given so that the reader can access the document from the World Wide Web.

8.3.2. Referencing electronic sources from an institution's website
It is possible that the 'author' of a website is an institution. (The following is a fictional example.)

In-text citation:	The library "contains books on over 3,000 subjects" (Stratford University, 2007: no pages) and these can be accessed by all students.
Reference list entry:	Stratford University. (2007). *Welcome to Stratford University*. Retrieved Month Day, Year, from http://www.stratford.ac.uk/lib.html

(NB: In the two URLs above there is no full-stop at the end of the web address. Do not place a full-stop at the end unless there is one actually at the end of the address. In the last reference above, the year (2007) shows when the site was last up-dated. The year can also be the copyright date.)

8.4. Referencing dictionaries and corpora

Referencing dictionaries

The reference(s) for any dictionaries used in any piece of work should be placed in alphabetical order in the References. There should be a brief description of the type of dictionary after the

name of the publishers. The in-text referencing for the Cambridge dictionary listed below would be:

In-text citation:	According to the CALDII (Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary, 2nd edition, 2005: 21), the word…. The CALDII (2005: 206) also defines…..
Reference list entry:	**CALDII:** Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary, 2nd Edition. (2005). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Monolingual English language learners' dictionary.

If this dictionary is mentioned again in the text, it can be referred to as CALDII.

Referencing corpora

In-text citation:	The following line of concordance, taken from The British National Corpus (BNC), shows that *many* and *people* collocate: also like to record our thanks to the many people who have covenanted in
Reference list entry:	The British National Corpus (2007). Distributed by Oxford University Computing Services on behalf of the BNC Consortium. URL: http://www.natcorp.ox.ac.uk/

09. Abbreviations

Do not use abbreviations such as 'e.g.' and 'i.e.' in the body of the text. In the body of the text the full form should be used:

• Many errors were found in the text, for example, one pupil wrote…
• You can use pens, paper, and so forth, to help…

These Latin abbreviations can be used in parenthetical material:
- Many errors were found in the text (i.e. more than the researcher expected)

Any other abbreviations should be written in full the first time they are used. Only use abbreviations if they will appear in the text more than twice, for example:

In this paper, an Action Research (AR) cycle is described…. AR is not only used in….. However, AR might not…

10. Tables

Using tables is one (efficient) way of presenting data. Try not to have too many tables in your paper as it can make it difficult for the reader to focus on and/or understand the text. If, for example, your table has two or fewer columns or rows, present the data in the body of the text.

Never place a table in the text without explaining what it shows. However, it is not necessary to write about everything in the table, only the main points. Otherwise, the table becomes unnecessary.

All abbreviations used in the table should be explained.
Refer to the table by its number (note that when referring to a specific table, the word is capitalized, i.e. "Table 3"):

>…as shown in Table 1, the number of…
>…many students did not understand the text (see Table 2)…

Do not write, for example, "the Table above" or "the Table on page 16".

The tables should be numbered in the order that they appear in the text, that is, the first table to appear is Table 1. If this table is then discussed again later in the paper, it should be referred to by its number.

Every table should be given a brief title. This can appear above or below the table, but be consistent.

Test	14-19 year-old girls	14-19 year-old boys
Test 1	76%	72%
Test 2	85%	83%
Test 3	72%	74%
Test 4	86%	85%

Table 1: Vocabulary Test Results

11. Appendices

The main purpose of an Appendix is to give the reader additional detailed information. It is not necessary for this information to appear in the body of the text. For example, if you have used a questionnaire, a copy of the whole questionnaire would appear as an Appendix, but it would probably not be necessary for all of this to appear in the text. All the data gathered should be collated and placed in an Appendix.

If there is only one Appendix, it will be labelled Appendix. When there is more than one, each one should be labelled with a number (Appendix 1, etc.). Every page of the Appendices should have a label. If, for example, Appendix 1 covers two pages, the first page would have the label: Appendix 1: The title of the appendix, and the second page: Appendix 1 (cont.). The Appendices should appear in the order they appear in the text. Every Appendix has to have a title. In the text, the Appendices are referred to as follows:

>…gave the same answers as the other learners (see Appendix 1 for questionnaire and collation) and…

>…could not answer all the questions (see Appendix 2 for unanswered questions).

Appendices appear directly after the reference section and should have page numbers that follow sequentially from the rest of the paper. That is, if the last reference page number is 25, the first Appendix page will be number 26. If you have Appendices they must be referred to

somewhere in the body of the text. That is, do not have an Appendix that is not referred to in the body of the text.

See Sections 17-19 for an example.

Notes on the writing process

12. The content

When beginning the work, one of the most difficult tasks in academic writing can be finding a suitable focus and then narrowing down the focus to a manageable proportion. It is therefore very useful, once you think you have found your focus, to write a brief (A4) **abstract** stating what your paper will be about or a Table of Contents. This can then be discussed with the relevant tutor who can help you to narrow your focus. (See Appendix 2 for a copy of an abstract layout.)

13. Research

The research methods then have to be decided. Any of the following can be used to collect primary data (there are, of course, other methods available):

• questionnaires;
• tape recorders and/or video cameras;
• think aloud protocols;
• field notes;
• learner's diary;
• interviews.

14. Ethics

When carrying out any kind of empirical research, there are certain conventions that should be followed. Human subject research requires the informed consent of every participant **in writing**. If the research involves children, parental/guardian permission should be asked for before the research begins. A simple form outlining why you are doing the research and asking permission for the child to be taped, videoed, and so forth, is necessary (see Appendix 2 for an example).

Any audio or video material (including photos) involving children and teenagers should not be available to anyone but the tutor supervising the paper. Care must be taken that this information is not included in an M.Ed. or B.A.

All research participants have the right to remain anonymous. If necessary, research participants can be given assumed names (numbers are also possible, but less friendly). Do state, in your paper, that the names have been changed. Schools **should not** be identified by

name, but by type, for example, do not write *St. Mary's Realschule*, but write: *a Realschule in Hildesheim* or a *Realschule in Lower Saxony*.

If you are unsure about the politically correct form to describe certain groups of people, please check on the internet or with your tutor/instructor.

15. Sources

There are a number of sources available: You can use the library and inter-library loans. Various tutors may have resources that can help you. They may also be able to give you other useful information such as authors to look out for, journal articles, resource books, newspapers and so forth.

You should primarily use the internet to find scholarly writing on your topic. This can be accessed through, for example, the university library's search function, Web of Science, Google Scholar. Random websites are not considered scholarly sources. You should NOT use them.

Wikipedia is not considered a valid source by most tutors. Therefore, avoid using this as a source. It can, however, be a valuable source to help you start your investigation into a certain topic.

The university subscribes to various journals that can be found online, for example, the *ELT Journal*. These can be accessed from any university computer, including the computers in the Media Centre, Room LN119.

16. Drafting

To draft a piece of writing is to re-write the same piece, over and over again. The aim is to continually improve the piece.

All work that is to be given a course mark should be drafted at least two to three times. **It is not acceptable to hand in a paper that has only been drafted once**. While some leeway may be given for 'typos', there is a very small margin allowed for error. After the first or second draft, ask someone to proof-read the paper. It is sometimes a good idea to put the paper away for one or two days and then read through it again.

17. Appendix 1: List of various references

Abdullah, K. I. (1993). Teaching reading vocabulary: From theory to practice. *English Teaching Forum*, 31(3). Retrieved May 24, 2012, from http://exchanges.state.gov/englishteaching/forum/archives/1993/docs/93-31-3-c.pdf

Aitchison, J. (2001). *Language Change: Progress or decay* (3rd Ed.). Cambridge: CUP.

Aitchison, J. (2003). *Words in the Mind: An introduction to the mental lexicon* (3rd Ed.). Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.

Bruner, J. (1978). The role of dialogue in language acquisition. In A. Sinclair, R. J. Jarvella, & W. J. M. Levelt (Eds.), *The Child's Conception of Language,* (pp. 241-256). Berlin: Springer Verlag.

Crystal, D. (2011). *Internet Linguistics: A student guide*. Oxford: Routledge.

Dreyer, D. (2005). *Recursive Type Generativity*. Retrieved May 24, 2012, from http://www.mpi-sws.org/~dreyer/papers/dps/main.pdf

Ferris, D. (2004). A response to Truscott. *Journal of Second Language Writing,* 13(4), 345-8.

Gillett, A. (2011). *Using English for Academic purposes: A guide for students in higher education. Retrieved May 24, 2012, from www.uefap.com*

Gillett, A. (2011a). *Using English for Academic Purposes: A guide for students in higher education.* Retrieved May 24, 2012, from http://www.uefap.com/index.htm

Gillett, A. (2011b). *Writing Paragraphs.* Retrieved May 24, 2012, from http://www.uefap.com/writing/exercise/parag/paragex3.htm

Johnson, S. (1755). *A Dictionary of the English Language: Preface to the dictionary*. Retrieved May 24, 2012, from http://andromeda.rutgers.edu/~jlynch/Texts/preface-sherman.html

McCarthy, M. J. (2001). *Issues in Applied Linguistics*. Cambridge: CUP.

Renouf, A., & Sinclair, J. (1988). *Collocational Frameworks in English*. Retrieved May 24, 2012, from http://rdues.bcu.ac.uk/publ/Collocational_Frameworks.pdf

Rogers, P. C. (2003). A Discourse-Centered Rhetoric of the Paragraph. In V. Villanueva (Ed.), *Cross-Talk in Comp Theory: A reader* (2nd Ed.), (pp.175-188). National Council of Teachers of English.

Sinclair, J. (2004). *Trust the Text*. London: Routledge.

Sinclair, J., & Renouf, A. (1988). A lexical syllabus for language learning. In R. Carter and M. McCarthy (Eds.). *Vocabulary and Language Teaching,* (pp.140-158). London: Longman. Retrieved May 24, 2012, from http://www.wordtrends.org/publ/Lexical_Syllabus.pdf

Vygotsky, L. (1934/1986). *Thought and Language*. A. Kozulin (Ed.). Massachusetts: The MIT Press.

Weinrich, M. (2010). *A Case Study: Teaching chunks to a B1 class using a corpus.* Hildesheim University: Unpublished Masters Dissertation.

Welsh, I. (1993). *Trainspotting*. London: Martin Secker and Warburg Ltd.

18. Appendix 2: An example of information to be given in an abstract

Abstract Form

Course:
Name:
Title of Assignment:

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1. Focus (Please state the focus of the assignment and the reason(s) for the focus. This may include a statement of the problem addressed, if applicable).

2. Context (Please give a brief description of the context in which the research takes place. In the case of the linguistics modules, please include the theoretical fields on which you are drawing and the sources of your data).

3. Argument, Analysis & Procedures (Please give an outline of how you propose to frame your information and argument and the procedures that you intend to carry out, including how you propose to analyse any data that you will collect).

4. Evaluation (Please describe how you intend to evaluate both your research procedures and outcomes).

5. References (Please list what you have read so far and any other sources you have identified, but not yet read).
(Amended from Assignment form – Aston University.)

19. Appendix 3: Example letter requesting parental/guardian permission

This letter was sent to the primary carers of all the children who took part in my research. It has been translated from German.

Dear Parent(s)/Guardians

I am currently carrying out research into …………………………….. for my BA at Hildesheim University. I would be very grateful if your daughter/son could participate in my research. I will, of course, ask the relevant children if they want to take part in this research, too.

I will be using questionnaires, tape recordings ……………. to collect my data.

However, if I use the data collected from your daughter/son, she/he will be given an assumed name and will, of course, remain anonymous.

It is hoped that the results of my research will help ……….

Please see below for the permission slip.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter.

A. Student

I agree that my daughter/son, (name here, please)_____ can take part in the above research.

I do not agree that my daughter/son (name here, please) _____ can take part in the above research.

20. Useful links and web sites

http://www.apastyle.org/

http://eltj.oxfordjournals.org/

Google Scholar
Web of Science
UB Hildesheim
OWL (Online Writing Lab, Purdue University)