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Guidelines for Writing a Paper at the Undergraduate or Graduate Level

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Introduction

This document sets out a number of tasks that students must complete before, during and after writing a paper at the undergraduate or graduate level. It goes on to explain a number of textual and language expectations for this type of work, then page layout expectations. The recommendations in this guide can be followed to write a thesis, a supervised project report or any other term paper; in the latter case, it is the student's responsibility to adhere to their professor's specific requirements.

This document is supplementary to information on the School's web page for the [MSc Program](#) on registering for, writing, and submitting a [thesis](#) and a [supervised project report](#), and on its [PhD program](#) web page on registering for, writing, and submitting a [dissertation](#).

1. Checklist for Before, During and After the Writing Process

• Before you begin

You must take into account several things before you begin writing. First and foremost, it is very important to **learn about the program requirements, as well as those of the professor** directing your research or to whom you will be submitting the text. Requirements vary depending on the course, field, type of research, subject of research, etc. Once you know the expectations, **determine the aim** of your work; you can fine-tune it later and incorporate it into the introduction of the text.

Next, you should **plan your work and the document** you will be submitting. There are two types of plans to consider at this juncture: a writing plan, and a working outline.

Purpose and benefits of having a **writing plan**:

- organize the various steps of research around the initial problem, hypotheses, and the chosen approach (Beaud and Latouche, 1988)
- read and research material covering all aspects of the topic or theme
- identify the documents and information to use for the work.

Purpose and benefits of having a **working outline** before writing (Beaud, 2006; Belleville, 2014; Leclerc, 1999):

- clarify the problem and the main question
- develop the main or central idea (Leclerc, 1999)
- select topics and subtopics
- organize the main ideas
- determine the logical sequence of ideas: introduction, body, conclusion.

• While you are writing

With a working outline, you can begin writing by following a central idea. As you advance, you will probably have to re-evaluate the central idea and turn the working outline into a detailed outline. When you reach this stage, you will begin to think about **organizing the text** in terms of ideas and paragraphs.

With a **detailed outline** you can (Beaud, 2006; Belleville, 2014):

- determine a hierarchy (order) of main topics
- organize and determine a hierarchy of subtopics
- add headings to sections and sub-sections
- ensure a balance across the various parts of your work
- find a logical sequence to your arguments and give structure to the various steps in your argument and reasoning
- build a solid argument
- develop your line of reasoning
- show how the parts link together
- organize your text into paragraphs.

When **drafting a document** for a research project, you must take into consideration several textual and linguistic factors, such as having strong initial objectives, organizing your text, splitting up your text into paragraphs, inserting reported speech, and using proper sentence structure and vocabulary. You must also consider grammar, spelling, and punctuation—components which are not covered in this guide but for which tools are recommended in section 4.4. Of course, you must also clean up and standardize the presentation of the text and bibliography.

- **Once you have finished...**

While it is paramount to **revise the draft** on all the aspects mentioned above, it is impossible to go over everything all at once. Thus, when revising, you should go over your text more than once, focusing on one or two elements at a time. First, try reading your draft aloud, then running it through spellcheck or Antidote.

2. Basic Structure of a Paper

All academic papers comprise several essential components. We will now explore some of the specific components that are common among longer papers. Students must, of course, adapt their text to the nature of their work.

2.1 Organizing sections: from introduction to conclusion

INTRODUCTION

The introduction should spark the readers' interest and make them want to continue reading. Below are the components of an introduction for a long paper, such as a thesis or dissertation. Students writing a shorter paper can simplify the narrowed topic, and even omit the main points in the introduction if not required by the teacher.

GENERAL TOPIC

- ☐ Begin by setting up the topic and providing a general context.

NARROWED TOPIC

- ☐ Summarize the problem from which the central question or main objective of the paper arose.
- ☐ Formulate a general hypothesis for the stated problem, which will either be confirmed or abandoned depending on the research results.
- ☐ Specify the research objectives.

- ☐ Emphasize the relevance (theoretical and practical or social) and originality of the research.
- ☐ State the main methodologies chosen.

MAIN POINTS:

- ☐ Present the major parts of the document and the structure of the document in chapters or sections.

In general, the first elements of the introduction are drafted when beginning the research, after the author has developed a detailed outline. These elements will be re-written at the end when the final elements are being written. The final versions of the introduction and conclusion are written at the same time.

BODY

The body of a paper will depend on the type of paper you wish to write. In a longer work, like a thesis or dissertation, a literature review is used to elaborate on the research topic and on the conceptual or theoretical framework, as well as the methodology.

The chapter in which you define **the problem** is not limited to a review of the main articles, works, or chapters of works pertaining to the topic of study. In the **literature review**, students must do the following:

- ☐ Describe the main components of the topic being addressed (e.g., the people or institutions affected by the problem, or the context).
- ☐ Present facts accepted by scholars who have already written on the topic (basic concepts, factors, variables, and data, and the approaches and results of prior research), through a **critical lens**.
- ☐ Make links to other research, and compare the studies by mentioning the strengths and weaknesses of their results, their relative importance, etc.

It is up to you to decide how to organize the literature review, such as by logical structure, theme, or chronological order. Whatever you choose, keep in mind the **objectives** or **research question**, and remember that the format has to introduce the **problem** and the **relevance** of your research.

The chapters describing the **theoretical or conceptual framework** and the methodology used in the research will vary depending on the field of study and the chosen research approach, such as qualitative, quantitative, or case study. Generally, these parts of the paper are also a critical synthesis in which you must do the following:

- ☐ Define the terms and concepts pertaining to the problem and the objectives or research questions.
- ☐ Present and describe the main theoretical models and approaches for your topic and choose those best suited to answer the central question of the paper or research.
- ☐ Clearly and briefly present and explain the main results from referenced works.
- ☐ Draw links between the theories, models, approaches, and concepts, and compare them based on the strengths and weaknesses of their results, their relative importance, etc. Add tables and graphs as needed.

- ☐ Develop the conceptual or theoretical framework, if applicable, to form working hypotheses. "Research documents deal firstly with concepts and later with how they were selected and eventually fleshed out. Unless it cannot be avoided, we do not mix the two." (Loose translation of Alain d'Astous, *Atelier de recherche en marketing*, unpublished).
- ☐ Present the methodological approach (e.g., sample or data collection).

The next two chapters present, analyze, and discuss the **results** of the study. At this point, the researcher must do the following:

- ☐ Present the main findings.
- ☐ Analyze and discuss the results in relation to the initial objectives, questions, or hypotheses.

Some basic rules

- A well-constructed body consists of a solid, well-organized framework with carefully checked data (e.g., facts, observations, and information).
- This data serves as a basis for reasoned analysis, methodical reasoning, and logical deductions.
- Each part contributes to the overall soundness of the paper and helps prepare for the conclusion.
- A well-constructed body should prepare the reader for the conclusion.
- Any observation or information presented in the body and especially the statement of facts must help build the reasoning as well as the defence.
- While selecting what will go into the body is important, it is even more critical to arrange them in an orderly fashion.
- Writers should use a range of transition words, phrases, and strategies to help indicate the various steps of reasoning and facilitate transitions from one idea to the next.

Translation of Marie-Éva de Villers, Workshop on Writing a Master's Thesis, unpublished.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, students typically must do the following:

- ☐ Restate the central problem or question.
- ☐ Summarize the main themes and briefly recap the defence and reasoning of your paper.
- ☐ Present the final results of the study and offer ways to address the problems raised.
- ☐ Highlight the theoretical and social contribution the study makes and the study's limitations in terms of theory, empirical research, and methodology
- ☐ Propose future avenues of research.

The conclusion places the study within a particular context and opens the door to other

possibilities. It must come full circle, meaning that it must offer a solution to the problem stated in the introduction. It re-states the proposals and recommendations made in response to the questions the paper attempts to address. The conclusion is a summary of the key points in your paper. It does not present any new information.

2.2 Organizing sections and sub-sections with headings and numbers

Each heading must accurately describe the section or paragraph below it. Headings usually do not contain full sentences and do not end with a period. They do begin with an uppercase letter ("sentence case"), and higher-level headings can be all uppercase. In the title of your document, the first word and each significant word thereafter should be capitalized ("title case", e.g., Impacts of Interpersonal Conflict on Workplace Morale).

It is generally recommended to use the same grammatical structure for all higher-level headings or for all headings within a section, such as a noun phrase or a gerund phrase.

E.g.	↓	↓
	1. Presentation of the main objectives	1. Presenting the main objectives
	2. Results comparison	2. Comparing results
	3. Student survey	3. Surveying students

The chapter and section numbering¹ must also be consistent. The text will be divided into sections (1,2,3...) and, if necessary, into sub-sections (1.1, 1.2; 2.1, 2.2...). Do not exceed three levels of numbering (2.1.1, 2.1.2...). The following is an example of standard organization for an academic paper. Note that there is generally at least one paragraph between two headings.

1. Introduction
First paragraph of section 1
2. Heading
First paragraph of section 2
 - 2.1 Heading
First paragraph of sub-section 2.1
 - 2.2 Heading
First paragraph of sub-section 2.2
Concluding paragraph of chapter 2
 - 2.3 Heading
First paragraph of section 3
 - 2.4 Heading
First paragraph of sub-section 3.1
 - 2.5 Heading
First paragraph of sub-section 3.1.1
 - 2.6 Heading
First paragraph of sub-section 3.1.2
 - 2.7 Heading
First paragraph of sub-section 3.2
Concluding paragraph of chapter 3
3. Conclusion

Notes on typography:

The font characteristics are identical for each heading level.

Line spacing above and below headings must be the same for every heading of that level. For example, you can choose 12-point spacing above and below all section headings and sub-headings and 6-point spacing above and below all sub-section headings.

3. The text: sentences and paragraphs

The page layout of a text is not simply a matter of aligning sentences one after another. The sequence and grouping of sentences must follow a logical flow that will make the text cohesive and help readers understand the writer's organization and the reasoning behind it.

3.1 Grouping sentences into paragraphs

In addition to being a visual means of clearly organizing a text, a paragraph indicates that a set of sentences form a whole that readers can then judge for its coherence. The way paragraphs are broken up generally reveals the organization of thoughts and the document's framework.

A definition of a paragraph worth considering :

"The purpose of paragraphing is to give the reader a rest. The writer is saying to him: 'Have you got that? If so, I'll go on to the next point.' [...] The paragraph is essentially a unit of thought, not of length: it must be homogeneous in subject-matter and sequential in treatment." (Fowler, 434-435)

A paragraph should be cohesive. Divide a text into paragraphs based on the number of secondary ideas you wish to develop. Address one new idea per paragraph. Be careful not to jump from one

¹ A short paper rarely contains chapters but is still divided into sections that should be numbered
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subject to the next or be needlessly redundant. Paragraph length will vary. For example, a page with 1.5 line spacing typically has two to four paragraphs. There is rarely only one sentence in a paragraph; this usually only occurs when the paragraph serves as a brief introduction or conclusion to a section of text.

Example: As success after success piles up, crowdfunding money-raising platforms have proven to be a great way to fund your next startup. Settle on one of the multiple approaches of crowdfunding, and your product or service just might be the next FORM1 or TikTok. By definition, crowdfunding is simply the collective effort of individuals who network and pool their money, usually via the Internet, to support efforts initiated by other people or organizations. Among the best-known crowdfunding platforms is Kickstarter. Kickstarter founder Yancey Strickler has said, "Most ideas in the world are funded because they have the ability to make someone else's [sic] money. That's what investment is, what lending is. Ninety-nine percent of ideas have no ambition to create money whatsoever. The extent of the dream is, 'I wanna [sic] make this.'" So, if raising money isn't your strength – and you don't have access to a favorite uncle with oodles of cash to spare – you may just want to set your sights on becoming the next crowdfunding success story. (Kevin Harrington, "Cashing in on Crowdfunding," February 7, 2014. Retrieved February 16, 2014 from www.forbes.com)	1st paragraph: announces the key element of the text 2nd paragraph: defines the key element 3rd paragraph: gives an example of the key element 4th paragraph: contextualizes the key element 5th paragraph: concludes first section of text and transitions to next section
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3.2 Cohesion between sentences and paragraphs

In a well-structured paragraph, certain words help us interpret a new sentence based on what was stated in the previous sentence. These words help to establish contextual clarity and can include demonstratives or pronouns (e.g., *this, that, it, she, they, the former, the latter*).

Examples²:

"To use Kipling's metaphor, **they** observe one aspect of the elephant without considering the whole animal." (Sarta, Durand, and Vergne, 2020)

"A boundary condition for this review is a focus on established organizations as opposed to

² The examples below are drawn from Sarta, Andrew, Durand, Rondolphe, and Vergne, Jean-Philippe (2020) "Organizational Adaptation", in Journal of Management: Southern Management Association, vol 47, issue 1. Consulted 11/22/2022 at <https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206320929088>.

new ventures, since **the latter**, by definition, do not yet have a legacy resource base in need of adjustment vis-à-vis external environments." (ibid.)

[...]

"Appendix A details how **these four attributes** make adaptation different from related constructs, such as "fitness" or "strategic change." (ibid.)

Other words called **transitional devices** are also used to connect two short sentences or two parts of a sentence. These can be conjunctions, prepositions, or adverbs (e.g., *so that*, *for*, *thus*). A transitional device can also introduce part of a sentence that indicates a progression or underlying order in a text.

Example:

Our article follows a three-step approach. **First**, we identify and unpack the vast literature on adaptation and its related labels (e.g., "fit," "congruence"). **To do so**, we introduce a combination of computer- and human-centered methods to systematically identify and contrast contributions **while** minimizing researcher bias. **More specifically**, our mixed method incorporates both topic modeling and systematic hand-coding of manuscripts. (ibid.)

For more information on transitional devices, see the [Purdue Online Writing Lab](#).

Word choice can also show a connection between two sentences or two parts of a sentence. For example, verbs such as *proves* or *explains* and various expressions can convey the notion that what follows is, in some way, a result of what was previously stated, whereas verbs and expressions such as *results (from)* or *stems(from)* announce a cause.

Example:

"The results of Hypothesis 2 **suggest** that a better trained work force [sic] may be important for recombined resources in order to create new capabilities and be able to compete at international standards. The improvement perceived by managers in their workforce after joining ProPymes has a positive effect on the IT. This finding **is consistent with** the theoretical development. Training aimed at achieving high standards provides the basis to develop competitiveness and deal with the complexity of a global economy."

Keen, Christian. (2013) "Tangible and Intangible Internationalisation of SMEs: The Argentinian Case." in International Journal of Entrepreneurship and Small Business. 9.3. 414.

Punctuation marks, such as the colon or semi-colon, can also be used to link two ideas with a connection that can be understood easily by the reader. For example, a colon can be used to join two independent clauses when the second explains or illustrates the first. (E.g., Maria is determined to improve her financial situation: she is looking for a job; Maria is looking for a job: she is determined to improve her financial situation). For more information on how to use various punctuation marks, see the [Purdue Online Writing Lab](#).

4. Following Language Standards

As with all assignments submitted to HEC Montréal, evaluations take into account writing quality. From a linguistic point of view, certain rules must be applied consistently when writing a paper.

4.1 Sentence structure

SENTENCE LENGTH

Martin Cutts, in his *Oxford Guide to Plain English*, offers the following guideline: "Over the whole document, make the average sentence length 15-20 words."³ This will increase readability and help you hold the reader's attention.

HOW TO AVOID USING THE PERSONAL PRONOUN 'I'

Except for assignments requiring students to write about their personal experience, the convention in much academic writing is to write with minimal reference to yourself as an author. This is due to a tradition of presenting one's work "objectively," as the work of a dispassionate and unbiased researcher. So, one of the features of academic writing is a general absence of the first person pronoun "I".⁴

- Eliminate personal language.

Ex. *I think* Ned Kelly relied on his Irish heritage to gain local sympathy.
Ned Kelly relied on his Irish heritage to gain local sympathy.

We use the passive voice to make *our writing* sound objective.
The passive voice makes writing sound objective.

- Do not refer to what you think, but to what the evidence suggests.

AVOID USING PERSONAL JUDGEMENT WORDS	USE WORDS REFERRING TO THE EVIDENCE
<i>I think</i>	<i>From examining the findings,</i>
<i>I feel</i>	<i>In light of the evidence,</i>
<i>I believe</i>	<i>From previous research,</i>
<i>I am convinced that</i>	<i>Considering the results,</i>
<i>I disliked</i>	<i>According to the figures,</i>
<i>I liked</i>	<i>According to the diagram,</i>
<i>I agree</i>	<i>It is evident from the data that</i>
<i>I disagree</i>	<i>The literature suggests that</i>
<i>I am sure that</i>	<i>Given this information,</i>
<i>It is my belief that</i>	<i>Some theorists argue that</i>

- Use the Third Person of 'It' constructions

It could be argued that	It could be suggested that
It can be seen that	It appears that
It was found that	It is generally agreed that
It could be concluded that	It seems that
It tends to be	It is widely accepted that
It is doubtful that	It is evident from the data that

- Use the Passive Voice

The passive voice should be used in academic writing when the 'doer' of the action in a sentence is unknown or irrelevant to the discussion. Passive sentence construction emphasises the events and processes the sentence is describing.

³ Passage taken from Nirmaldasan, "The Average Sentence Length." Retrieved February 25, 2014 from <http://strainindex.wordpress.com/2008/07/28/the-average-sentence-length/>.

⁴ Passage taken from "Language and Learning online." Retrieved February 25, 2014 from <http://www.monash.edu.au/lls/llonline/writing/arts/sociology/2.3.1.xml>

ACTIVE VOICE

I cut a segment of the apple
and placed it in agar solution.

PASSIVE VOICE

A segment of apple *was cut* and placed in
agar solution.⁵

4.2 Conciseness

One hallmark of good English writing is conciseness. Why say something in 20 words that can be said in ten? This means eliminating words that are redundant or used as filler. For more information, see the Purdue Online Writing Lab's webpages [Eliminating Words](#) and [Conciseness](#) and watch the Purdue OWL vidcast [Cutting While Revising](#).

4.3 Specialized terms for academic discourse or a specific field

Every field of study, profession or trade has its own specialized vocabulary and technical terms, which appear in academic writing alongside words used specifically in research and everyday language.

E.g.,

E.g.: "The competitive and uncertain environment of the 1990s requires an accelerated product development process with greatly improved coordination and integration among cross-functional teams (Dennison, Kahn and Hart, 1991). Their successful product development effort suggests that speed and variety in perspective and expertise are compatible. Although product development using cross-functional teams has been drawing much attention from academics as well as the corporate world, research into its organization and processes is still underdeveloped. This deficiency is significant because the traditional literature on decision making has assumed that speed and variety are, in reality, incompatible. This paper elaborates the process of cross-functional team efforts, based on interviews and observations over a two-year period. A model is developed and operationalized with 22 survey measures and tested with data from 183 individuals on 29 teams. Results show that product development using cross-functional teams is highly correlated with time compression, creativity, capability improvement, and overall effectiveness." (Kaz Ichizo, "Speed and Innovation in Cross-functional Teams," in *Academic Writing for Graduate Students*, 215-216)

It is important to note that technical terms may change in meaning from one discipline to the next:

RETENTION [INSURANCE]: "The amount of risk not covered by an insurer or a reinsurer that an insured or an insurer or a reinsurer assumes for its own account." (Termium Plus– TP⁶)

RETENTION [PROSTHETIC DENTISTRY]: "The resistance to removal or displacement." (TP)

RETENTION OF EMPLOYEES [HUMAN RESOURCES] (TP): "Employee retention refers to the efforts on the part of an employer aimed at creating an environment that supports the needs of current employees so that they can continue to be part of an organization." (Corporate Finance Institute⁷).

SYN.: STAFF RETENTION (TP)

⁵Examples taken from "How to Avoid Using Personal Language." Retrieved February 25, 2014, from <http://unlearning.uow.edu.au/academic/2div.html>

⁶ Examples taken from <http://www.btb.termiumplus.gc.ca/>. Retrieved November 24, 2022.

⁷ <https://corporatefinanceinstitute.com/resources/management/employee-retention/>. Retrieved November 24, 2022.

The resources below may be helpful in finding the right business jargon, including the fields of management, finance, accounting, marketing, etc.

- [Termium Plus](#): terminology data bank in English, French and Spanish, and The Canadian Style writing guide
- [Dictionary of Derivatives and Other Financial Instruments](#)
- *Dictionnaire de la comptabilité et de la gestion financière*: English-French accounting and finance dictionary with a French index. English, 3rd edition by Louis Ménard et al., Toronto : Canadian Institute of Chartered Accountants, 2014
- [Business Development Bank of Canada glossary](#)

4.4 Writing or revision tools

It is important to follow English spelling, syntax, and punctuation rules when writing a paper. One must also use the proper vocabulary⁸, pay close attention to specialized vocabulary⁹, and use words that convey a link between sentences and paragraphs (e.g., *as a result*, *consequently*, *for example*, *however*, *nevertheless*, *on one hand*, *on the other hand*).

All students can improve their writing in English by using dictionaries and other writing and revision tools. One such tool is **Antidote**, a software program (installed on workstations in the library), which includes a spellchecker and a number of highly useful **dictionaries** (thesaurus, collocations, grammar, etc.). The following are a few other **reference tools** you can access online:

- [Dictionaries, Encyclopedias, Handbooks](#) on the HEC Montréal library website
- [Cambridge Dictionary](#)
- *Le Grand Robert & Collins français-anglais, anglais-français (French-English dictionary)*

In addition to these tools are the specialized business dictionaries mentioned in the previous section.

4.5 Free English Language Support at HEC Montréal

Students who are writing a paper and need targeted help in English can use the free services offered by HEC Montréal's [Business Language Training Centre](#). It is recommended to register for the [workshop](#) *Plan to write a thesis or the writing portion of a supervised project in English*.

Students can also sign up online [one-on-one tutoring](#) for free, personalized sessions. Note that tutoring services do not include text correction but will assist you with some of your writing challenges. Students can, however, pay a professional revisor to go over their work.

⁸ A number of dictionaries can be accessed on the HEC Montréal library website. Just click *Dictionaries, Encyclopedias, Handbooks*.

⁹ See the references in section 4.3.

5. Presenting a Paper

Before submitting an academic paper, make sure that the standards described in the section below have been met. The Business Language Training Centre (CFLA) and the Myriam et J.-Robert Ouimet Library have created models in Word for writing a thesis or dissertation. These tools are available on the CFLA¹⁰ and library websites and will help you write your thesis or dissertation, whether in classic format or manuscript-based, without having to worry about the technical details of using Word. It's all there: presentation pages, a table of contents that updates with a simple click, the key sections that make up a thesis or dissertation, and optional sections. You can also refer to Appendices B and C, which describe the usual order of a thesis or dissertation, respectively. If you are working from a LaTeX application, see LaTeX class document and templates, on the same CFLA page. It is also possible to take a basic or advanced LaTeX course¹¹ by signing up on the Library website. A shorter paper should have some of the same components (title page (see Appendix D), a table of contents (see Appendix I) if needed, a body, a bibliography and, if needed, appendices.

5.1 Graphic presentation and page numbering

It is important to pay attention to presentation when submitting a paper. It is even more important when submitting a thesis, which is why this topic is covered in Appendix K.

- A paper must be numbered in Arabic numerals (2, 3, 4...), except for the title page (see Appendix D for an example of a title page).
- It must be printed on white paper measuring 21.5 cm x 28 cm (8 ½ in x 11 in).
- It must be printed **double sided** (unless the teacher specifies single sided only).
- The upper, lower, and right **margins** are standard (around 2 to 3 cm); the left margin is 4 to 5 cm.
- The text is generally set to one 1.5 line **spacing**, with at least 6-point spacing between paragraphs. It can also be double spaced; paragraph spacing must also be increased in this case. Generally speaking, indentation is not recommended.
- Use a classic **typeface** (e.g., Arial, Calibri or Times New Roman). The typeface should be the same throughout the text, but can be changed in tables, figures, and illustrations as needed. Font size generally varies between 10 to 12 points for the main text, depending on the typeface, but can be reduced to as small as 8 points for secondary text, for example, text boxes, notes, keys and figures.
- Papers are printed **in black ink**; **colour** is permitted only in graphics when necessary for clarity.
- Manual annotation is not permitted.

¹⁰ <https://www.hec.ca/en/cfla/english/language-resources/index.html> ("Language resources" icon; Word templates are located in the "Writing" section).

¹¹ To register for LaTeX training: <http://https://www.hec.ca/en/library/news/formations-latex.html>

- **Italics** are used for the titles of documents, newspapers, and journals. However, do not use italics for law titles. We also use italics when writing foreign words or expressions (e.g., in French or Latin), words that are cited as words (e.g. the word *spam* refers to...); and symbols that are isolated lower-case letters representing numbers, measurements, variables, etc. (e.g., $t = 9.77$).
- **Bold font** can be used to emphasize a word or short excerpt but should be used sparingly.
- **Initialisms and acronyms** generally are not written with abbreviation periods (e.g., UNESCO, NASA, CRA). You should write out the long version of the term the first time you refer to it and write the initialism or acronym in parentheses next to it, after which point you can use the initialism or acronym in the rest of the text, [e.g., The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) is an independent agency of the United States federal government responsible for the civilian space program, as well as aeronautics and space research. NASA was established in 1958..."].
- **Mathematical formulas and equations** are generally numbered inside parentheses aligned to the right of the formula or equation. Numbering is continuous throughout the document. Do not re-start the numbering for a new chapter or section. This means that if there are 50 formulas or equations in a document, they will be numbered 1 to 50. See the Purdue Online Writing Lab's page on [Tables, Figures, and Equations](#).

5.2 Tables and figures

When inserting a table or figure in a text, you should preface it with a **short introductory paragraph** explaining the purpose of the table or figure or any elements to which you wish to draw attention. The paragraph below the table or figure should elaborate on it and generally provide some sort of conclusion about results it presents.

Example¹²:

The ASHMM (1994) study provides data that is specific to our concerns. It shows that inventory in the surgery unit is not managed as well as elsewhere in the hospital. Table 8 compares the inventory turnover ratios of the surgery unit with those of the central warehouse. The results clearly show that there is a major accumulation of inventory in the surgery unit.

[Table 8]

The above results confirm that inventory management in health care facilities, particularly in surgery units, are not meeting the expected results.

According to Malo (2010), we must distinguish the presentation of tables from that of figures.

Table 2.1 Table heading

Source: Insert the full reference of a table, if applicable.

¹² Translation of Lafond, Nelson and Sylvain Landry, "La planification des besoins matières (MRP) pour gérer les stocks du bloc opératoire: étude exploratoire", *Cahier de recherche*, n° 99-04, Montréal, HEC Montréal, 1999, p. 9-10.

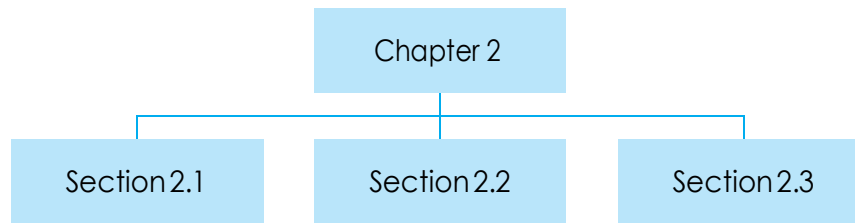


Figure 3.4–Figure heading

Source: Insert the full source for the figure, if applicable.

It is recommended to **number** tables and figures in keeping with the chapter or section number under which they appear. For example, if the first table inserted in a paper is in chapter or section 2, the table will be numbered 2.1, the “2” referring to the chapter or section number and the “1” referring to it being the first table in that chapter or section. If we insert two tables in chapter or section 3, they will be numbered 3.1 and 3.2. If there are several tables or figures in the paper, it is recommended to add a list of tables or figures after the table of contents (see example in Appendix J).

5.3 References and citations

One important characteristic that is recognized in academic discourse is intertextuality (Pollet, 2001). This means that the author builds their argument by relating it to other texts. The texts referenced are sometimes cited textually but are more often referred to indirectly through paraphrase or summary. The following is an excerpt from a text in which the authors incorporate reported speech into their arguments.

Example¹³: “The workforce is changing, with a general movement away from manual labor jobs and an increase in the use of efficient and automated technologies (Church et al., 2011). One undesirable consequence of these changes is an epidemic of sedentary workers who fail to meet recommended physical activity levels (World Health Organization, 2018). Low rates of physical activity have been linked to obesity, diabetes, and cardiovascular disease (CVD; Bielenda, Knapik, & Wright, 1993; Heraclides, Chandola, Witte, & Brunner, 2009). Organizations have recognized the negative impact of sedentary work (Calderwood, Gabriel, Rosen, Simon, & Koopman, 2016), with two-thirds of U.S. employers now offering wellness programs (Valet, 2015), over 70% of which contain a physical activity component (Mattke et al., 2013).”

It is very important to remember that taking credit for someone else’s work is **plagiarism**. Plagiarism is an act of academic dishonesty that could result in sanctions **up to expulsion from HECMontréal**. Furthermore, **any reproduction** (whether a few words, three lines or more than a page), in full or in part, **of another person’s text** and **any cited idea** must be **also include an exact reference to the source**, regardless of whether the text is drawn from a printed or electronic document (see Appendix L for examples of plagiarism). In most fields, to refer to a work other than one’s own, the author must paraphrase the text and use the *author, date* method. This method is preferred over the use of a reference mark to a footnote or endnote. We can then reserve reference marks for comments or specifications about theories, for example. To learn more, see the Purdue Online Writing Guide’s [APA Formatting and Style Guide – 7th Edition](#).

5.4 Bibliographic entries

All references within a text must appear in the final bibliography with a full bibliographic reference.

¹³ Calderwood, Charles, ten Brummelhuis, Lieke L., Patel, Amanda, Watkins, Trevor, Gabriel, Allison S., Rosen, Christopher C., (2020) “Employee Physical Activity: A Multidisciplinary Integrative Review”, in Journal of Management: Southern Management Association, vol 47, issue 1. Consulted 11/29/22 at <https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206320940413>.

There are several ways to present a bibliographic reference. What matters most is to choose a method that takes into account the types of documents referenced (e.g., article, book) and that is consistent with the style chosen for the rest of the bibliography. See the McGill University's [Citation guides](#) to learn how to present each type of reference (e.g., articles, books, webpages, course notes). You also now have free access to [EndNote](#) through the HEC Montréal Library. Just select a style in EndNote, for example, HEC_Montréal.

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Appendices

APPENDIX A: A FEW USEFUL PHRASES TO ORGANIZE A TEXT

The following phrases are useful when introducing different parts of an academic paper, such as a thesis or supervised project report, or to indicate a transition between sections, paragraphs or ideas.

To introduce

The aim of this research is to...

(e.g.: The aim of this research is to analyze, describe, develop, study, propose, identify, take an inventory of...)

This research will address...

The goal of this research is...

The research aims to...

This study will provide...

This study will demonstrate...

In this study/chapter/section, we will...

The purpose of this chapter/section is to...

To divide sections

Chapter 0
Section 0.0

will cover
will describe
will define
will include
will address

In Chapter 0,
In section 0.0,

we describe
we define
we examine
we analyze
we present
we discuss

To conclude

These conditions suggest that...

For these reasons...

In short...

In conclusion...

To conclude,

To summarize,

It is clear that...

This study reveals that...

Based on these observations, it would be useful to...

To discuss studies by other authors

X bases this argument on...
X argues/asserts that...
X shows/wants to show/wanted to show that...
In this work, X indicates that...
The authors base this argument on X
The authors explore...
X's contribution to the field has...
In conducting this study, the author ...

To report what others have said

X specifies that...
X points out that...
X notes that...
X observes that...
X asserts that ...

To draw links between studies

This study is an important milestone in the history of ...
This factor was a historical turning point in the field of...

X's work is aligned with the ideas put forth by Y and Z.

This aspect of X's study is similar to those proposed by Y and Z

We can see that X draws from Y's work by updating/taking a fresh look at/, improving on/transforming their arguments...

X takes the same approach as Y...

The authors agreed that...

X supports Y's argument that...

X strays from the arguments of her predecessors in that...

While X defines this concept as ..., Y calls it / says it is / defines it as ...

To explain the choices you made vs. others

We took inspiration from... in selecting the categories...

We drew upon X's model... in order to...

To remind the reader of an important argument

We noticed...

We observed...

We noted...

We saw...

We have previously shown that...

Let us recall that...

To present an important point, fact or element

We must highlight that/the...
We believe it necessary to focus on...
It is crucial to observe...
We seek to identify...
remind/add/confirm

To mention a detail

To that point, it is important to mention that...
It is interesting to consider...
We must also mention that...
We would be remiss not to mention that...

To introduce a figure or table

As shown/demonstrated/illustrated in figure 3.1...
Figure 3.2 shows the role that X plays in...
Statement, as shown in figure 5.3
Statement, as indicated/demonstrated in table 3.1
Table 5.2 presents the factors...
These factors are presented in table 4.1.
Table 2 lists these elements
Table 4.4 includes all the...

To indicate a step in the argument

Now that X has been established, let us examine...
These answers leave us to conclude that...
Up until now, we have limited ourselves to..., we must now examine...
We must now research/develop/plan
We already know that..., we must now...
Now that we know that..., we must...
Now that we know..., it is now important to...

To limit a previous statement

We do not presume that...
We do not support the argument that...
We are not confirming that...
This does not, however, mean that...
We must also take into account...
We agree that..., but...
One should not conclude that...
We realize that...
However, it is important to clarify what we mean when we say that...

To express restrictions or reservations, or to limit the scope of an opinion

There is no question, however, that...
We must not, however, underestimate...
We must not, however, lose perspective of...

APPENDIX B: CHECKLIST OF PARTS TO INCLUDE IN A THESIS¹⁴

A thesis¹⁵ generally includes the following components (items in bold font are mandatory):

- ☐ **A cover page (blank page not counted in the page numbering)**
- ☐ **A title page** as shown in the Appendix E and including
 - the title
 - statement of the specific degree sought
 - the year and month the final thesis is submitted
 - the copyright symbol:©
- ☐ Notice of compliance with the Research Ethics Board (REB), if applicable, the form *Déclaration de l'Étudiante, de l'Étudiant – Éthique en recherche auprès des Êtres humains* (ethics declaration form for research on human subjects), duly completed and signed
- ☐ An **abstract written in English** of about 150 to 250 words, along with a maximum of 10 keywords in English, including the terms for the research methods used (see the list of methods in Appendix H)
- ☐ An abstract in French, if required, along with a maximum of 10 keywords in that language, including the terms for the research methods used (see the list of methods in Appendix H)
- ☐ **Table of contents**, which must include the corresponding page numbers
- ☐ **List of figures or tables**, which must include the corresponding page numbers (Appendix J)
- ☐ A list of abbreviations and codes used, if applicable
- ☐ A foreword (mandatory for a manuscript-based thesis)
- ☐ Acknowledgements
- ☐ **Body of the paper**, meaning the various chapters of the thesis, including the introduction, literature review and conclusion
- ☐ An analytical index, as needed
- ☐ A full bibliography¹⁶
- ☐ Appendices, if applicable
- ☐ Special documents (e.g., film, CD-R), if applicable, each of which must be properly labeled
- ☐ **Back cover page (blank page not counted in the page numbering)**

¹⁴ Word templates for a classic thesis and a thesis by articles are available on the [CLFA website](#) in the "Writing" section.

¹⁵ See Appendix M for a list of the Best Master's Thesis Award winners.

¹⁶ For those who use EndNote, the bibliography will appear after the appendices, at the end of the document. Before submitting the final version of your thesis, move the bibliography using the copy-paste feature

APPENDIX C: CHECKLIST OF PARTS TO INCLUDE IN A DISSERTATION¹⁴

A dissertation¹⁵ generally includes **the following components, in this order** (items in bold font are mandatory).

Classic dissertation	Manuscript-based thesis
☐ A cover page (blank page not counted in the page numbering) ☐ A title page as shown in Appendix F ☐ A page identifying the members of the jury (Appendix G) ☐ An abstract¹⁶ in English along with a maximum of 15 key words in English, including the terms for the research methods used (see the list of methods in Appendix H) ☐ An abstract¹⁶ in French along with a maximum of 15 key words in French, including the terms for the research methods used (see the list of methods in Appendix H) ☐ Table of contents (Appendix I), which must include the page numbers and first pages (before the introduction), as well as the numbered headings and sub-headings of each chapter and section ☐ A list of tables or figures (Appendix J), which must include the corresponding page numbers ☐ A list of abbreviations and codes used, if applicable ☐ A dedication, if applicable ☐ Acknowledgements ☐ A forward (especially for a manuscript-based thesis)	☐ A general introduction ☐ A chapter presenting the general theoretical framework, as needed ☐ The papers, each of which includes: - an abstract - an introduction - the body sections - a conclusion - bibliographic references ☐ A general conclusion ☐ A general bibliography¹⁸, as needed ☐ Appendices, if applicable
• Back cover page (blank page not counted in the page numbering)	
☐ If applicable, the co-authors of the papers are mentioned in the manuscript-based thesis either in the foreword, in the general introduction, or after the abstract but before the key words.	

¹⁴Word templates for a classic thesis and a thesis by articles are available on the [CLFA website](#) in the "Writing" section.

¹⁵See Appendix N for examples of dissertations submitted to HEC Montréal.

¹⁶The abstract is between 350 and 500 words and is listed in the table of contents. It must not be a simple enumeration of the research chapters. Usually, this is where we summarize the topic, research objectives, and main findings. We can also briefly describe the type of research methods used.

¹⁷For those who use EndNote, the bibliography will appear after the appendices, at the end of the document. Before submitting the final version of your dissertation, move the bibliography using the copy-paste feature.

¹⁸For those who use EndNote, insert a bibliography at the end of each section as well as a final bibliography that includes all references mentioned in the dissertation. Then, remove the bibliography from the sections that do not require it, for example, the introduction.

APPENDIX D: MODEL OF A TITLE PAGE FOR AN ACADEMIC PAPER¹⁷

HEC Montréal

Title of paper

Presented to
First and Last Name of the professor

For the course
Course title
Course code

by
First and Last Name of the student
Student ID No.

Day Month, Year (when the paper is submitted)

¹⁷ This model is intended to be an example. Your own title page may vary depending on the professor's requirements.

APPENDIX E:
MODEL OF A TITLE PAGE FOR A MASTER'S THESIS

HEC Montréal

Title of thesis

by

First and Last Name

**Master of Science in Administration
(specialization)**

*A Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements of Master of Science in
Administration
(MSc)*

First and Last Name
HEC Montréal
Research Director

Month and year of final submission
© Student's First and Last Name, Year

APPENDIX F: MODEL OF A TITLE PAGE FOR A DISSERTATION

HEC Montréal

School affiliated with Université de Montréal

**Dissertation title:
subtitle, if applicable**

**By
First and Last Name**

**Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree of Doctor of Administration (Name of Specialization)**

Month Year¹⁸

© Student's First and Last Name, Year

¹⁸ Date of final submission.

APPENDIX G: MODEL OF A JURY IDENTIFICATION

HEC Montréal

School affiliated with Université de Montréal

This dissertation entitled:

**Dissertation title:
subtitle, if applicable**

Presented by:

First and Last Name

has been evaluated by a jury comprising the following people:

First and Last Name

HEC Montréal

Chair (rapporteur)

First and Last

Name HEC

Montréal

Research Director

First and Last Name

HEC Montréal or name of partner university

Research Co-director

First and Last Name

Name of partner university

Jury member

First and Last Name

Name of partner university

External examiner

First and Last

Name HEC

Montréal

Representative of the Director of HEC Montréal

APPENDIX H: RESEARCH METHODS FOR A THESIS OR DISSERTATION

Determine which types of research methods are used in your thesis or dissertation. The types must be included in the keywords used in the abstract, both in French and in English.

- ☐ *analyse de contenu* (content analysis)
- ☐ *analyse multivariée* (multivariate analysis)
- ☐ *analyse numérique* (numerical analysis)
- ☐ *comparaison interculturelle* (intercultural comparison)
- ☐ *économétrie* (econometrics)
- ☐ *enquête* (survey)
- ☐ *entrevue en profondeur* (in-depth interview)
- ☐ *équations structurelles* (structural equations)
- ☐ *ethnographie* (ethnography)
- ☐ *étude de cas* (case study)
- ☐ *expérimentation* (experimentation)
- ☐ *exploitation de données* (data mining)
- ☐ *intelligence artificielle et heuristique* (artificial intelligence and heuristics)
- ☐ *méthode d'observation* (observation method)
- ☐ *méthode historique* (historical method)
- ☐ *méthode mixte* (mixed methods)
- ☐ *netnographie* (netnography)
- ☐ *neuroimagerie* (neuroimaging)
- ☐ *programmation mathématique* (mathematical programming)
- ☐ *recherche évaluative* (evaluative research)
- ☐ *recherche longitudinale* (longitudinal research)
- ☐ *recherche quantitative* (quantitative research)
- ☐ *simulation* (simulation)
- ☐ *théorie des jeux* (game theory)

APPENDIX I: EXAMPLE OF A TABLE OF CONTENTS

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Source: Translation of an excerpt from Dufour, Émilie (2016). *Analyse et conception d'un réseau d'entrepôts d'aide humanitaire : Le cas de l'Organisation des Nations Unies pour la réponse en Afrique de l'Est*, mémoire de maîtrise, Montréal, HEC Montréal, 108 p.

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Source: List of Tables and Figures. Retrieved February 26, 2014 from http://www.fdic.gov/bank/historical/history/6_15.pdf

APPENDIX K: LAYOUT AND PAGINATION OF A THESIS OR DISSERTATION

The quality of a thesis or dissertation's presentation is a criterion that jury members consider in their evaluation and is essential to any well organized work a student submits. When writing a thesis or dissertation, whether classic or manuscript based, students can use the models provided on the [CFLA](#) webpage so they can write without worrying about [the](#) technical aspects of using Word.

An Overview

- A thesis or dissertation must be paginated (see *Pagination* below).
- It must be printed on white paper measuring 21.5 cm x 28 cm (8 ½ in x 11 in).
- It must be printed on **both sides** of the pages.
- The top, bottom and right **margins** are standard (about 2 to 3 cm); the left margin is 4 to 5 cm wide for readability after the document has been bound.
- The text is generally set to 1.5 line spacing, with at least 6-point spacing between paragraphs. It can also be double spaced; paragraph spacing must also be increased in this case. Generally speaking, indentation is not recommended.
- Use a classic typeface (e.g., Arial, Calibri, or Times New Roman). It should be the same throughout the text (if needed, it can be different in the tables, figures, and illustrations). Font size generally varies between 10 to 12 points for the main text, depending on the typeface, but can be reduced to as small as 8 points for secondary text, for example, text boxes, notes, keys and figures.
- The thesis and dissertation are printed **in black ink**; colour is allowed only for graphics for the purpose of clarity.
- Manual annotation is not permitted.

Pagination

- When printing the document, make sure there is an unnumbered blank page on the back of the title page, and on the back of the jury identification page for a dissertation. Blank pages can also be added each time you wish to print starting on a right-hand page (odd page¹⁹), for example, at the end of a chapter so that the following chapter starts on a right-hand page.
- All pages must be numbered²⁰ at the bottom of the page, in the centre, barring the following exceptions which are not numbered:
 - the front and back cover pages and the title page, and the jury identification page for dissertations
 - the blank pages on the back of the title page, and the blank page on the back of the jury ID page for dissertations
 - the first page of the abstract in English
 - the first page of a chapter.
- All pages are counted in numerical order, except for the front and back cover pages.

¹⁹ In Word under the "Layout" tab is a feature for inserting a **section break: page break**.

²⁰ Do not add a dash or any other element to the page number.

- The pagination of the first pages (before the introduction) is generally in lowercase Roman numerals (i, ii, iii, iv...). Numbering starts on the title page, but the pagination does not usually appear before the second page of the abstract in French.
- Pagination of the body of the paper (starting from the introduction) restarts at 1, but only appears starting on the second page of the introduction, meaning on page 2. It appears in the same place throughout the document, even if there are tables in landscape orientation.
- Pagination in the appendices also appears in the same place and orientation as in the rest of the document, even if the appendices are in landscape orientation. Generally, it is in lowercase Roman numerals. It can, for example, start again at the numeral *i*, or continue where the numbering left off in the first pages (e.g., *i* to *xii* in the first pages, and *xiii* to *xx* in the appendices).

APPENDIX L: EXAMPLE OF A PLAGIARIZED VS. PROPERLY CITED TEXT

Source Text	
[...] The Craftsman is the preserver and the mentor. Since when have realism and conviction become outmoded, old-fashioned? He's the one who will give our young people, most of whom are budding Craftsmen, a chance to get started. He's the one who will accept them into the organization even if they are not "brilliant". He won't ask them if they are charismatic. He doesn't expect them to be. He will ask them what they <i>know</i> and whether they have the desire to <i>learn how to do</i>. He's the one who will mentor, empower and teach and train and invest in them. The Artist hasn't got the time. And the Technocrat hasn't got the inclination. [...] (p. 187) SOURCE: Patricia Pitcher (1995) <i>Artists, Craftsmen and Technocrats: The Dreams, Realities and Illusions of Leadership</i>. Toronto. Stoddart, 239.	
Plagiarism	Correct Quotation
The Craftsman is both a preserver and a mentor. He is where young people get their first start, even if they are not charming or brilliant. This person wants to find out <i>what</i> they know and <i>what</i> they want to do. He will be their mentor, empowerer, and trainer. He is not like an Artist or a Technocrat: the former cannot make time for the young apprentice; the latter just doesn't have the will.	This section deals with "Craftsmen" and the pivotal role they play in nurturing the upcoming generation of workers. Pitcher points out that Craftsmen give young people their first opportunity to ply their trade. (Pitcher, 187) They are not interested in the young protégés' charm or brilliance. Instead, they ascertain the depth of their knowledge and their willingness to learn. (187) In short, unlike the hurried Artist or the uninterested Technocrat, the Craftsman is "the one who will mentor, empower and teach and train and invest in [young workers]."(187)
FEATURES: ▪ No reference made to author. ▪ Certain parts of the sentences have been copied. ▪ One part of the original text has been rewritten. ▪ Author's ideas have been appropriated.	FEATURES: ▪ Reference is made to authors when their words and ideas are reported directly or indirectly. ▪ Quotation marks used to set off quoted text. ▪ Reference is made to the authors whenever their words are rewritten or summarized. ▪ Words or ideas introduced with verbs such as describe, state, assert, contend, claim, allege, affirm, maintain, imply, etc.