

Essay Writing

(1) Required Format for all Essays:

Essays must be typewritten; hand-written work cannot be accepted (medical-certified reasons aside). All essays must be printed in black ink and must be typed in 'Times New Roman' font, size 12. All footnotes should be in size 10 of the same font.

Use one-and-a-half line spacing. To set your computer to one-and-a-half line spacing in *Microsoft Word*, click on 'Format', then 'Paragraph'. In the 'Line Spacing' section, click on the arrow at the right of the box and select '1.5 lines'.

Indent the first line of all new paragraphs about 5 spaces (or press the tab key once); alternatively, insert an extra space between paragraphs and begin the new paragraph flush with the left margin.

Quotations:

Quotations of less than 3 lines are enclosed within single quotation marks ('I wandered lonely as a cloud') and included within the text of your paper. Use double quotation marks for quotes within quotes, e.g. Murphy argues that 'The fact that Wordsworth opened his poem with the line "I wandered lonely as a cloud" suggests that it was not quite the sunniest of days in rural England'. Quotations longer than 2-3 lines (block-quotations) should be indented from the left and right margins, single-spaced, without quotation marks:

This is what a block quotation should look like. There is no need to place quotation marks around block quotations. Also, do not italicise block quotations and do not place the quotation in bold (unless done so in the text that you are quoting).

To set your margins to the correct indentation for block quotations in *Microsoft Word*, click on 'Format', then 'Paragraph'. In 'Paragraph' select 'Indents and Spacing', then, in the 'Indentation' section enter '2.54 cm' into 'Left' and 'Right'.

Use three periods with a space on either side to indicate marks of omission (an ellipsis): ... e.g. The document with the words 'This letter which was given to me by my trusted confidante ... whose name I keep hidden from prying researchers, if discovered, would perhaps be of greater consequence than all the recent intrigues of history'. Always have a space before and also a space after an ellipsis except where the next character is a closing quotation mark or a closing parenthesis. Do not insert an ellipsis at the start of a quote.

Page Numbers:

All of the pages of your essay should be numbered. Numbers should be placed in the top right hand corner of each page. To insert page numbers correctly when using

Microsoft Word click on 'Insert' and then 'Page Numbers'. Go to 'Position' and click on the arrow to the right of the box, then select 'Top of page (Header)'.

Titles:

Italicise book titles; use single quotation marks for articles and chapters. For example, Michael Drumm's *Passage to Pasch* but Emmanuel Levinas' 'The Trace of the Other'.

(2) Bibliography and Referencing:

Bibliography:

A correctly presented bibliography (i.e. list of books and articles that you have referred to) must be presented with your essay. Bibliographies must be alphabetised by the author's last name. If the book is an edited collection or a translation, use ed. for editor and trans. for translator. Your bibliography should contain **at least five books** that are referred to in your essay. The books in your bibliography should reflect the required and recommended reading for the course that the essay is being submitted for. Alphabetise your bibliography by author's last name (single space entries, double space between entries). The following are standard formats for the bibliography.

A book: Author's name, title *italicised*, place and date of publication. For example:

Drumm, Michael, *Passage to Pasch: Revisiting the Catholic Sacraments* (Dublin, 1998).

An edited book:

Hand, Séan (ed.), *The Levinas Reader* (Oxford, 1998).

An article in a journal: Author's name, title of article in single inverted commas, journal title *italicised*, with volume number, year, and page extents. For example:

White, F. C., 'Love and the Individual in Plato's *Phaedrus*', *The Classical Quarterly*, 40 (1990), pp 396-406.

An article in an edited collection: Author's name, title of article in single inverted commas, editor's name, title of book *italicised*, and page extents. For example:

Harris, H.S., 'Hegel's intellectual development to 1807', in F.C. Beiser (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Hegel* (Cambridge, 1993), pp 25-51.

An essay or article in a book (by the same author):

Adorno, T, 'Skoteinos, or How to read Hegel', in *Hegel: Three Studies* (Cambridge, MA, 1993), pp 89-148.

Footnotes:

If you quote (that is, reproduce the author's exact words) from a book, article in a journal, or other source, you should always provide a reference by means of a footnote. You should also use a footnote when you are referring to another author's ideas or when paraphrasing an author.

To insert a footnote in *Microsoft Word* click on 'Insert', then click on 'Footnote' (N.B. in some versions of *Word* you will need to click on 'Insert', 'Reference', and then 'Footnote'). Footnotes automatically place themselves at the bottom of the page and appear numerically. Your first footnote reference gives the full source and the page referred to. The author's last name comes first in a bibliography; in footnotes the name is rendered as first name, then surname. For example:

¹ Edith Stein, *On the Problem of Empathy*, trans. Waltraut Stein (Washington D.C. 1989), p. 199.

Where no confusion can arise (for example, where references are on the same page), subsequent references to the same book use 'ibid.' ('in the same place'), followed by the page number. If intervening references to other works occur, use 'op. cit.' ('in the work quoted'); however, do not send the reader back too many pages - if in doubt, use a full reference.

Examples:

² Ibid., p. 103. [this is a reference to Stein's book, above.]

³ Albert Alteritas, 'Is it all the same?', *Philosophy*, 8 (3) (Jan. 2000), p. 22.

⁴ Edith Stein, op. cit., p. 21.

Citing the Bible:

There is no need to insert a footnote each time you quote the Bible. However, once you have quoted the Bible in your essay you must reference it in brackets after the quotation ends in the main body of your essay. For example: 'Therefore you have no excuse, whoever you are, when you judge others; for in passing judgement on another you condemn yourself, because you, the judge, are doing the very same things' (Rom. 2:1).

Internet:

At St. Patrick's College we encourage our students to carefully research each of their essays. The internet is a vast source of information but not all of this is reliable. Therefore, we do not recommend that students use the internet as a source of research for their essays. Our college library has a wide variety of interesting and useful books, not to mention access to a large collection of journals and periodicals; we would encourage you all to make use of this very valuable resource. Students should consult the booklists given to them by the course lecturer when deciding what books to refer to in their essays.

(3) Grammar and Proofreading:

A well-structured essay not only reads better but it also puts a smile on the marker's face! Good use of paragraphs and well-ordered syntax can really make a difference to

the quality of your essay. It is very important that you check your grammar before you submit your essay.

In the age of computers with spell-check there really is no excuse for handing up an essay that is littered with spelling mistakes. It only takes the click of the 'ABC' button in *Microsoft Word* to correct slight mistakes and save your essay marker undue stress!

Students are advised that poor spelling, grammar and punctuation in essays and examinations will be penalised, and they are urged to give this matter their serious attention. Students who have difficulty with spelling, grammar and punctuation should consult a staff member for advice as a matter of some urgency.

Once you have checked the grammar and spelling, you should proofread your essay for any further mistakes. If you have saved your work on to a disk, this is a relatively pain-free process and your essay marker will thank you for it!

(4) Plagiarism:

N.B. Plagiarism is unacceptable and not permissible under any circumstances. Occurrences of plagiarism are taken very seriously at St. Patrick's College.

It is the college's policy that the use of another's work without due acknowledgment is strictly forbidden. Copying another's work, either word for word or with only minor changes of wording, and presenting the results as if it were your own work, is both unethical and illegal under copyright laws. It is a form of dishonesty, indicating a complete disregard for others' work. Plagiarism also reveals an unwillingness to think for oneself, being therefore diametrically opposed to the spirit of third level studies. The direct copying of passages from a book, an article, or the Internet, without adequate references being made, is plagiarism; if you are unsure of whether or not you are plagiarising the best thing to do is to insert a footnote.

Copying another student's work is also deemed to be plagiarism. When you copy someone else's work you are being unjust to yourself and the other student. Submitting essays or projects that have been written by anyone other than yourself will result in heavy penalties. As your final assessment is partly based on written assignments, plagiarism is equivalent to cheating at examinations. A lecturer or tutor who finds plagiarism in an essay or project is obliged to report this to the registrar. The penalty can extend beyond loss of marks for the essay or project in question to exclusion from the final examination for that year.

Students who make an honest effort will achieve rapid progress in the art of writing essays and will grow in confidence as a result. Any student who is unsure about the correct use of sources should consult a tutor or lecturer for advice.

(5) Essay Cover Sheets:

Your essay should be accompanied by a cover sheet that lists the following information: name, year, course, student number, subject, lecturer, essay title, date. There is a blank essay cover sheet on the following page that students should photocopy and use each time they submit an essay. Essay cover sheets can also be

accessed on the student server and printed off. **N.B.** It is not always possible to return copies of essays to students as we need to retain them for our own records. Therefore, we advise each student to save their essay on a disk and retain it.

St. Patrick's College Essay Cover Sheet

SURNAME, FIRST NAME (in capitals)

Student Number

Year

Tutor/Lecturer

Deadline

Essay title

This is my own original work. It has not been submitted previously in respect of any course.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Essay Grading System (H.E.T.A.C.)

GRADE	INTERPRETATION OF GRADE	MARKS
First Class Honours (1.1)	Outstanding answer in every respect. Also, casts the issue/question in a new light.	75
First Class Honours (1.1)	Excellent informed answer; excellently constructed argument displaying a sure command of concepts and some originality of thought.	70-74
Second Class Honours, Grade 1 (2.1)	Very well informed answer; coherent, well-constructed argument displaying good grasp of concepts.	60-69
Second Class Honours, Grade 2 (2.2)	Good information and the question/issue is addressed; a fairly good grasp of concepts displayed.	50-59
Pass	Adverts to question/issue but not free of irrelevance; information very limited or inadequately utilised or expressed in derivative language.	40-49
Fail	Little relevant information and/or question is not addressed.	30-39
Fail	Little sense of what is required and/or no more than scraps of relevant information.	0-29