Style Sheet for Literary Essays Written for English at SPL

Some Common Referencing and Formatting Situations

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(not a) BA/MA/ thesis

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Title: Style Sheet for Literary Essays Written for English at SPL: Some Common Referencing and Formatting Situations

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Abstract: The aim of this text is to present the most common referencing and formatting situations for students when writing an academic essay in English literature at the Department of Languages and Literatures, University of Gothenburg. It illustrates many standard formatting issues for both in-text citations and bibliographical references based on the MLA style. The primary materials used here were references to diverse sources, both in print and online; the method (as far as there was one) was a qualitative analysis of the gathered material followed by a selection of the most representative situations. This is not an academic research paper, so there is no scholarly conclusion drawn, but this paper clearly illustrates that citations and references are by no means a simple matter and that much care must be given in order to follow the appropriate formatting guidelines.

Keywords: Style sheet, formatting, reference, MLA, footnote, quote, in-text citation, primary material, secondary material, print sources, non-print sources
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1. Introduction

The purpose of this guide is to give you clear instructions on how to lay out a paper written as part of a literature course in this department. It will inform you about the formal requirements of such a paper, especially with regard to sections, quotations, and references. For your convenience, the format adopted for this guide reflects the one required for your paper (cf., for example, paragraph indentation style, the format of the headings, text, footnotes,\textsuperscript{1} in-text citations, references, etc.).

Apart from the formal criteria, there are a number of additional aspects of academic writing you should consider when writing papers in literature. You should try to write in a readable and accessible style, and make sure that your arguments are expressed coherently and concisely. Additional information on various aspects of academic writing is available in several books in the library and also for example on the following websites: www.uefap.co.uk (see also “Links” section), http://owl.english.purdue.edu/.

2. Preliminaries

Basic Features

You should use A4 paper and print on one side only. Set all margins of your document (left, right, top and bottom) at 2.5 cm. To make the paper easier to read, use a line spacing of 1.5 (as used in this text). However, footnotes, long quotations, the abstract and the references should be single-spaced. The main body of the text should be left justified (or fully justified). Choose the Times New Roman font (the font used here), size 12 (for the body text). Finally, all pages should be consecutively numbered, beginning with the page which carries the introduction (i.e. not counting the title page, the abstract page or the table of contents page). The sections of the paper should be arranged in the following order: title page, abstract, table of contents, main text, references, appendix (if applicable).

\textsuperscript{1}This is roughly what your footnote should look like. In most cases, your word processing program will take care of all the details, if not then keep in mind that footnotes should be Times New Roman, font size 10 and the line spacing should be single-spaced.
Your paper may follow British or American English spelling and grammar conventions. However, once you have made your choice, be consistent. If your word-processor has a spellchecker, set it for either British or American English, and use it. If you use a word-processor, there should be no need for corrections by hand. If you do discover any errors after printing, correct them neatly in ink.

The length of your paper will normally be prescribed by the type of essay you are writing (e.g. a bachelor’s degree essay will be ca. 8000 words, an interdisciplinary paper will be 8000 to 10,000 words, and so on). Use the word-count on your computer to check that your paper is neither too long nor too short, and that the various sections are of appropriate lengths.

**Title Page**

For the title page, please use one of the ready-made templates. If you are unsure which template to use, contact your supervisor.

**The Abstract**

The example below serves as an illustration of how you can organize and format your abstract. This is the information you need to include in an abstract: **the title of the essay, the author’s name, supervisor’s name**, the actual **abstract** (which should mention **aims, method/material and main results**) and finally **keywords** (at least 5, no more than 10).

**Abstract example**

**Title:** The Poetry of Idries Davies and Postcolonial Wales  
**Author:** Jane Smith  
**Supervisor:** Marge Simpson  

**Abstract:** In recent years there has been a debate about whether or not Wales can be seen as a postcolonial society. This essay is a contribution to this ongoing discussion through its focus on the poetry of Idries Davies, one of Wales’s most important modern poets. By applying the postcolonial concepts of exile, migration, margin and centre to a selection of Davies’s poetry, the essay shows that Davies’s writing has much to say about the colonial and postcolonial experience of ordinary Welsh people. The focus of the argument is both on the postcolonial condition that Davies explores in his writing, as well as the poetic voice he gives to the Welsh characters he portrays in his three epic poems, *Gwalia Deserta* (1938), *The Angry Summer* (1943) and *Tonypandy* (1945).

**Keywords:** Idries Davies, *Gwalia Deserta*, *The Angry Summer*, *Tonypandy*, Wales, postcolonialism, exile, migration, margin, centre
Table of Contents

This page should carry the title ‘Table of contents’ at the top. Leave a few lines and then begin to list the contents: section titles on the left, the pages on which the sections begin on the right (see the Table of Contents page of this guide for an example). Most modern word processing programs will do this automatically if you insert the headings properly using the correct heading level from the preset ones from the top ribbon in the program (e.g., in Word 2010, this is a series of different styles to the right-hand of the page). Please note that the references and any appendices should also be included in the table of contents.

3. Features of the Actual Paper

Paragraphing

Make sure that you follow the two important rules of academic writing: unity and coherence. Unity can be best explained by the expression ‘one idea, one paragraph’, meaning that you need to focus on one argument at a time and indicate the transition to a new argument (or sub-argument) by beginning a new paragraph. However, avoid very short paragraphs, especially those containing only one sentence. Coherence refers to the fact that your essay should be organized in a logical manner and that links within and between paragraphs should be made explicit.

Each new paragraph should be ‘indented’ which means that the first line should start further right than the following lines (usually about 1 cm from the margin). Note that paragraphs beginning new sections or following quotations are NOT indented.

Sectioning

To help organize your work, it is worth dividing it up into explicitly marked chapters or sections. This helps to make it obvious for the reader what you are dealing with at any moment in time and gives a very clear overall structure to your work. In literary essays it is common to have between 4 and 5 sections/chapters, including the introduction and conclusion. Remember that all the different sections of your essay should be clearly related to your main thesis. You need to indicate the focus of each section/chapter by a heading. In titles and headings, the first letter of each main word should be capitalized. The same applies to the table of contents. For an example of sectioning, look closely at this guide. It has been set out according to the above principles.
Citations and Quotations

In the text, the details of the literature referred to are not indicated in full and are not indicated in a footnote. Instead, two pieces of information are given in brackets after the relevant passage: (Author’s surname and Relevant page/s), for example (Felski 9). If an author’s name is part of the running text, integrate it in a suitable way, for instance “Felski explains that the concept of…” (9) or “According to Felski, the concept …” (9).

Citations of books or articles by more than one author take the form (Gilbert and Gubar 215), (Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin 11). If a text has more than three authors, provide the name of the first author followed by et al., as in (Smith et al.). When a citation refers to a work consisting of more than one volume, you should indicate both the volume number and the page number as in: (1: 235). When citing works by several authors with the same last name use initials to differentiate them, for example (V. Woolf 146-48) and (L. Woolf 12).

When citing internet sources, include in the text or within parenthesis the first element that will appear in your bibliography. This can be the author’s name, the title of the article or the name of the website. Indicate page numbers whenever possible. It is helpful to insert the word online in the text to help the reader understand why some information that would usually be mandatory (such as an author’s name and a page number) is missing from your citation.

Try to avoid citing titles indirectly via another source containing this citation. If required, these citations take the form (Carby qtd. in Suleri 277). Only the text you actually consulted should appear in the bibliography.

Indirect quotations or paraphrases present the ideas or arguments of an author in your own words. In this case, it is important that you add the source from which you gained the respective information in brackets. An example of paraphrase is:

The writing of Virginia Woolf is particularly fitted to a contextual approach since she herself was well aware of the link between literary production and an author’s social and personal situatedness (Shaw 156).

Verbatim (i.e. word-for-word) quotations can be integrated in two basic formats: if the quote is quite short (less than approx. 50 words/3 lines), it is included in the main body of the text and enclosed within double quotation marks, as in the following example:
In an article on *Mrs Dalloway* and *A Room of One’s Own*, Marion Shaw claims that Woolf “was one of the first writers to consider seriously and at length the relationship between an author’s historical and personal situation and his or her work” (156).

If the quote is longer, it is presented as a separate paragraph, with each line indented about 2 cm from the left margin; the line spacing for the quote is single, the font size is reduced to 10 and the quote is *not* enclosed in quotation marks:

In her award-winning book *Radical Children’s Literature* (2007), Kimberley Reynolds argues that while contemporary children’s literature certainly explores new problem areas, children have in fact always been confronted with less than optimistic narratives:

> Despite efforts to protect children from books and other kinds of reading that could leave them feeling hopeless, the young have always encountered frightening, nihilistic, and depressive ‘stories’ in a variety of contexts – from the news through popular soap operas and even such ‘family favourite’ films as Walt Disney’s version of *Bambi*. (89)

All *direct quotations* should follow the original text exactly – in wording, spelling and punctuation. Any additions or changes that you make should be indicated by square brackets [ ].

In the example below *in* is, contrary to the original text, spelt with a lowercase *i*:

According to Collie and Slater, “[i]n order for us to justify the additional time and effort which will undoubtedly be needed for learners to come to grips with a work of literature in a language not their own, there must be some special incentive involved” (6).

If you omit part of a quotation, indicate this by ellipsis points in square brackets: […]. For example: “Since the end of the twentieth century, children’s literature has reflected many of the themes […] identified by Showalter” (Reynolds 151). If you should spot mistakes (e.g. typos) in the original text, you may add Latin [sic] in square brackets after the flawed construction in question. If you use quotations from languages other than English in the text, give the quote in the original language first and enclose the translation in square brackets.

**Footnotes**

Footnotes are *not* used to indicate the source of citations (these are included in the running text – see section above). Use footnotes only when referring to further discussions of a topic or to include extra information. Number them consecutively throughout the text, and make sure that all punctuation marks as well as closing parentheses precede note numbers in the text.
Punctuation, Font Conventions, Abbreviations

Conventions on the use of quotation marks can vary considerably, but we recommend that you use “double quotation marks” for direct quotations; use ‘single quotation’ marks for glosses, definitions, ‘qualified’ words or phrases, or for quotations within quotations. Quotation marks go inside punctuation when only part of a sentence or the title of an article/a contribution to a book is quoted; unless the punctuation mark is part of the quotation:

The Swedish word *gymnasium* means ‘upper secondary school’, not ‘gymnasium’.

In her article “Problems of Gender and History in the teaching of Things Fall Apart”, Rhonda Cobham suggests that…

Consequently, the text type drama has been described as “a stereotypically ‘oral’ register” (Biber & Finegan 1997: 260).

This is the way he used the question “What’s up bro?”.

Use *italics* if you cite a word, phrase, or sentence as a **concept** or as the object of discussion; do not use quotation marks for this purpose. If you want to indicate **emphasis**, do this by using language wherever possible, rather than typographic features. If it has to be done typographically, please do not use italics but **bold** type.

Avoid using too many **abbreviations**; they often pose severe problems for readers not completely familiar with the language of a text. Where more than one abbreviation is acceptable, select one and use it consistently throughout the text. Abbreviations ending in a small letter have a full stop following them (e.g. OFr., Gk., Lat.), those ending in a capital letter do not (e.g. MHG, OCS, OE). Here are some abbreviations which are frequently used:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>cf.</td>
<td>(confer, ‘compare’) Usually used in footnotes to indicate a source that develops an argument you make: cf. Spivak for a detailed discussion of the concept of the <em>subaltern</em>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e.g.</td>
<td>(exempli gratia, ‘for example’) Any section can have sub-sections (e.g. 1.1.).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i.e.</td>
<td>(id est, ‘in other words’) Begin your list of references on a new page (i.e. the one after your conclusion).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| [sic]        | (not an abbreviation - means something like ‘as it is written’) … his latest school job page advertises “a wide range [sic] of 6th form courses”.


Plagiarism

Plagiarism (i.e. using another person’s ideas or phrasing, and representing them as your own without acknowledging it) is a serious offence. Please respect and obey the academic code of conduct (see also the Gothenburg university guidelines available online at the following address: http://www.ub.gu.se/skriva/plagiering/ or consult the rules and regulations information for students at http://www.rk.gu.se/digitalAssets/1299/1299480_regelsamling_svensk.pdf). If you are ever in doubt, please contact your supervisor/teacher.

4. Format of References in the Bibliography

The references at the end of the manuscript give full citation details of the literature referred to in the text. Make sure that your bibliography comprises all of the books/articles/etc. referred to in the running text of your paper and vice versa! Always begin your bibliography on a new page (i.e. the one directly after your conclusion). The references are always ordered alphabetically and chronologically if there is more than one work by the same author. First names should be written out in full, i.e. try to avoid initials if that is possible. If a reference stretches over more than one line, the second line should be indented (a so-called ‘hanging’ indentation) as in the examples given below as well as in the bibliography. We recommend that you use the same spacing in the bibliography as for the rest of the document, i.e. 1.5 spacing.

Books

You must give six pieces of information: 1) Author/Editor, 2) Title, 3) Place of publication, 4) Publisher, 5) Year of publication, and 6) Medium. The author’s/editor’s surname is always the first piece of information and is followed by the author’s/editor’s first name. Next comes the title of the work which should be italicized. Note that titles in languages other than English should be translated into the language of the text with the translation following the original title in square brackets. Information about the edition used may be given after the title. After that comes the place of publication followed by the name of the publisher. The year of publication is indicated (if a work has not yet been published, add ‘in press’ or ‘forthcoming’). Finally, add the medium of the work – most commonly for books ‘Print’.

Author’s/Editor’s surname, Author’s/Editor’s first name, ed. [if applicable]. Title. Edition [if applicable]. Place of publication: Publisher, Year. Medium.


If there is more than one author/editor, use the order given on the book, which may or may not be alphabetical, and separate them by a comma. Note that the order in which you give the first author’s surname and first name is inverted for all following authors. Add ‘and’ before the name of the last author:

**Author’s surname, Author’s first name[, and 2nd author’s first name 2nd author’s surname].**

*Title*. edition [if applicable]. Place of publication: Publisher, Year. Medium.


If a work has more than three authors, only name the first author followed by et al.:


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\(^2\) Note that titles within titles (such as *The Simpsons* in this case) are not italicized.
It may sometimes be important to signal that the date of publication of a work which you have consulted does not correspond to when the text was originally published. In this case you need to give first the original date of publication after the title and then the date of publication of your edition in the usual manner, after the name of the publisher:


PhD, MA and BA theses are referred to as follows:


Special cases can include a translated book or a book prepared by an editor:


**Articles**

**Articles in Journals (Including Reviews)**

List the following information in the following order:

Author’s surname, author’s first name[ and 2nd author’s first name 2nd author’s surname].


For example:


When referencing an article which you have consulted online, write ‘Web’ for the medium of publication followed by the date of access:

When citing sources you have accessed via online databases such as EBSCO, Academic Search Elite, JSTOR, Project Muse, ProQuest, Science Online, etc., you need to indicate this in the following way:


Reviews are cited in the following way (note that the first review has a title of its own, while the second doesn’t):


**Articles/Chapters in Books**

List the following information in the following manner:

**Author’s surname, author’s first name[, and 2nd author’s first name 2nd author’s surname]. “Title of Chapter.” Title of Book. Ed(s). Editor’s name(s). City of Publication: Publisher, Year. Page range of chapter. Medium of Publication.**

For example:


Articles in Newspapers and Non-scholarly Sources

List the following information in the following manner:

**Author’s surname, author’s first name[, and 2nd author’s first name 2nd author’s surname].**

“**Title.**” *Newspaper/Magazine* Day Month Year: Page(s). Medium of publication.

For electronic sources, always add ‘Web’ followed by the date of access.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Publication</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

The World Wide Web (WWW)

For obvious reasons, you should treat information from the internet with caution. To cite files available on the WWW, follow the basic format given above. As mentioned in the section on “Citations and Quotations”, however, internet sources might not provide an author. When citing such sources, you should use what will be the first element in your bibliography. That can be the title of a webpage, the name of the website, or the publisher. The following sentence gives an example of a webpage with a title but no known author: “The webpage ‘How to Cite a Newspaper in a Bibliography Using MLA’ confirms that no URLs are needed for electronic sources” (“How to Cite”).

The standard way of referencing an online source in your bibliography is

**Author’s surname, author’s first name[, and 2nd author’s first name 2nd author’s surname].**

“**Title of Webpage.**” *Title of Website. Publisher, Day Month Year. Page(s). Medium of publication.*

If information such as date of publication, pagination, publisher, etc. is missing, you should indicate this in your bibliographical entries using the following abbreviations: n.d. to indicate that no date is provided, n.pag. for no pagination and n.p. for no publisher.
Bibliographical references should look like those in the following examples:


**Citing Online Dictionaries and Reference Works such as Wikipedia**

You must provide a separate reference entry for each word/phrase/concept you are citing in your essay, as in the following:


An example of an in-text citation for the above example would be something like this:

At most universities, plagiarism by students, professors, or researchers is considered academic dishonesty or academic fraud (“Plagiarism”).

If you are discussing an online dictionary/encyclopedia itself, not any specific term or definition in that reference work, you should make a reference to the site itself using the following format:


The in-text citation information would then be *(Wikipedia).*

**Other Common Sources**

**Interviews**

Interviews may or may not have a title of their own. Below is an example of each:


Motion Pictures and TV Series/Episodes
Films are usually listed by their title and include the name of the director, the film studio or distributor, and the release year. Finally add the medium: ‘Film’ for movies still in theaters or not yet on DVD or video, and ‘DVD’ for movies viewed on DVD.


*The Descendants.* Dir. Alexander Payne. Twentieth Century Fox, 2011. DVD.

If you wish to emphasize specific performers (‘perf.’) or directors (‘dir.’), begin the citation with the name of the desired performer or director, followed by the appropriate abbreviation:


The way you reference a TV broadcast or TV series episode differs according to whether it is a live broadcast or a recorded version you refer to (such as a DVD). Below is an example of each:


To refer to an entire TV series, provide the title followed by the name of the producer. Indicate the name of the network and the first year of airing:


Sound Recordings
To refer to a specific music recording, use the following basic format:


5. Conclusion

This text has covered most of the basic situations which you will encounter as regards referencing in your essay. However, students are using more and more non-typical primary materials (e.g. blogs, internet images, etc.) and new types of secondary sources are appearing all the time. If you are not sure how to format a reference, you may first want to examine a more extensive website for a similar style (for example, the MLA style sheet from the Purdue University Online Writing Lab, available at http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/1/). You will notice some minor formatting differences (e.g. the MLA uses double spacing throughout). Another possible option is to use a citation generation device like the one available from Son of Citation, http://citationmachine.net/index2.php?reqstyleid=1&newstyle=1&stylebox=1. (Obviously, if you use such a generator, you must make sure the finished product makes sense and follows the general formatting rules indicated in the text above.) It is important to note in this context that today’s many resource options can present challenges, not the least of which is the fluid nature of the digital environment. Sometimes you will need to be creative in order to refer to works not anticipated by this style sheet or the major academic citation sources such as the MLA, the APA, the Chicago system, etc.

Finally, if you have any further questions, ask your supervisor/teacher.
Bibliography


3 Note that this reference list does not cover every reference given in the above text – it is simply meant as an example of how most of the common reference types would be presented in your reference section.


*The Descendants*. Dir. Alexander Payne. Twentieth Century Fox, 2011. DVD.

