1 GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR THE WRITING OF ASSIGNMENTS/PROPOSALS

As assignment, research proposal, dissertation or thesis is a scientific document, which should not only conform to basic research and content requirements, but also to specific technical requirements. The following paragraphs outline some general guidelines pertaining to the technical aspects of academic writing.

i. Scientific documents (journal articles excluded) should include a table of content that outlines the list of headings as well as the associated page numbers. Main heading should be capital letters and subheadings not. See the following example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE OF CONTENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. INTRODUCTION ........................................ 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS .............................. 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1 Public Administration .............................. 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1.1 Public policy making ............................. 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. POLICY IMPLEMENTATION .............................. 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1 Models for policy implementation .............. 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. CONCLUSION ........................................... 10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The headings in the text should be in exactly the same format as in the table of content (in terms of the use of capital letters, bold, italic etc.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paper size</th>
<th>A4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Font (body text)</td>
<td>Arial, 12pt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Line spacing (body text)</td>
<td>1½ spacing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language setting</td>
<td>Use the English (UK) or English (South African) settings in MS Word.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Margins</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Left &amp; right</td>
<td>2 cm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Top &amp; bottom</td>
<td>2.54 cm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heading numbering and format</td>
<td>As shown in document</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paragraph formatting</td>
<td>Paragraphs should be justified (i.e., the text should be aligned evenly along both the left and right margins to form a square box).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Page numbers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Front page</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table of Contents, List of Figures, List of tables</td>
<td>Roman numerals, small caps (e.g., i, ii, iii)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Body of assignment</td>
<td>Arabic numerals starting at 1 (e.g., 1, 2, 3)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ii. Every document should have an **introduction and conclusion.** The introduction introduces the reader to the subject matter while the conclusion usually contains no quotations or factual information but serves as a summary of what was discussed in the document previously and may include recommendations and/or provide an indication of areas for further research in the particular field.

iii. **Headings and sub-headings** should be a true reflection of the main theme, should be clear, not too vague and not too long. Do not underline headings. Do not refer to the number of acts (legislation/regulations) in headings – just the title of the act. Separate headings by writing, under the first heading, something pertaining to the topic which will be discussed in the subsequent paragraph (bridging sentence or paragraph) for example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2. POLICY IMPLEMENTATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Numerous models for policy implementation exist and will be described in the following paragraphs.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.1 Models for policy implementation

Models for policy implementation in the ...

iv. Do not start each word in a **sub-heading** with capital letters, thus in sentence case – write as you would when using the same concepts in a sentence. For example:

| 1. INTRODUCTION |
| 2. DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS |

2.1 Intergovernmental relations in a developmental state

Not

2.1 Intergovernmental Relations in a Developmental State

v. Using words to indicate numbers – from nought to nine, use words for example: there were seven public officials in the meeting representing their different departments. The only exception is if age is expresses, for example: The head of the mission is 39 years old. Any number above nine, use figures, for example: Only 40 delegates attended the conference. Numbers starting from ten, will be 10, 21, 30 and so forth.
vi. Avoid the narrative style of writing or using concepts or phrases that exaggerate or reflect emotion. Try to be objective when describing or commenting on an issue. See the following examples:

This experience taught me a significant lesson in life and it assisted me to change the way I used to perceived people living with disability. After that symbolic welcome, everybody was back at work performing his/her duties without visible supervision. I have also learnt that proper internal controls play an important role in instilling discipline among workforce in any given work environment.

Avoid:

At the break of dawn on the new South Africa ...(note it is the democratic South Africa, not new South Africa)

vii. All quotations must be followed by an indication of the sources thereof. Direct quotations must be placed in inverted commas. Make sure of the placement of the inverted commas, for example:

The whole sentence a direct quotation:

“Administration is a type of cooperative human effort that has a high degree of rationality (Waldo 1996:6).”

When a paraphrase of the words of an author is used:

May and Koski (2013:151) argue that: “the engagement of different private sector entities and of key industry and professional associations means little unless their involvement helps to foster broader communities of interest for addressing risks to critical infrastructures”.

A quote within a quote – use the single inverted comma:

The President’s Coordinating Council is an intergovernmental relations structure (Section ... of the Intergovernmental Relations Framework Act, 2005 [Act 13 of 2005]).

viii. Line spacing should be consistent before and after headings.

ix. When making use of abbreviations – write out the word/name of organisation/institution/act when referring to it the first time, for example:
The National Development Plan (NDP) (2011:3) outlines the priorities of the government of South Africa.

Later in text

**According to the NDP (2011:13) there are** numerous intergovernmental relations structures and forums in South Africa.

Or

The *Intergovernmental Relations Framework Act*, 2005 (Act 15 of 2005) (hereafter referred to as the IRFA) outlines the role, composition and functions of the various intergovernmental relations forums.

Later in text

The various steps in the intergovernmental relations dispute resolution process are outlined in the IRFA.

x. Please see the following pointers when writing an assignment/proposal

**Introduction**

Opening with quotation/statement/anecdote; context of past research – what has happened?

Condition of ignorance – what is current situation? Cost of ignorance – what will happen without research?

Gist of solution – what do you intend to do?

**Content**

Discussion of subject matter; literature review and discussion of aim/goal of assignment

**Conclusion**

Gist of solution; larger significance or application; what is still not known?

Closing quotation/statement/anecdote (return to aim of assignment)

There must be a clear link between the introduction and the conclusion

xi. Some pointers with regards to reading and writing skills

- **Reading skills:**
  - Critical and sensitive to language
  - Ask yourself when evaluating information:
    - Who is author? Profession, competence and qualification to write on subject matter?
    - For whom is article written? Scholarly or general public?
    - Is author objective? Can he make the assumptions he is making?
• Where did he get his information – data collection method?
• Does the research compare with other works? Is this accepted knowledge – if not, why not?

• Writing skills:
  – Requirements for scientific writing:
    • Objectivity
    • Systematic presentation
    • Conciseness
    • Language usage
      • Spelling and sentence construction comply with language rules
      • Thoughts must be expressed clearly, unambiguously and intelligibly
      • Use of pompous or vulgar language must be avoided
      • Assignment must be easily understandable and should read smoothly

xii. Plagiarism

What is it?
* Direct quotation without recognition

Why should it be avoided?
* Unethical – illegal and subject to discipline

Consult UP Library/AIS website for full plagiarism policy

2. REFERENCE TECHNIQUES

Consistency is key

2.1 Books

i. One author or editor

List of References entry


Text reference

Dunn (2014:9-11) illustrates this by ...
ii. Two authors or editors

List of References entry


Text reference

Cloete and de Coning (2011:12) maintain ...
... can be seen as taking place (Cloete & de Coning 2011:45).

iii. Three or more authors or editors

List of References entry


Text reference

First text reference - mention the names of all the authors.

Cheminais, Bayat and van der Waldt (1998:89-109) discuss this problem in detail.

Subsequent references - use the name of the first author followed by et al (not italicised).

Cheminais et al. (1998:89-109) discuss this problem in detail.

2.2 Corporate bodies

List of References entry


*Note: In the first example above the corporate body is both the author and the publisher of the book. In such cases the publisher’s name is omitted from the imprint.*

**Text reference**

... as illustrated (Apartheid Museum 2001:2).
... as reported (Department of Education 1999:10).
... not mentioned (National Planning Commission 2011:11)

2.3 Entries listed under the title of the book

i. Anonymous works

**List of References entry**


*Note: Ignore articles (a, an, the) when arranging titles alphabetically in the bibliography. For instance, The martyrdom of an empress would be listed under M.*

**Text reference**

(Martyrdom ... 1899:5).

*Note: When the title of a publication is used in a text reference instead of the author’s name, this title may be abbreviated. If the most suitable short title is not the first word of the book title, the bibliography must contain a cross-reference, for example:*

**List of References entry**


**Text reference**: Soektog (1980:15)

**Cross-reference in list of reference**: Soektog, vide ‘n Lang soektog na voortreflikheid.

2.4 Works universally known by their titles: dictionaries and encyclopaedias

Certain reference works are universally known by their titles and it makes things considerably easier for the reader if these works are listed under their titles.

**List of References entry**


Text reference

According to the Concise Oxford Dictionary (1976:8), "accountable" refers to ...

or

"Accountable" is to be bound to give account (Concise Oxford Dictionary 1976:743).

... as mentioned before (Encyclopaedia Britannica 1964, sv “optics”).

Note: “sv” is an abbreviation of the Latin expression “sub verbo”, which means “under the word”, in other words the word consulted in the dictionary.

2.5 Unknown date or place of publication

For the sake of convenience the following examples are given in this section on books, but the principles apply to any source where the date or place of publication or the copyright date is lacking. If the date of publication is unknown, an abbreviation of the Latin expression sine anno (without year) is used in square brackets. If the place of publication is unknown, an abbreviation of the Latin expression sine loco (without place) is used in square brackets.

List of References entry


Text reference

According to Jones ([sa]:14) there are ...

... in that regard (Jones [sa]:10).

Note: The “S” of both sine anno and sine loco is capitalised because it introduces a new element of the bibliography. In the text reference “s” is written with a small letter.

2.6 Collective works (composite works)

If a collective work is listed in its entirety, the bibliographical entry resembles that of a book, except that the editor’s function is mentioned. The format differs for contributions in collective works.

i. Collective works listed in their entirety

• Indication of the editorial function

List of References entry


Text reference

ii. Contributions in collective works

List of References entry


Text reference

Hilliard (1994:267) concludes ...

2.7 Journals, newspapers, magazines and conferences

i. Author’s name is known

List of References entry


Note: Sometimes the volume number is not available. We now give examples of how the article would be entered in a list of references if the volume number were lacking but if an issue number or a date were known.


Text reference

Nkwana (2014:90) maintains that ...
... as indicated (Nkwana 2014:90).
ii. Only the title of the article or headline is known

**List of References entry**


**Text reference**

... appeared (Pond power 1980:14).

*Note*: In a case like this, where a short title is used which does not start with the same word as the title, a cross-reference should be made in the bibliography, for example:

Pond power, vide And now it is pond power.

iii. Name of author and headline is unknown


2.8 Unpublished works

i. Dissertations or theses

**List of References entry**


**Text reference**

... the kind of trust (Binikos 2006:5).

ii. Unpublished papers

**List of References entry**


Text reference

Zerubavel (1978:6) states that ...

iii. Acts

The following format is used for the text reference:

List of References entry


Text reference

... as stipulated in the Intergovernmental Relations Framework Act, 2005 (Act 13 of 2005).

The President’s Coordinating Council is an intergovernmental relations structure (Section ... of the Intergovernmental Relations Framework Act, 2005 [Act 13 of 2005]).

iv. Internet references

• If the author is known:


Text reference: As stated by Smith (2012) ...

(Take note that the “www” reference cannot be in blue ink as it means it is a life link)

• If the author is not known

http://www.psc.gov.za/ (Accessed on 25/03/14)

Text reference: ... as they claim (http://www.psc.gov.za).

2.9 Figures and tables

All figures and table must be numbered and should have a heading (on the top) and the source mentioned after the table. See the following example:
The three steps in PPP development range from low, to sophistication, to high. The following figure indicates the market development curve.

**Figure 1: PPP Market Development Curve**

![PPP Market Development Curve](image)

Source: Adapted from Eggers and Startup (2006:6)

Or

**Table 2: International Best Practice in Risk Allocation for PPPs**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RISK</th>
<th>APPROPRIATE PARTY</th>
<th>DETERMINANTS</th>
<th>SOUTH AFRICA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Planning or statutory</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>Planning and statutory process undertaken in advance of tender</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Misspecification of output requirements</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>Information and resources relevant for output requirements</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>Works adhere to contract specifications regarding performance</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Author’s Own, ideas adapted from Iossa et al. (2007:4-15) and IMF (2004:18, 31)
Declaration Regarding Plagiarism

The School of Public Management and Administration emphasises integrity and ethical behaviour with regard to the preparation of all written proposals. Although the lecturer will provide you with information regarding reference techniques, as well as ways to avoid plagiarism, you also have a responsibility to fulfil in this regard. Should you at any time feel unsure about the requirements, you must consult the lecturer concerned before submitting an assignment.

You are guilty of plagiarism when you extract information from a book, article, web page or any other information source without acknowledging the source and pretend that it is your own work. This doesn’t only apply to cases where you quote verbatim, but also when you present someone else’s work in a somewhat amended (paraphrased) format or when you use someone else’s arguments or ideas without the necessary acknowledgement. You are also guilty of plagiarism if you copy and paste information directly from an electronic source (e.g., a web site, e-mail message, electronic journal article, or CD ROM), even if you acknowledge the source.

You are not allowed to submit another student’s previous work as your own. You are furthermore not allowed to let anyone copy or use your work with the intention of presenting it as his/her own.

Students who are guilty of plagiarism will forfeit all credits for the work concerned. In addition, the matter will be referred to the Committee for Discipline (Students) for a ruling. Plagiarism is considered a serious violation of the University’s regulations and may lead to your suspension from the University. The University’s policy regarding plagiarism is available on the Internet at http://upetd.up.ac.za/authors/create/plagiarism/students.htm.

For the period that you are a student at the School of Public Management and Administration, the following declaration must accompany all written work that is submitted for evaluation. No written work will be accepted unless the declaration has been completed and is included in the particular assignment.

I (full names & surname):

Student number:

Declare the following:

1. I understand what plagiarism entails and am aware of the University’s policy in this regard.

2. I declare that this proposal is my own, original work. Where someone else’s work was used (whether from a printed source, the Internet or any other source) due acknowledgement was given and reference was made according to departmental requirements.

3. I did not copy and paste any information directly from an electronic source (e.g., a web page, electronic journal article or CD ROM) into this document.

4. I did not make use of another student’s previous work and submitted it as my own.

5. I did not allow and will not allow anyone to copy my work with the intention of presenting it as his/her own work.

Signature  Date