

# Writing History Essays

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## HOW TO USE THIS BOOKLET

This booklet is a guideline for history essays. It offers advice for preparing assignments and gives particular advice on referencing and presentation techniques. While the ideas and tips it contains may be useful for writing in other Programmes, each Programme will undoubtedly have different formatting, layout and style requirements. If in doubt, ask.

This booklet is designed to be used by history students at all levels. It contains information on the 'hows' and 'whys' and offers examples to clarify points. We suggest that students new to history at university read this guide *before* writing their first essay. As you become familiar with essay writing you can use this as a reference booklet, looking up the sections you need for further information by using the **table of contents**.

We have included a **One Page Summary (p.2)** that contains the basic principles in *Writing History Essays*. This summary is not a substitute, however, for reading the whole text. Your essays will be assessed and marked on the assumption that you have read and applied the advice in this booklet. If you would like further information, talk to your tutor or lecturer.

Another History guide, 'Improving Your Writing', is also available on the History website and contains more information about writing style and structure. Assistance with written expression is also available from Student Learning Support.

## Summary

- ⊙ First, ask yourself: 'What is the question actually asking?'
- ⊙ Read **widely**, but also read **critically** and **selectively**.  
Consider your sources carefully. Of what are they trying to convince you? What are they trying to explain or argue? When were they written, and by whom?
- ⊙ Take **notes** in your own words as you read.  
Note all the necessary bibliographical information from each text.  
Quotes should be taken sparingly and **accurately**.
- ⊙ **Avoid plagiarism.**
- ⊙ **Plan** your argument.  
Give your essay a logical structure that develops your argument.
- ⊙ Write a **draft**, and take time to improve the final product.
- ⊙ Your essay should be *your argument* based on **informed reading**.  
Your essay's argument should answer the question, be supported with evidence, and be **written clearly**.
- ⊙ An essay is a **structured answer** requiring an *introduction*, a *main body* and a *conclusion*.  
Your **introduction** should present the argument of your essay to the reader.  
Your **conclusion** should sum up the argument of your essay.
- ⊙ Your essay requires *well structured paragraphs* with *complete sentences*.
- ⊙ Submit your work **on time**.  
Late essays have valuable marks deducted.
- ⊙ Correct **spelling** and **grammar** are *important*.
- ⊙ **Quotations** should be *accurate* and be placed in quotation marks.
- ⊙ **Footnotes** show your use of evidence.  
You should footnote quotes, figures, statistics, and your paraphrases of factual material or another author's argument.
- ⊙ Your **bibliography** lists the sources you have used to construct your argument.
- ⊙ Your essay should be printed in a readable typeface, 1.5 or double spaced, with a wide left margin, paragraphs indented, and each page numbered.
- ⊙ Finally, read the marker's comments. Just before you start your next essay, re-read the marked essay and the comments. Try to *improve* your essay technique and your understanding of history.

### Why we write history essays

History courses require you to submit written essays as part of your assignment work. Essay writing helps develop abilities that will enable you to participate in the continuing discussion about the past, including developing and stating a reasoned argument, quickly and effectively analysing and summarising texts, and presenting a scholarly, well documented final product. Such skills have wide application in many areas beyond history.

### What is a history essay?

The word 'essay' is derived from the French, *essayer*, which means 'to try, to attempt, to test'. An essay is an attempt to establish a case or test a hypothesis. Specifically for our purposes, an essay is a reasoned and orderly argument with properly acknowledged supporting *evidence*. The *argument* in your essay should be your coherent explanation for 'Why?' or 'How?' events and processes happened, supported by *evidence* in the form of the ideas and writings of other historians, people of the time, and other historical sources. The material you find and read on the question will constrain your argument and its supporting evidence.

### What is the question?

Every research essay has a question (or topic), and your task is to respond in a series of logical paragraphs. It sounds simple, yet one of the most common essay problems is not answering the set question. Often essays do not answer the question posed and so do not get the desired grade. Essay questions use specific language, and so *understanding the question* before you start is the first step in the essay writing process.

Identify the key concepts in a question. Questions will ask you to *examine, account for, evaluate, assess, discuss, compare, contrast, or consider* the relative importance of, etc. etc. You will *not* be asked to describe a sequence of events or simply write down everything you can find out on a topic.

*For example*, you will *not* be assigned a question such as, 'What happened in the Industrial Revolution?' Rather, the question will focus on an area of debate, so that you can contribute to that debate. So, *for example*, a more likely question would be, 'The Industrial Revolution was not at all revolutionary. Discuss.' In response you could find many sources that argue against the premise and many that support it. Your task would be to present both sides, assessing their strengths and weaknesses and come to your own conclusion regarding the debate.

Stay focused on the question. Do not wander far away from your essay-writing task.

*For example*, when answering the question 'Assess the impact of the Reform Bill of 1832 on the working class in Britain', devoting half your essay to the French working class is *not* a good idea.

Be sure you cover the topic. Answer the entire question, not just a section of it. Topics may be very broad.

*For example*, if you are answering the same question 'Assess the impact of the Reform Bill of 1832 on the working class in Britain', then an essay that discusses only English children in poverty is *not* answering the whole question. What about men and women? What about workers living in other parts of Britain?

You might be given a seemingly simple question or statement, yet under the surface may lie

complex issues that need to be explored.

*For example*, take the question ‘Did the state simply ignore Māori health before 1936?’ There appears to be an obvious single word answer: ‘Yes’ or ‘No’. However, the question requires a more considered response. *Within* the given question there are more questions to be explored and answered. For instance, ‘Did the state devote adequate attention to Māori health before 1936?’ ‘Did the state have a policy (official or unofficial) regarding Māori health before 1936?’ ‘What efforts, if any, were made to bring the issues of Māori health to the state before 1936?’ ‘Why did the state ‘suddenly’ devise a policy in 1936?’ ‘Why is 1936 an important date for Māori health?’ These and other questions need to be answered in any essay that tackles what—at first glance—seems to be a straightforward question. The key words in the question are ‘simply ignore’. What does this phrase mean?

Another common problem is the ‘blind’ selection of familiar or ‘cool sounding’ topics, questions that seem to be about something in which you may be interested.

*For example*, First World War questions are very popular, and you may have studied this broad topic in high school. An essay answering the question ‘What was the demographic impact of the First World War on European societies?’ should not contain a summary of the major battles or a discussion of who won the war. Rather, it should comment on population movements and trends, comparing pre-war and post-war European societies.

If you do not understand the nature of the question, the chances are that you will not answer the question adequately. Think about what you are being asked to do, and if you want clarification ask your tutor.

History questions are *not* ‘true’ or ‘false’ tests. There is no one right way of answering a history question. Rather, a history essay is an opportunity to enter an ongoing debate, to read and think about questions that may never—indeed often cannot—be finally resolved. There are always new ways of looking at material, new methods to apply, and new ideas to incorporate.

## 1) READING

### 1.1—Before You Start

Reading for a history essay is *not* the same as reading for leisure. The *first* difference is that you should *take notes* as you read (see section (2) **Note Taking** below).

The *second* difference is that you should read with discrimination. Read extensively, but *read wisely*. Concentrate on material that is relevant to the question. You should normally start with a general book or website, to gain an overview of your topic, and then move to more specialised books and articles.

Use *tables of contents* and *indexes* to find the sections that apply to your topic. Often books and articles have *abstracts, prefaces, introductions* and *conclusions*, which summarise the argument. Read these first, and use them to guide you to the key parts of the text.

The *third* difference is that you should read with specific questions in mind. It is important to *read critically*. Weigh the evidence each author uses, compare texts, think about what each author is trying to argue and why. Historians try to convince you of why particular changes occurred in the past, and they also suggest ways for us to think about the past. Reading a historical text is always a challenge; you should try to see the assumptions behind the argument. Who made the source? Why? When? Is it supported by other sources?

### 1.2—Types of Sources

You will encounter a wide variety of sources in the course of studying history: books, periodicals (or journals); book reviews; newspapers; photographs; interviews; microfilms; CD-ROMs; videos; databases; websites; and a range of digitised material available through the internet. Historians classify these sources into two broad categories: primary and secondary material.

*Primary* sources are the documents, papers, articles, books, personal recollections, archaeological and visual remains produced by people at, or very near, the time of the historical actions in question. They are first-hand evidence, sources immediate to the historical actors and actions. Often they are personal materials, such as diaries, letters and memos; however, they can be more public documents, such as newspapers, magazines, television programmes and songs.

*For example*, Captain James Cook's journals (written during or shortly after the actual events) are considered *primary* sources of information for study of Cook or his times.

*Secondary* materials are documents written or created at some time removed from the events they discuss. They are sources subsequent to the historical actors and actions. A secondary text uses a mixture of primary and secondary material to create a new interpretation of the source material. Any essay you may write on a historical subject is a secondary piece.

*For example*, Richard Hough's biography of Cook, *Captain James Cook*, written in 1994 (well after the events, and drawing on many sources including Cook's personal journals), is a *secondary* source.

You should examine sources critically (1.1). There are some extra questions you can ask of a primary source. Why has it survived? Is the source authentic? Has it been edited or corrupted? What have other historians written about the source?

*Be wary* of older secondary texts. History is not a fixed interpretation of events: it is an ongoing debate on the ‘whys’ of past events. Debates move on and scholarly opinions change. At least consider the most recent secondary sources you can find.

*Be wary* of what are sometimes called ‘tertiary’ sources, or school textbooks. These are *very* general works written from secondary sources and usually contain limited scholarly value. Often they are little more than a source of dates and names, with little interpretation of events. While encyclopaedias (including *Te Ara* and *Wikipedia*) are very important reference tools—they can give you important definitions, ‘facts’ and dates—they do not usually contain in-depth historical analysis.

### 1.3—Where to Find Sources

Most courses require you to purchase a *Book of Readings* (or use a set of electronic readings) which will contain selections of books, articles and documents carefully compiled by your lecturers as well as recommended reading lists.

A wide variety of sources is available in the *Victoria University Library*: books, periodicals (or journals), newspapers, microfilms, CD-ROMs, slides, DVDs and electronic databases. Take advantage of the library tours and on-line tutorials to introduce yourself to the computer catalogue and to the variety and location of the materials.

The university library provides reading areas and study rooms. It also has *photocopying* facilities that can be useful if you need only a few relevant pages in a text. Remember: when photocopying material, ensure you take down all the relevant bibliographical details (2.2 and 7).

Wellington has the distinct advantage of being the location of the *National Library of New Zealand—Te Puna Mātauranga o Aotearoa* and the *Alexander Turnbull Library*. Sources housed here include Photographic and Portrait collections, the Oral History Archive, Newspaper archive, the New Zealand Manuscript Collection, and vast microfilm sources, including all books printed in Britain from 1475 to the eighteenth century. Wellington also has *Archives New Zealand—Te Rua Mahara o te Kāwanatanga*, which contains government records, The Treaty of Waitangi, business records, personal documents, and more.

You also should consider the *Wellington Public Library* as a further source, especially if the University Library shelves empty out before you find all you need. Especially useful is the New Zealand reference collection located on the second floor.

While the *internet* contains a vast array of historical information, care is needed in utilizing material from the web. There are a number of strange, eccentric sites that pose as academic but are not necessarily reliable. Articles in scholarly journals and books have been reviewed before publication by experts in the field. They meet academic standards of evidence and argument. In contrast, anyone can create a website. Think carefully about the reliability of a site by asking:

- Is the author of the material named?
- Are his/her credentials given?
- Is the owner of the website named? Does it appear to be promoting a particular agenda?
- Are the views presented on the site consistent with what you have read in books and

articles? Remember, authoritative information is able to be **verified**. It is **more** than a personal opinion.

- Is the website up-to-date?
- Is the website maintained by a university — and hence the URL ends in 'ac.nz' or 'ac.uk' or 'edu'?



## 2) NOTE TAKING

### 2.1—Why we Take Notes

Notes are necessary to ensure that you have the information you require from the text, when you want it. You need to take notes from the texts you read so that you can use the information from these sources clearly, accurately, and in a scholarly manner. Remember that a history essay is a reasoned and orderly argument *with* properly acknowledged supporting evidence. The notes you take as you read will be the source of evidence for your argument and will allow you to create **footnotes** (5) and your **bibliography** (2.2 and 6). Clear and precise notes also will help you *avoid plagiarism* (4.6, 4.8).

You will read many texts in a trimester of study, and remembering all the arguments, strengths, faults, and specific page references, is not practical. If you take good notes, you may only need to read a text once. However, do not hesitate to re-read a text, especially one that is important to your topic.

### 2.2—Starting your Bibliography

A bibliography lists the sources you use in the essay. Before taking notes from any source, it is most important to record all the information about the source required for your footnotes and bibliography.

#### *Bibliography format*

##### **For books:**

Author last name, author first name, *Title* (Place of publication: Publisher, year of publication).

##### **For journal articles:**

Author last name, author first name, 'Title of Article', *Title of Journal*, Vol. X, no. X, year of publication, pp.XXX-YYY [full page range].

##### **For chapters in edited collections:**

Author last name, author first name, 'Title of Chapter', in Editor1 first name last name, Editor2 first name last name, and Editor3 first name last name (ed. or eds.), *Title of Collection*, X ed. (Place of publication: Publisher, year of publication), pp.XXX-YYY [full page range].

See section 5.3 (**the style of footnotes**) and 6 (**bibliographies**) on the styles to use and examples.

Now is the time to format the required information correctly. Paying attention now to citation style will free time at the crunch stage to focus on your writing and ideas.

### 2.3—How to Take Notes

There are many ways of taking notes, and you may have developed your own style that works for you. Some guidelines are offered below.

*Organisation* is the key to note taking. Nothing is worse than spending valuable time searching for a lost scrap of paper containing vital information. Use a ring binder, a laptop, a bound exercise book, or a card index rather than random, loose (easily misplaced) pages.

Your notes should enable you to construct footnotes (5) and bibliographical entries, so it is important to record the details of each text (2.2). You must note from *which page or pages* the information came.

Arrange notes by *subtopics*. A single text may have widely different ideas and arguments. Several different texts may all comment on the same aspect of your topic. By keeping all the notes from separate books on the same subtopic together you can see where authors agree and disagree with each other.

**Tip to avoid plagiarism: Quote now, paraphrase later.** Be sure to use quotation marks.

Keep the question in mind. Only take notes that relate to the question you are answering. Photocopying is no substitute for good notetaking.

Be sure to include *page numbers* of your sources (5.4). Page numbers enable you and your readers to quickly relocate any material you cite, and are important in constructing your footnotes.

### 3) Planning your Essay

#### 3.1—Remembering the Question

It is all too easy to lose sight of the question during your reading and note taking. Remind yourself of the exact question you are answering *before* you start planning your essay. One of the keys to essay writing is staying focused. There are many interesting tangents to the topics you will study, and you must be careful not to stray from the question.

#### 3.2—Why write an Essay Plan or Outline?

In order to answer a question effectively an essay needs to be structured carefully. An essay must persuade and convince the reader (and marker). Every sentence (4.3) and every paragraph (4.4) should be relevant to the question, and provide a step by step link in the development of the argument. Without planning, an essay will not stay coherent and focused.

A history essay should have a definite structure, with an **introduction** (3.3, 4.2, 4.10), a **main body** (3.4) containing your argument and evidence, and a **conclusion** (4.2, 4.9). You should sketch out these components and make sure they will add up to a comprehensive answer to the question.

#### 3.3—Planning your Introduction

An introduction is a clear one-paragraph roadmap of your essay. It tells the reader what you will prove in the essay (the destination) and the subtopics you will cover (the route to the destination—the stops along the way). After reading your introduction the marker should know exactly what you intend to argue.

Your plan need not be complete, as during the drafting of your essay you may refine your ideas. However, it is useful to note down what you think you are going to prove, and you can use your introduction plan to ensure that you do not forget to include important points as you go. Your **reading** (1) and **note taking** (2) should give you a sufficient number of ideas with which to start.

*For example*, an introduction plan to a question such as ‘Discuss the assumptions of the first English arrivals to Virginia’, might contain the following sketchy ideas:

##### **Introduction plan:**

What did the first English arrivals to Virginia assume about:

what they would find (what sources of information did they have?)?

inhabitants? climate? plants/animals?

what they could accomplish (things possible in Virginia, not in England?)?

how Virginia would differ from England?

the obstacles they might face in Virginia?

#### 3.4—Using Notes: Planning the Main Body

The body of your essay provides the in-depth argument and analysis that you have outlined in your introduction plan. The plan of the body of your essay needs to offer a coherent structure for your evidence and argument. Develop your argument in clear steps. The most effective way to construct an answer is to support each major step in your argument by reference to supporting evidence and/or examples.

Taking the ideas from your introductory plan (3.3), add in the notes (2.3) that you have taken and any of *your own ideas and deductions*. Your notes should help you plan your essay, and your plan should help you see any gaps in your notes.

*For example*, using the same question as (3.3) above, 'Discuss the assumptions of the first English arrivals to Virginia', you could expand the introduction plan into an outline of the entire essay. Here is a small sample, which could become a partial or whole paragraph in your final copy.

**Assumptions about animals** (IDEA OR PARAGRAPH TOPIC FROM INTRO PLAN)

They thought food alone limited how well familiar animals would thrive. (OWN IDEAS ON SUBJECT BASED ON READING)

Barber, *Jamestown Voyages*, p.161, in Anderson, 'Animals', p. 379 (NOTES THAT RELATE DIRECTLY TO THE TOPIC; EVIDENCE)  
Francis Perkins noted 'an abundance of fresh fodder, for any kind of livestock . . . even if there were a million of them'.

Anderson, 'Animals', p. 379  
Governor Francis Wyatt asserted that livestock would flourish in Virginia, and so the colony would succeed. (MORE EVIDENCE)

Anderson, 'Animals', p.379 (MORE EVIDENCE)  
By 1609, the colony already supported 500 pigs, 500 chickens, and 7 horses, as well as goats and sheep.

When taking notes you may start thinking of useful sentences to include in your essay. Thus consider the note-taking process *and* the writing process as often going hand-in-hand.

***Taking notes and writing topic sentences***

Topic sentences appear in sentence one of the paragraph, and, to help your reader, they should state the main point of the paragraph. These topic sentences are thus *important points* that you want to make in your essay, and each topic sentences tells your reader what you will prove in that paragraph.

For example, in researching the English colonists' animal husbandry in colonial Maryland and Virginia, you may find primary source evidence from settlers or indigenous peoples about the cold winters in the Chesapeake Bay region. You might think to yourself: 'English settlers were unprepared for the cold winters in the Chesapeake'. If you wrote down such a thought in a complete sentence, you may find that your thought/sentence becomes a topic sentence to a paragraph discussing colonialism and the environment.

## 4) DRAFTING

### 4.1—Why Write a Draft?

Effective essay writing is much more than knowing what you need to say, sitting down, and writing it all in one go. Even with a good set of notes (2) and an effective plan (3) you can never be sure how your argument will evolve. You may discover a logical inconsistency in your structure, come across new information, or have a blinding insight in the middle of the night. Thus drafting is important. Drafting is a process of discovering what you *really* need to say. Writing a rough draft is an essential step towards producing a coherent, logical and complete essay. Start your draft as soon as possible. Do not delay beginning a draft because you are not completely sure of your arguments. Drafting—actually writing your ideas down and trying arguments out—is the best way to make progress.

### 4.2—What to Consider While Drafting

When drafting it is important to keep the end product—your final submitted essay—clear in your mind. You will need footnotes (5) and a bibliography (6) in your final copy, so ensure you include all the necessary information for these as you go.

### Introduction as Road Map (see 3.3)

**Body** See 4.3–4.8.

### Conclusion

The conclusion briefly summarises your whole argument and position in one paragraph. It relates closely to your introduction, although it should *not* be exactly the same. Rather a conclusion should express similar information in a more developed form and bring the essay to an end.

In general, no new evidence should appear in a conclusion.

If you can, allow yourself a break in your essay writing between the draft and the final copy to let your mind absorb what you have done and what needs to be added. Let the essay have time to ripen.

Most essays have a word limit, plus or minus ten per cent. Keep the word count in mind while drafting. If you find yourself below the word count, you may need to do some more research and thinking about the topic. If you find yourself well over the limit, then edit your draft down by summarising or shortening your text. Rewrite rather than randomly deleting or adding sections.

### 4.3—Coherent Paragraphs

A paragraph is a coherent collection of separate sentences that form one major idea and a group of lesser related ideas. A paragraph should contain only *one major point*, and all the minor elements in a paragraph should be connected. If the major point appears in the first sentence, it appears in the *topic sentence*. Writing topic sentences as major points is useful, as your reader sees this sentence first in the paragraph. In general, your paragraphs should total 100-175 words. If they are less than 100 words, the information may not be sufficiently important to warrant a paragraph; as paragraphs begin exceeding 175 words, they begin to discuss more than one major point or topic.

## Paragraph Transitions

Your paragraphs should link into each other conceptually, so that your essay flows and develops logically.

### 4.4—Paraphrasing Evidence

Remember to footnote (5) your paraphrase. To paraphrase, rewrite information in your own words. Historians often paraphrase in order to briefly summarize some aspect of a complex idea; most paraphrases will be significantly shorter than the original text.

Students frequently paraphrase incorrectly. Paraphrasing requires a complete rewording of the author's ideas. Consider a *sample text*,

By 1850 there was hardly a trading or a manufacturing town in England, which was not in some way connected to overseas markets. The profits obtained from overseas trade provided one of the main streams of that accumulation of capital in England which financed the Industrial Revolution.

The text below is not paraphrased, but *plagiarized*, as the writer has only substituted a few synonyms into the sentences, and hence has stolen the author's sentence structures:

**By the mid-1800s** there was hardly a **commercial** or a manufacturing **city** in England, which was not **linked** to overseas markets. The profits obtained from overseas trade provided one of the **principal** streams of capital in England, which **funded** the Industrial Revolution.

An acceptable paraphrase might look like this:

In the first half of the nineteenth century, foreign exchange earnings provided sufficient capital to sustain England's industrial revolution.

*Tip 1:* If you read the source sentence(s) aloud and then your sentence(s) aloud, and they sound the same, then you probably have not paraphrased sufficiently.

*Tip 2:* Try to write sentences without looking at your sources.

### 4.5—Using Quotes as Evidence

Judicious use of quotations can effectively support your argument. Place the words in quotation marks ( ' ' ) and footnote. Use quotes *sparingly* and *accurately*.

Primary material (1.3), or key secondary material, makes for the best quotations. The sample reading (1.2) is a good example. Anderson quotes only from primary sources; she paraphrases the arguments of her secondary sources.

Use an author's words in your final essay only when they say something in a particularly striking manner or summarise their thesis succinctly. There is almost no need for long quotations, and quotations should not dominate your own words.

Try to *integrate* quotations into your argument. One way is to introduce the source and

context immediately before the quotation:

In exploring colonists' assumptions about livestock farming, Anderson observes:

'Colonists had little reason to expect anything other than the easy transfer of animal husbandry to the Chesapeake'.<sup>1</sup>

Quotations must be *accurate*. Reproduce the words, spelling, capitalisation and punctuation of your source, *exactly*. If you use a quotation that contains an obvious misprint or mistake you must not alter it yourself. It is assumed that all quotes are reproduced accurately; however, if you want to stress that any mistake or error is not yours but your source's, you can place the word 'sic' in square brackets immediately after the incorrect item. Sic, a Latin word, means 'thus' or 'so'. In its essay-writing usage, a good meaning is 'intentionally so written'.

*For example*, Abbot notes that 'there is no single winning formula four [sic] a successful [sic] academic argument'.<sup>2</sup>

Occasionally you may need to *add in* your own words or letters to a quotation. Additional material must be enclosed in square brackets to distinguish it clearly from the quotation. You can use this method to replace a capital letter with the lower case equivalent, or to add in clarifying phrases that give context to the quote.

Anderson states that '[t]he Virginia Company aimed to supply its fledgling colony with all the "domesticall" beasts it needed'.

Or add in a descriptive and clarifying phrase,

'These animals arrived in a land [Northern Virginia] with seemingly limitless amounts of natural meadow and a temperate climate roughly similar to England's.'

However, it would *not* be acceptable to change the meaning of the quote by additions such as,

'These animals arrived in a land [the Waikato] with seemingly limitless amounts of natural meadow and a temperate climate roughly similar to England's.'

Long quotations, more than four or five lines, are seldom justified: as quotes increase in length they increase in complexity and in amount of information they contain. So your reader may have difficulty understand the main point of the quote.

If you cite long quotations (more than three lines) then the accepted format is to indent the quotation (left and right margins) and omit the quotation marks. You also may indent quotations of particular importance, to highlight the words for your reader.

*For example*, The Deputy Prime Minister, J. R. Marshall, chose to emphasise other reasons for the New Zealand commitment in the House of Representatives:

The crux of the matter for us is that Communist aggression in Vietnam is a threat to us. If South Vietnam is overrun and becomes a Communist State it becomes the base for the next move in the Communist plan for world revolution.... Our security and way of life are at stake and we cannot stand aside.<sup>3</sup>

### *Quote-splitting*

Splitting long quotes adds elegance to your writing.

***Ellipsis to show omitted text (...)***

Sometimes a quotation can be shortened by omitting phrases or sentences that do not contribute to your argument. Be careful that such omissions do not alter the sense or emphasis of the author's words. If in doubt, do not omit anything, and if the quote is too long and obscure, then consider omitting it.

Omission from a quotation is shown by an ellipsis, three unspaced periods '...' preceded and followed by a space. If the omission contains a full stop then four periods '....' followed by a space are used, the first period right next to the last word. Omissions from the end of a quote do not need to be acknowledged.

**4.6—Reference to Avoid Plagiarism:**

Plagiarism is copying without proper acknowledgement. It is the use of another person's words, ideas or specific information without referencing. It is passing off someone else's work as your own. Plagiarism is academic dishonesty and incurs serious penalties in all university departments. Victoria University's official policy regarding plagiarism is available on the website:

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism: [www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/integrity-plagiarism](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/integrity-plagiarism)

Writing a history essay requires you to use the words and ideas of other authors, and there is nothing wrong with this use, if they are referenced correctly. Referencing, in the form of footnotes (6) is the method of acknowledging your use of other people's ideas and phrases. If you use the words of anyone other than yourself, you must use quotation marks.

**4.7—Steps to the Final Copy**

Revision is not simply checking your spelling and punctuation. Rather, revising means checking the logic and consistency of your argument and making sure that you have answered the question. 'Re-vision' or 're-seeing' your draft leads to substantive changes in structure, argument, and phrasing. To be useful, revision needs to be thorough. After revision, proofread to check your spelling and punctuation.

Ask others to read your draft if you can. A new set of eyes can pick up errors you may miss. If a reader has trouble with a sentence, rephrase it. Rephrasing uses your limited time more effectively than trying to understand the reader's difficulty. Support, suggestions, proof-reading and debate are all useful to the essay-writing process.

**4.8—Questions to Ask of your Draft**

*Have you answered the question?* This is the first question that you should ask of your work. This is, after all, the purpose of the assignment.

*What is the answer you have given?* Could you easily explain it to a friend or flatmate? Is the argument obvious? Do not hide your argument under facts. Support it with the most striking facts only. Omit all facts that do not make a significant contribution.

*Is your essay well organised?* Make sure that your paragraphs are arranged logically, and that there is no needless repetition. 'As has been discussed earlier' or similar phrases are red flags for repetition. Reorganising your structure can sometimes improve the impact of your



argument. Reorder the list of subtopics in your introduction after reorganising.

*Have you supported your arguments with evidence?* While your essay should be your own argument, in your own words, you cannot create it solely from your imagination. Your ideas and argument must come from informed reading and analysis, and you must show your sources, in the form of footnotes (6), in your final copy.

*Is your essay interesting?* While this booklet stresses the use of sources and the marshalling of arguments from other authors, your writing does not need to be dull. You can use your ideas and imagination as long as you are guided by informed reading. The past is a foreign country, and to visit it you must use your imagination.

*Is your writing clear?* Avoid jargon when you can, explain jargon when you cannot. Do not bombard the reader with obscure allusions. In other words, write considerately. Your task is to explain and convince the marker of your argument, not to confuse her/him.

Use the tips in 'Improve Your Writing' to improve the flow of the essay.

#### **4.9—Polishing Your Conclusion**

Ask yourself the following **questions**:

'Does my conclusion relate closely to the topic and sum up the argument satisfactorily?'

'If my conclusion was all that a reader read of my essay, would they understand not only my answer, but my question?'

Check that no new evidence (nothing requiring footnotes) appears in the conclusion.

Avoid using the words of the question directly in your conclusion (or introduction). Instead, try to answer the question in a way that makes the nature of the question obvious.

#### **4.10—Polishing Your Introduction**

While you write the introduction first, revise it last. Since we learn through writing, the thesis proved in the body of your essay may differ from that stated in your introduction. Similarly, you may need to add or remove subtopics or change their order. Revise to make the introduction an accurate roadmap of the essay. Polishing your introduction pays.

#### **Questions:**

'Does my introduction succinctly state my argument in response to the question?'

'If I did not know the essay topic would I be able to figure out its essence from my introduction?'

Ask someone else to read your essay and tell you what you have argued and answered.

#### **4.11—Due Dates and How to Keep Them**

Essays are due on a certain date. Start your reading and note-taking as early as possible. Even if you then need to put aside the essay in order to do other work, an essay that has been started will let your mind ponder the topic and notice unusual connections. Starting early gives you time to negotiate unexpected roadblocks, such as trouble finding sources, or realizing that the question confuses you.

Essays must be handed in to meet the *mandatory requirements* of any course. You must fulfil the mandatory requirements of a course in order to be allowed to sit the final

examination or be assessed for a final grade. Therefore, it is better to hand something in for marking than hand in nothing and either get a zero or fail to meet the mandatory requirements. Be aware that there is usually a minimum standard or average mark to be achieved in most courses in order to be satisfy the mandatory requirements. The Course Guide will contain specific information regarding that course's mandatory requirements.

Plan ahead, and if you are having problems talk to your tutor or lecturer **as soon as** the problem becomes known. Sickness extensions are available (with documented medical practitioners' certificates), and there are provisions for extensions in case of family bereavements and crises. See Course Guides for details.

#### **4.12—Word Count**

Most history assignments have a word limit. Part of the set task of an essay answer is to keep close to this limit, and yet fully answer the question. As a rough guide, you should try to stay within ten percent of the word limit. Specific assignments may require more precise limits, so be sure to check any instructions.

The key is to be concise yet informative, brief yet explanatory. When drafting your essay keep the word limit in mind, and aim for about the limit, or maybe a little more. When revising, you can tighten your text, deleting less effective portions of your writing and bringing your essay closer to the word count.

#### **4.13—Miscellaneous Technical Points**

Since it is your essay that you are submitting, it is understood that all the opinions in the essay are yours alone, except those you attribute to another author by way of footnotes (6). Therefore there is *no need* for expressions such as 'I think' or 'in my opinion'. It is better to use neutral phrases such as 'it follows' or 'the evidence suggests'. Do *not* use 'we' or 'our' since others may not share your opinion. Also avoid 'the writer thinks'; when stating the author's opinion, use a less emphatic verb.

*For example*, 'Evidence suggests that in the Middle Ages reading was laborious' is more appropriate than 'I think that in the Middle Ages reading was laborious'.

'Anderson states that ...' is better than 'Anderson thinks that ...'. For all we know Anderson may now have changed her mind.

If you use phrases such as 'some historians' or 'many historians', be sure to back up the point with a footnote that lists some or *many* historians with that opinion. One or two is not many.

## 5) FOOTNOTES

### 5.1—What is a Footnote?

Footnotes are linked numbered references that point from a particular sentence (or sentences) of your essay to the location of the sources of your direct quotations, figures and statistics, factual material, and ideas or arguments you have taken from other authors. They are placed at the 'foot' of the page, (in contrast to 'endnotes', which appear at the end of your document). In your history essay writing, *use footnotes rather than endnotes or in-text referencing*. In-text referencing, in which the source appears between parentheses at the end of a sentence, is a type of referencing used only in a few specialised economic history or history of science journals, and thus is not standard historical practice.

Footnotes are an important craft to master as they represent expertise, rigour and accuracy in your use of evidence. They provide a basis for your essay's argument, and should provide sufficient information to allow the reader to find your sources. The key to footnoting, as with so many other aspects of essay writing, is accuracy and consistency.

The key principles in any footnoting or referencing are: transparency, accuracy and accountability.

### 5.2—When to Footnote?

You must provide footnotes for *direct* and *indirect borrowing*. Specifically, whenever:

- (i) *you quote* another author (4.5).
- (ii) *you present figures*, number, percentages, or other statistics.  
*For example*, In 1851 Governor Grey estimated that the Māori population of the colony was 120,000. **(FOOTNOTE REQUIRED HERE)**
- (iii) when *summarising* detailed *factual material* from your sources.  
*For example*, Over the course of his life Francois Viète correctly expanded the estimation of pi out to thirty five places, the value of which his wife placed on his tombstone. **(FOOTNOTE REQUIRED HERE)**
- (iv) to acknowledge a *summary of an argument* or opinion of an author, even when the exact words are not used.  
*For example*, Anderson argues that lengthy voyages between England and America weakened livestock shipped on board. **(FOOTNOTE REQUIRED HERE)**

**Note:** this is the summary of an argument, not factual material, as Anderson is not merely stating verifiable facts, but rather making an argument about a subject and supporting it with evidence.

**Hint:** if you find that most of your footnotes are of type (i), it indicates that you are over-quoting or not recognising your use of other authors' ideas. You should do more summarising of others' ideas in your own words, so more of your footnotes

become type (iv).

You do *not* need to footnote matters of common knowledge.

*For example*, 'The Normans invaded England in the year AD 1066', does *not* require a footnote as it is common knowledge. However, a more controversial or debated point always needs to be footnoted. So, 'The Normans would have invaded England in AD 1065 if it had not been for bad omens', would require some evidence in the form of a footnote to a source (or sources) that contains this analysis.

You do *not* need to footnote your own opinions and ideas. This is often the hardest part of footnoting to work out, as your ideas often come from your reading. However, new connections and concepts that you have made regarding the topic, even though they are based on your reading, are considered *your own*. If in doubt it is better to over-footnote, rather than under-footnote.

Be wary of using material that requires footnotes in your introduction and conclusion, as these should *not* introduce new evidence. An exception would be if you launch your introduction with a historical story, as in 'In 1610 Jesuit Priest ... travelled from Lisbon to Rio de Janeiro. During his trip...'

### 5.3—The Style of Footnotes

The main requirements for your footnotes are *consistency* and *clarity* in identifying a text. The specific information required in each footnote depends on the material being referenced. In general this is the author *name*, text *title*, *publisher*, *place* and *year* of publication, and the *page number(s)* of the text to which your writing refers. The various details of footnotes for specific sources are detailed below.

Note: Your footnotes should be numbered continuously throughout your essay. (1,2,3,...,n).

Place the *referring footnote number* slightly above the line of text, a little smaller than the main text (Microsoft Word does this automatically). The referring footnote number should be placed after the fullstop of the sentence to which the sources relate.

The footnotes themselves are placed on the same page as the corresponding reference number. It is always best to use **auto-numbered footnotes** that will automatically change the numbers if you add or subtract footnotes as you go.

There are different conventions for citing books, periodicals, edited collections and translations, *et cetera*.

Footnote vs. Bibliography Style:	Footnotes	First name Last name,
	Bibliography	Last name, First name,

## Citing Secondary Sources

### a) CITING BOOKS:

Author **First Name Last Name**, *Book Title* (Place of publication: **Publisher**, Year of publication), pp.XX. Cite the exact page(s) where you found the material.

*For example,*

(AUTHOR) (TITLE)  
(CITY)  
<sup>6</sup>Mark Alrich, *Death Rode the Rails: American Railroad Accidents and Safety, 1828-1965* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006) pp.134-5.  
(PUBLISHER) (YEAR) (PAGES)

### b) CITING PRINTED JOURNAL ARTICLES:

Author **First Name Last Name**, 'Article Title' (in single quotation marks), *Journal Title* (in italics), Vol. x, no. y, Month (if there is no month provided give whatever information listed, such as a season) year, pp.XX.

*For example,*

(AUTHOR) (ARTICLE TITLE IN INVERTED COMMAS)  
Erik Olssen, 'Mr Wakefield and New Zealand as an Experiment in Post-Enlightenment Experimental Practice', *The New Zealand Journal of History*, Vol. 31, no. 2, October 1997, p.210.  
(JOURNAL TITLE) (VOLUME) (NUMBER) (DATE)  
(PAGE)

Although most printed journal articles now have been digitalised and are sourced from the University Library's online databases, you need not list a database URL in your footnotes or bibliography so long as you follow the above rules. If in doubt, consult your lecturer or course coordinator. Exception: electronic journals that do not appear in print—see e) below.

### c) CITING CHAPTERS FROM EDITED COLLECTIONS:

Author **First Name Last Name**, 'Chapter Title' (in single quotation marks), in editor **First Name Last Name (ed.)**, *Book Title*, (Place of publication: **Publisher**, Year), pp.XX.

*For example,*

(AUTHOR) (CHAPTER TITLE) (EDITOR) (BOOK TITLE)  
(PLACE)  
<sup>13</sup>C. Davis, 'Clio's Lost Sheep', in Jock Phillips (ed.), *Biography in New Zealand* (Wellington: HarperCollins, 1985), pp.9–12.  
(PUBLISHER) (DATE) (PAGES)

Even when the author of the article is the same person as the editor of the collection you should still list the names in both places.

*For example,*

(AUTHOR) (EDITOR)  
<sup>14</sup>Jock Phillips, 'Introduction', in Jock Phillips (ed.), *Biography in New Zealand* (Wellington: HarperCollins, 1985), p.1.

## d) CITING FILMS AND VIDEOS

Give the producer's and/or director's name (or names), the *title*, the **distributor**, the **year** of production.

*For example,*

(PRODUCER) (TITLE) (DISTRIBUTOR) (YEAR)

<sup>15</sup>Ken Burns et al., *The West* (PBS Video, 1996).

(PRODUCER) (WRITER/INTERVIEWER) (TITLE)

<sup>16</sup>Gaylene Preston and Judith Fyfe, *War Stories Our Mothers Never Told Us*

(DISTRIBUTOR) (YEAR)

(Ronin Films, 1995; released on video, 1996).

## e) CITING DIGITAL-ONLY MATERIAL FROM THE INTERNET:

Each day more and more useful historical material appears only in digital versions and is placed on the internet. In referencing such material, determine whether the source is *unchanged or unchangeable* or *may be changed*. The content in a journal article in the *Electronic Journal of Australian and New Zealand History*, for instance, would never be changed; the content on a website such as [www.slavevoyages.org](http://www.slavevoyages.org) may be edited and updated.

(i) *Unchanged or unchangeable sources*

If you use *material from a digitalised journal article or e-book*, you must provide a full, first reference that contains: *author's name* (first name comes first); *title of work* of the list/site as appropriate; and *access path* (Universal resource locator, URL).

*For example,*

(AUTHOR) (TITLE OF WORK)

<sup>18</sup>Graeme Davison, 'On History and Hypertext,' *Electronic Journal of Australian and New Zealand History*; [www.jcu.edu.au/aff/history/new.htm](http://www.jcu.edu.au/aff/history/new.htm)

(URL)

*Note:* Some of these e documents now have DOIs (Digital Object Identifiers). Since these identifiers are unique and permanent, you should use DOIs rather than URLs for sources that supply DOIs.

(ii) *Changeable sources*

If you use *material from the Internet* from a changeable website, you also must give your access date.

*For example,*

(AUTHOR) (TITLE OF WORK)

<sup>18</sup>David Eltis, 'A Brief Overview of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade', *Voyages: The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database*; [www.slavevoyages.org](http://www.slavevoyages.org); accessed 22 July 2011.

(URL) (ACCESS DATE)

## f) CITING REVISED EDITIONS:

If a book is a *revised edition* then you should note the current edition you are using and that edition's year of publication.

*For example,*

(AUTHOR) (TITLE) (EDITION) (CITY) (PUBLISHER) (YEAR ED. PUB.) (PAGE)

<sup>7</sup>E. H. Carr, *What is History?*, 2d ed. (London: Macmillan, 1987), p.88.

(AUTHOR) (TITLE)

<sup>8</sup>Maurice Meisner, *Mao's China and After: A History of the People's Republic*, rev. ed. (New York: Free Press, 1986), p.1

(EDITION) (CITY) (PUBLISHER) (YEAR REV. ED.) (PAGE)

g) CITING TRANSLATIONS:

If a source has been *translated* also include the *translator's name*.

*For example,*

(AUTHOR) (TRANSLATOR)

<sup>32</sup>Fernand Braudel, *On History*, trans. Sarah Matthews (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), p.114.

h) CITING LECTURES:

Footnoting notes *from a lecture* should only be done if the information or argument cannot be found in more conventional sources. Avoid using lecture notes as references where possible, as they are likely to be incomplete and possibly inaccurate; often they have been taken in a rush. You should include the **lecturer's name**, the **'lecture title'**, the **course**, the **place**, and the **date**.

*For example,*

(AUTHOR) (TITLE) (COURSE) (PLACE)  
(DATE)

<sup>37</sup> Steve Behrendt, 'Sugar in World History', HIST120 lecture, Victoria University of Wellington, 23 March 2011.

i) CITING WORKS QUOTED IN ANOTHER WORK:

If you are footnoting a quote or idea from a book that does not belong to the author of the book, you must identify not only the original author, but also note the text in which you found the excerpt (or else seek out the original source).

*For example*, if you wanted to use a quote from St. Augustine from Alfred Crosby's book *The Measure of Reality*, you must show that while the author of the quote may be St. Augustine, you did not obtain the quote from the original work. So the footnote would expand to include all this information.

(DETAILS OF SOURCE YOU ARE USING)

<sup>40</sup>St Augustine, *Confessions*, trans. R. S. Pine-Coffin (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1961), p.114, in Alfred W. Crosby, *The Measure of Reality: Quantification and Western Society, 1250-1600* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p.134.

(DETAILS OF BOOK IN WHICH SOURCE WAS FOUND)

j) CITING A BOOK OF READINGS:

This is the same as footnoting a cited work (i). The key is to remember that it is the original author and initial source of the text you are using that you must acknowledge first. Ask yourself, 'Who wrote the text I am using, and where did it come from?' Then note that the material was 'in' the Book of Readings (or seek out

the original source).

*For example*, if using the text on page 361 of the HIST117 Book of Readings you must note the original author, publication, and page numbers, and then note that you took this from the Book of Readings.

<sup>41</sup> Nini Rodgers, 'Equiano in Belfast: A Study of the Anti-Slavery Ethos in a Northern Town', *Slavery and Abolition*, Vol. 20, no. 3, December 1999, p.74, in *HIST117: Europeans, Africans and Americans Book of Readings* (Wellington: 2006), p.361.

Note: a Book of Readings does not list an editor, so you cannot give the editor name. Do not assume the editor is your lecturer. Where there is no information given, you cannot make it up.

#### k) CITING THESES

Theses (Honours 489 essays, MA and PhD theses are unpublished documents so do not require their titles to be italicised.

Aimee Nicholson, "A touch of lace" and "a kiss from France": New Zealand soldiers, masculinity and 1920s consumption', History Honours long essay, Victoria University of Wellington, 2007, p.33

#### l) CITING MULTIPLE SOURCES:

If you have two or more sources that give the same information or argument you can footnote all of them in the same footnote. Entries for each title follow the same rules as other footnotes, and each source is separated by a semi-colon ';':

*For example*, for the same (or very similar) argument found in the following two books you could footnote both.

<sup>10</sup> Francois Crouzet, *The Victorian Economy*, trans. A. S. Forster (London: Methuen, 1982), p.15; S. Pollard and D. W. Crossley, *The Wealth of Britain, 1085-1966* (London: Batsford, 1968), p.241.

### Citing Primary Sources

#### m) CITING NEWSPAPER ARTICLES:

Give the *author* of the article (where possible), the '**article title**' (in single quotation marks), the *newspaper title* (in italics), *date of publication* (date month year), and the *page number* where you found the material.

*For example*,

(AUTHOR)

(TITLE)

(NEWSPAPER) (DATE)

<sup>6</sup> Vernon Small, 'US Envoy Defends Frank Talk in Leaked Cables', *Dominion Post*, 1 December 2010, p.A5.

(PAGES)

#### n) CITING ARCHIVAL SOURCES:

Give the *author* of the source (where possible), the **addressee** (if a letter) or the *title* of the document (if any), the *date* of the source, the *collection title*, the *archival*



*reference number*, and the *archival repository* and its location (you can abbreviate this in subsequent references).

*For example,*

(AUTHOR) (ADDRESSEE) (DATE)  
(COLLECTION TITLE)

<sup>3</sup>M. Fraser to The Secretary, New Zealand Seamen's Union, 20 October 1921, STATS Series 1, Box 29, Record 22/6/15, Archives New Zealand (ANZ).  
(ARCHIVAL REFERENCE NUMBER) (ARCHIVAL REPOSITORY)

<sup>18</sup>JK Smith, 6 August 1916, Diaries, 1914-1917, MS-Papers-1234, Alexander Turnbull Library (ATL).

o) CITING LEGISLATION:

Give the *short title* of the Act, the *date* of the Act, the *section* you are referring to, and the *line* reference (where relevant). Cite Bills (legislation yet to be passed by Parliament) in the same way, but remember that they consist of clauses (cl.) rather than sections (sec.).

*For example,*

(SHORT TITLE & DATE)

<sup>21</sup> Electoral Act 1993, s.60(a)(ii)  
(SECTION)

p) CITING FROM THE *Appendices to the Journal of the House of Representatives*:

Give the *title* of the document (in single inverted commas), the *title* of the source (you can abbreviate to *AJHR* in subsequent references), the *date* of the source, the *session*, the *section*, and the *page number*.

*For example,*

(TITLE)

(AJHR)

<sup>7</sup> Further Papers Relative to Mr Buller's Leave of Absence', *Appendix to the Journals of the House of Representatives (AJHR)*, 1872, Session 1, G-19, p.2.  
(DATE) (SESSION) (SECTION) (PAGE)

q) CITING PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

Give the *speaker*, the *title* of the source (can abbreviate to *NZPD* on subsequent references), the *date* of the source, the *volume number*, and the *page number*.

*For example,*

(SPEAKER)

(TITLE)

(DATE)

(VOLUME) (PAGE)

<sup>8</sup> Richard Seddon, *New Zealand Parliamentary Debates (NZPD)*, 1894, Vol. 82, p.965.

r) PHOTOGRAPHS AND IMAGES

Opening of Woolomooloo Memorial, 25 April 1923, Ref No. 1-234-5AB, State Library of NSW (accessed on Picture Australia, [www.nla.gov.au/pictureaustralia](http://www.nla.gov.au/pictureaustralia) 12 May 2008)

Crowd at opening of memorial, Wainouiomata, 11 November 1922, Wilkinson Collection, Ref. No.12-345-67, Alexander Turnbull Library.

There are many other types of sources that require specialised footnoting (and bibliographical) details. This booklet cannot give a complete list. The basic principles of footnoting can be found here. If you encounter a source that does not seem to fit into any of the above categories, check your course guide or you can ask your tutor or lecturer for advice. Footnoting may seem difficult and cumbersome at first, but it becomes routine with a little practice.

#### 5.4—Page Number References

*Page numbers* are written as 'p.' for a reference from a single page or 'pp.' for material that spans two or more pages. If the footnote refers to two distant separate pages then each page must be listed separately as the reference does not refer to the intervening pages.

*For example,*

- (i) for a reference from page nine, p.9.
- (ii) for a reference for material that spans pages nine, ten and eleven, pp.9-11.
- (iii) for a reference that takes material from page nine and page eleven (but not page ten), pp.9,11.

*Please note:* do not use 'pg' to abbreviate 'page' or 'pages'.

#### 5.5—Abbreviating Footnotes

In order to avoid an essay becoming overwhelmed with long footnote references throughout, historians and publishers of History use two main conventions to shorten some footnotes: the *short version* and the *short title*. You can *never* shorten the first reference to any work you are citing, so the *short version* or *short title* format apply to the second or subsequent time you cite a particular work.

##### *Footnoting: the short version*

In an essay where you have already given a footnote to, *for example,*

<sup>2</sup> Greg Denning, *Mr Bligh's Bad Language - Passion, Power and Theatre on the Bounty* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), p.27.

Then for subsequent footnotes you could use the short version that lists only the author's *surname* and the *page(s)* referenced.

<sup>13</sup>Denning, p.27.

##### *Footnoting: the short title*

However, if you are citing more than one work by the same author, or two authors with the same surname, you should also provide a *short title* to avoid confusion. The short title should be the first **few key words of the full title**, enough to uniquely identify that text in your essay. Thus in using the short title footnoting convention you would drop definition or indefinite articles, such as 'the' or 'an'.

*For example,* if you have already given a full footnote references for,

<sup>1</sup> Charles Webster, *The Great Instauration: Science, Medicine and Reform 1626-1660* (London: Duckworth, 1975), p.163.

and

<sup>4</sup> Charles Webster, 'Alchemical and Paracelsian Medicine' in Charles Webster (ed.), *Health, Medicine and Mortality in the Sixteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), pp.301-3.

Then you should shorten both in subsequent footnotes with a short title to identify each distinctly:

<sup>8</sup> Webster, 'Alchemical and Paracelsian Medicine', p.312.

<sup>9</sup> Webster, *Great Instauration*, p.14.

In reading works of History, you may see other footnote referencing methods, including the use of the word 'ibid'. The term 'ibid.' is a specialised designation derived from the Latin word 'ibidem', which means 'in the same place'. The footnote reference 'ibid'. applies to footnotes of the same work that *immediately follow* each other. Despite being **derived from a foreign word** (and being an abbreviation too) 'ibid.' does not need to be *italicised*.

Because your aim in footnoting is to **provide accurate reference information for your reader**, to avoid any confusion **use the short title** footnoting method.

*Tip:* It is often wise to make all footnotes in your draft full references, and then shorten those that can be shortened only in the final copy. Remember, you must give the first citation of any work in your footnotes in complete, full format.

### 5.6—Advanced Footnoting Techniques

If, as noted in (6.3k), you reference multiple sources in the same footnote, it *must be clear* to the reader where the information in the sentence/ paragraph came from. You can add clarity by specifying geographical locations or the names of authors in your text.

*For example*, this author specified geographical locations in the paragraph, enabling the reader to match the historical information to each source.

In 1703, a Massachusetts law stated that after nine o'clock in the evening, no 'Negro or mulatto servant or slave' should be out in the streets without specific permission from his or her master. Rhode Island, which would eventually use gang slavery in the farms around Narragansett Bay, in spite of its early prohibition of slaveholding, also established curfew for 'Negroes' or Indians in 1703. In New York, a brutal slave law was enacted in 1712 after a bloody slave insurrection left nine whites dead.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> R. C. Twombly and R. H. Moore, "Black Puritan: The Negro in Seventeenth Century Massachusetts," *William and Mary Quarterly*, Vol. 24, no. 3, 1967, pp.224-42; *Records of the Colony of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations*, 10 vols. (Providence, 1856-1862), Vol. 3, p. 492; K. Scott, "The Slave Insurrection in New York in 1712," *New York Historical Quarterly*, Vol. 45, no. 1, 1961, pp.16-18.

Another method of indicating how your references relate to the information in your text is to specify authorship, as in the following *example*:

In the early twentieth century, 'the plantation school' of Southern historians worked on

the assumption that the 'Negro' was only fitted for a subordinate position in American society, and that the plantation was the ideal vehicle for his or her civilisation. Ulrich Bonnell Phillips was the leading advocate of this 'school', and he and his followers stressed how blacks, who were by nature 'inferior', needed the nurturing environment of the plantation to survive in an increasingly capitalist world. Richard Hofstadter first challenged this thesis, and economists Conrad and Meyer further undermined the 'plantation school', by demonstrating that the standard of living of blacks declined precipitously on plantations. In the 1960s, Genovese led a reappraisal of Phillips' studies on plantation slavery.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>31</sup> Ulrich B. Phillips, *American Negro Slavery* (New York, 1918); T. J. Wertenbaker, *The Old South: The Founding of American Civilization* (New York, 1942); R. Hofstadter, 'Ulrich B. Phillips and the Plantation Legend', *Journal of Negro History*, Vol. 29 (1944), pp.109-124; A. H. Conrad and J. R. Meyer, 'The Economics of Slavery in the Ante-Bellum South', *Journal of Political Economy*, Vol. 66 (1958), pp.95-130; E. D. Genovese, 'Race and Class in Southern History: An Appraisal of the Work of Ulrich Bonnell Phillips', *Agricultural History*, Vol. 16 (1967), pp.345-58.

## 6) BIBLIOGRAPHIES

### 6.1—What is a Bibliography

A bibliography is simply the alphabetical listing of the sources you have consulted to write your essay. The purpose of a bibliography is to allow a reader of your work to trace your sources. You should record the information to complete your bibliography as you read (1) and take notes (2). An essay is not complete without a bibliography. Take care to include the relevant information as detailed below.

### 6.2—The Style of Bibliographies

Your bibliography should be the final page(s) of your essay, and should begin on a separate fresh sheet of paper. The first page of your bibliography should be headed 'Bibliography'.

You should list *all* relevant books and journal articles you consulted to write the essay. Do *not* include works you have not consulted. Essays are marked on the assumption that you have used all the books listed in your bibliography.

Bibliographical entries are similar in style and content to footnote references (see 5) with some important exceptions.

<b>Bibliography vs. Footnote Style:</b>	<b>Bibliography</b>	<b>Last name, First name,</b>
	<b>Footnotes</b>	<b>First name Last name,</b>

A bibliography is an *alphabetical listing*, by surname of the authors. Author names are therefore listed by surname first, then by first names (or initials). It is customary to separate your bibliography into two distinct alphabetical lists; one of primary material (if any), and the other of secondary material (see (6.3) for an example).

The **bibliographical entry for a book** requires the *author* (surname first), *title*, *place* of publication, *publisher* and *year* of publication.

*For example,*

McPhee, Peter, *The French Revolution, 1789-1799* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).

The bibliographical listings of articles a **journal** should contain the full details as in a footnote, PLUS the full page range of the article.

*For example,*

Dasgupta, Jyotirindra, 'Community, Authenticity, and Autonomy: Insurgence and Institutional Development in India's Northeast', *The Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 56, no. 2, 1997, pp.345-70.

For a chapter from an **edited collection** the bibliographical entry requires full details PLUS *full page range* of the chapter.

*For example,*

Goodman, Dena, 'Women and the Enlightenment', in Renate Bridenthal, Susan Mosher Stuart and Merry E. Weisner (eds.), *Becoming Visible: Women in European History*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1998), pp.233-62.

The basic style principles for *other texts* are the same as for **footnotes** (see (5.4) for more

details). The only differences to remember are to place the *surname first* (and list the entries alphabetically), and, if referring to an article or chapter, include the *full page range*. A sample bibliography, following the presentation guidelines given in section (6), is given below.

### 6.3—A Sample Bibliography

#### Primary sources

'Medieval Land Laws', *Ashburton Guardian*, 27 February 1894, p.3.

St Augustine, *Confessions*, trans. R.S. Pine-Coffin (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books), 1961.

#### Secondary sources

Alrich, Mark, *Death Rode the Rails: American Railroad Accidents and Safety, 1828-1965* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006).

Carr, E.H., *What is History?* (London: Macmillan, 1961, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, 1987).

Crouzet, Francois, *The Victorian Economy*, trans. A.S. Forster (London: Methuen, 1982).

Goodman, Dena, 'Women and the Enlightenment', in Renate Bridenthal, Susan Mosher Stuart and Merry E. Weisner (eds.), *Becoming Visible: Women in European History*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1998), pp.233-62.

Pollard S. and Crossley D.W., *The Wealth of Britain, 1085-1966* (London: Batsford, 1968).

Rodgers, Nini, 'Equiano in Belfast: A Study of the Anti-Slavery Ethos in a Northern Town', *Slavery and Abolition*, Vol. 18, no. 2, August 1997, pp.73-89.

Van Helden, Albert, 'Giordano Bruno (1548-1600)',  
<http://es.rice.edu/ES/humsoc/Galileo/People/bruno.html>

## 7) PRESENTATION AND STYLE GUIDE

These presentation guidelines are designed to help make your essay easy to read and mark. The ability to present your essay to a set standard is a skill that will be expected whether in the workforce or in another department.

### 7.1—Type Size and Fonts

A good size of font is twelve point. Use standard font types, such as Times New Roman, Calibri, Palatino Linotype, or Helvetica. Fancy fonts are hard to read.

### 7.2—Spacing and Margins

1.5 or double spacing your essay makes it easier to read and leaves room for your marker. Leave a wide left-hand margin of up to 5cm in your final copy. Margins are important as they give room for your marker to comment on your work.

### 7.3—Italics

Foreign words, book titles and journal titles should all be either *italicised* or underlined in your essay.

Sometimes you must italicise a title that already has italicised words. For instance, for a title that appear on the cover of a book as 'Class structure in Machiavelli's *The Prince*', the convention is that the italics of an italicised word is in normal type. In other words two italicisations cancel each other out. So the title given above would be written in your essay as: *Class structure in Machiavelli's* The Prince.

### 7.4—Numbers, Centuries and Years

**Numbers** less than one hundred (100) should be spelled out in words. For example: ten; eighty-three; ninety-nine. Numbers greater than one hundred can be given in numerical form.

It is acceptable to use numerical form for all values in *tables or graphs*. For presentation purposes, all graphs, tables or diagrams should be placed in an appendix at the end of your essay, and 'pointed to' in the text.

**Centuries** should be written out in words. For instance: the sixteenth century; the fifth century BCE; the nineteenth century.

**Years** are normally given in numerical form: so 1848, 1998, and 1066. Full dates: 22 November 1998; 4 July 1066; 12 March 49 BCE.

### 7.5—Footnotes

As noted in section (6), you can use either the footnote or endnote format in your essay. Footnotes must be placed at the bottom (or 'foot') of the page they relate to. Footnotes should be written in a slightly smaller type than the main text of your essay, and they *do not have* to be double spaced.

### 7.6—Bibliography Format

Your bibliography will be the last page(s) of your essay. Remember that your bibliography

must start on a fresh page, and be titled, 'Bibliography'. Bibliography entries should follow the layout guidelines for your main text with one important exception: do *not* indent the first line of each paragraph (or entry). See section (6) for details, especially the sample bibliography (6.3).

**Checklist:**

**Is your essay...**

Typed, 1.5 or double-spaced and footnoted?

Does it have a wide left margin?

Does it use footnotes (not endnotes or in-text citation)?

Do all the footnotes list page numbers where needed?

Does the essay have a bibliography attached?

Does the essay have page numbers?

Does your ID number appear on each page?

Have you retained a copy of the essay?

Does it have a completed cover sheet? Have you signed the plagiarism declaration?



## 8) ASSESSMENT

### 8.1—What the Grades Mean

The criteria for judging essays fall into two broad categories: firstly, construction of your essay as an argument, which includes research, development of an argument, and answering the question; secondly, the presentation of your essay, including grammar, spelling and expression. The following guide to grades is some indication of what is expected in an essay. While we have tried to systematise the marking of essays, an essay may not fit into a single category. Often essays will display characteristics that run across the grades. The mark given will, therefore, often be the result of balancing the essay's overall qualities.

**A+ (90-100):** An extremely well crafted paper that excels in all areas. It shows a high degree of original thought and interpretation. It has been widely researched, making creative use of a range of resource tools.

**A (85-89):** The essay demonstrates excellent analytical and critical ability. The argument should be well constructed and based on wide reading, including as much relevant primary material as appropriate. There should be evidence of originality of thought and interpretation. The areas of grammar, spelling and referencing should display a high level of competence.

**A- (80-84):** An essay in this grade will display the skills of an A essay, but to a lesser degree. It should have a well developed argument, critically evaluate sources, and be solidly researched from a wide range of material. The essay should have no problems in the areas of grammar, sentence construction, or referencing.

**B+ (75-79):**

**B (70-74):**

**B- (65-69):**

**An essay in the B range** should be well written, thoroughly researched, and well referenced. It should have a solid to good argument, with some critical evaluation of sources, but may not have as much independent interpretation and analysis as an A essay. There may be a few problems with grammar, sentence construction and referencing. Reading might be limited to the key sources only and in weaker essays there may be problems using evidence to support statements. In weaker essays in this grade range, an attempt will have been made to answer the question but it may have missed significant issues.

**C+ (60-64):**

**C (55-59):**

**C- (50-54)**

**The C range** includes essays that are a fair attempt to answer the question but are limited by some or all of the following: narrow or inadequate reading; noticeable problems with grammar, spelling and referencing; poor organisation and structure of argument.

**D (40-49):** A fail mark given to an essay that is unacceptable for a number of reasons. Often there is profound inaccuracy or confusion about the question. There may be problems with the use of material. While this grade usually denotes considerable problems, often minor improvements will boost the grade.

**E (39 or less):** An E grade is given only for essays that fall well below the required standard.

Lateness penalties may lower a higher graded essay to a fail category. Penalties are detailed in the Course Guide.

### **8.2—Reviewing Comments**

When you receive your marked essays it is easy to look quickly at the grade, celebrate or commiserate with your fellow students, and then file your essay under the stack of your current work. However, aside from the basic grade your essay receives, there will be a number of helpful comments and suggestions from your marker. These comments can help you with future essays, and they also can be of assistance when it comes to tests or exams. Take time to read the comments on your marked essays, and if you have any questions see your tutor or lecturer.