

KENT LAW SCHOOL

**POSTGRADUATE
STYLE GUIDE
FOR DISSERTATIONS AND THESES**



INTRODUCTION

This is a practical style guide to facilitate postgraduate students in law seeking to submit a dissertation or thesis in satisfaction of all or part of their degree programme. This guide does *not* provide information on the regulations concerning different programmes of study nor does it state the specific dissertation requirements on individual degree programmes.

For general information and regulations on degree programmes, see:
<http://www.kent.ac.uk/regulations/academic.html>

General information for postgraduate students in law is also provided in the Kent Law School Handbooks for taught and research students (annually updated).

The following information is provided as a *guide* to presentation rather than as a set of required conventions. However, students should appreciate fully the importance of good presentation to a successful thesis or dissertation. It is not something in relation to which you can afford to be casual.

GENERAL LAYOUT OF DISSERTATION/THESIS

The following is the usual order of the elements in a dissertation/thesis.

TITLE PAGE

This should have a balanced appearance and consist of

- title of work (descriptive but reasonably concise)
- full name of author
- qualification for which dissertation/thesis is submitted
- name of the School/University
- month and year of submission

ABSTRACT

This is a summary of about 300 words indicating the purpose, main points and conclusions in the order described in the dissertation/thesis.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

This should list the chapters and their main subdivisions, the page numbers, and peripheral items such as acknowledgements, bibliography, appendices etc (in order).

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

- where appropriate, ie where a number of abbreviations are used so frequently as to make it more economical and orderly to list them at the beginning of the work.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author should acknowledge all assistance accorded to him/her in the process of writing the dissertation.

TABLE OF LEGISLATION

- where appropriate.

TABLE OF CASE LAW

(Where little case law is used it may be more appropriate to refer to the cases at the end, as part of the bibliography).

BODY OF TEXT

There are no rigid rules here but good practice includes

- rational organisation of material in chapters
- the use of headings and subheadings
- good referencing of sources

APPENDICES

Only include here material which is genuinely relevant and which cannot be fitted into the text without interrupting the flow, eg a questionnaire used in research and other research-related material. Be careful about promises of confidentiality etc in this context.

REFERENCES/BIBLIOGRAPHY

Regardless of which style convention you use (see below) all references (material directly cited) and bibliographic material (ie material you found useful in formulating your ideas in the course of your research) should be listed at the end of the thesis/dissertation in alphabetical order of the author's surname.¹ Further guidance on format is provided below.

¹ Or where there is more than one author, the principal author. Material listed in the bibliography may also be subdivided into different sources – articles, books, etc and alphabetised within the selected categories.

STYLE CONVENTIONS

You will have noticed that books and journals adopt widely differing style conventions. It is important from the outset that you decide precisely what style conventions you intend to follow and then stick to them consistently. The KLS recommended house style is OSCOLA, the Oxford Standard for Citation of Legal Authorities. You can access details about OSCOLA via the postgraduate webpages or on:

<http://www.competition-law.ox.ac.uk/published/oscola.shtml>

OSCOLA is recommended in particular because we have adopted it in relation to the use of ENDNOTE by law students.

Examples of two 'house styles' are provided below. The first ('traditional legal Style') is very similar to OSCOLA. If you prefer this, you are advised to use OSCOLA. It is particularly suited to more doctrinally oriented research. The second ('Social Science reference Style') is more suited to interdisciplinary work.

GENERAL EXHORTATIONS

Please use a reasonably-sized font, eg, point 12 for the text and point 10 for footnotes/endnotes.

Use A4 paper and one and a half or double-space the text. (It is also helpful to one and a half or double-space the footnotes/endnotes but this is not as necessary).

Always fully punctuate, including footnotes/endnotes (eg, periods/full stops at end of footnotes/endnotes).

TRADITIONAL LEGAL STYLE

Dissertations/theses should be typed or word-processed on A4 paper. Both the text and footnotes/endnotes² should be one and a half or double-spaced, with margins on both sides.

Forms, tables and diagrams should be set out as clearly as possible.

1. *Headings*

Please eliminate all headings which do not add to clarity. It is important to distinguish clearly between headings and subheadings and to be consistent in the application of distinction.³

² Either will do but you must be consistent. Footnotes are generally easier on the reader than endnotes.

³ E.g. *headings* could be numbered 1, 2, 3; subheadings could be numbered i, ii, iii. Alternatively headings could be upper case and subheadings lower case. If you have degrees of subheadings, a range of distinction criteria are obviously necessary.

2. Quotations

These should be clearly indicated by single quotation marks, with double quotation marks used for quotes within quotes. Where a quotation is more than about five lines long, it should be indented as a separate paragraph, with a line space above and below, and with no quotation marks or leader dots. All quotations should remain exactly as in the original – housestyle should not be employed. They should of course be fully referenced, particularly page numbers, in the footnotes/endnotes.

3. Cross References

Cross referencing should generally be kept to a minimum but where used, make sure it is clear and correct. English terms (eg, see above/below) are preferred and easier to use than Latin (*supra/infra, ante/post*). In particular, please avoid *op cit, loc cit*; use 'n 4 above' rather than 'op cit n 4'.

4. Latin phrases and non-English expressions

Where these are used, they should be italicised (or underlined) unless so common that they have become wholly absorbed into everyday language, such as *bona fide*.

5. Abbreviations

These may be used provided that the name is set out in full, followed by the abbreviation in brackets, at the first usage, eg,
Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS).
The abbreviation can then be used throughout.

Alternatively, in relation to abbreviations common throughout the dissertation/thesis, it may be useful to provide a list of abbreviations at the beginning of the dissertation (see above).

Latin abbreviations should be cited as follows:

ibid et seq – italics, no full points or comma

eg ie cf – roman, no full points.⁴

6. Full stops/periods

No full stops/periods in acronyms,
Thus MLR USA TULRCA

Full stops/period are only used after initials,
Thus W.T.Murphy

⁴ Use in footnotes not main text where you should state the phrase in full 'for example', 'that is' etc.

7. **Footnotes**

Footnote numbers in text generally follow punctuation marks – comma, full point etc

The first letter of footnote should be upper case except

- (i) where it is part of Latin abbreviations *ibid* eg ie cf
- (ii) where it is the letter 's' referring to a section of a statute
- (iii) where it is a cross reference to another footnote, eg 'n 4 above'.

8. **Spelling**

Do not rely on a spell-check alone. Always proof read carefully. NO thesis should be marred by poor spelling. Use English rather than American spelling (eg colour not color, labour not labor). In relation to 's'/z' words - eg unionise, globalize - decide which you prefer and be consistent!

Dates

1 January 1996
1995-96 (not 1995-6 or 1995-1996)
1970s not '70s.⁵

9. **Page References**

These should be set out in full eg 123-124 (not 123-4).
Page numbers should **not** be preceded by 'p' or 'pp'.

10. **Numbers**

Numbers from one to nine should be spelt out in words unless they refer to section or schedule numbers in statutes. Thereafter they appear as numerals.

11. **per cent not %** (except in footnotes).

12. **Capital Letters**

These are used only when referring to a *specific body*, organisation or office, eg:

The United Kingdom Government

Otherwise, eg:

Previous British governments.

'the state' not 'the State'.

⁵ Abbreviated plurals do not have an apostrophe before the s: 1970s not 1970's; MPs not MP's.

13. Cases

Case names: These should be in italics, with the 'v' in roman type without full point – eg *Brown v White*. Usually only one reference is necessary. For English cases, this should be the Law Reports – AC, Ch, QB, ICR – if possible. A general reference is as follows:
A v B [1988] AC 123

A reference to a specific page should be made as follows, with the first page of the report always referred to first:
Re Smith [1989] AC 123, 134

Subsequent references to the same case should be:
Ibid 134 (where the case is cited in the immediately preceding footnote), otherwise n 8 above, 134

Please note the following abbreviations:
R (not *Rex/Regina*) *Att Gen ex p* (prefaced by a comma)

Square brackets should be used around the year of the report where this is essential to find the reference. Where this is not the case because the report has a volume number, the brackets should be round. For Scottish law reports the year is not placed in the brackets. Thus:
[1988] 2 WLR 456 (1986) 130 SJ 78 1984 SC 111

Judgements of the Court of Justice of the European Communities should be cited, as far as possible, by reference to either the European Court Reports (ECR) or the Common Market Law Reports (CMLR).
Thus, eg, Case 41/74 *Van Duyn v Home Office* [1974] ECR 1337 or [1975] 1 CMLR 1.

American law reports, amongst others, have their own rules. Please follow them as far as possible.

14. Statutes

In the text, references as follows:
Section 1 of the Companies Act 1985
Schedule 1 to the Companies Act 1985

In footnotes, references as follows:
Companies Act 1985, s 1
Companies Act 1985, Sched 1
Bill and Act always have capital letters.

15. Command Papers

The title should be italicised and cited as follows:

Royal Commission on Criminal Justice, Report Cm 2263 (1993)

Command papers are abbreviated as follows:

1836-1899	C	1956-1986	Cmdnd
1900-1918	Cd	1986 to date	Cm
1919-1956	Cmd		

16. Hansard

Parliamentary debates should be cited as follows:

HC Deb vol 989 col 1472 29 July 1980

HL Deb vol 414 col 1493 13 November 1980

HC standing Committee A col 1093 11 March 1980

17. Parliamentary papers

These should be cited as follows:

HC 44 (1989)

18. Books

These should be cited as in the following examples with the titles italicised (underlined):

H.L.A. Hart, *The Concept of Law* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1961)

O. Ogus and E. Barendt, *The Law of Social Security* (London: Butterworths, 3rd ed, 1988)

Allan Flanders and H.A. Clegg (eds), *The System of Industrial Relations in Great Britain* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1954)

Karl Marx, *Capital* Volume 1 (1867, London: Penguin, Eng tr, 1976)

Specific page references should be as above followed by "123" or "123-124".

Contributions to edited books should be cited as follows:

D. Harris, 'Ownership of Land in English Law' in N. MacCormick and P. Birks (eds), *The Legal Mind: Essays in Honour of Tony Honore* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986)

19. **Articles**

References should always give the article title. Article titles, like the titles of contributions to edited books, should be in single quotation marks and not italicised. Common abbreviations of journals should be used whenever possible and should be in Roman type. Only where the entirely unabbreviated name of a journal is used should it be italicised (underlined) Thus:

R. Abel, 'Between Market and State: The Legal Profession in Turmoil' (1989) 52 MLR 285
O. Kahn-Freund, 'The Tangle of the Truck Acts' (1949) 4 *Industrial Law Review* 2.

A reference to a specific page should be as follows
(1989) 52 MLR 285, 290

Subsequent references to the same article should be *ibid* 290 (where the article is cited in the immediately preceding footnote), otherwise n 10 above, 290

Initials or first names of authors of books and articles should be included as in the work cited.

SOCIAL SCIENCE REFERENCE STYLE⁶

Quotations

Quotations of more than 40 words should be set off clearly, either by indenting the left-hand margin or by using a smaller typeface. Use double quotation marks for direct quotations and single quotation marks for quotations within quotations and for words or phrases used in a special sense.

Headings and subheadings

First-order headings should be in capital letters, and numbered if the author considers it appropriate. Second, third, and fourth-order headings should be clearly distinguishable but not numbered.

Notes and references

In general, reference to articles, books etc should be in the main text. Footnotes should be used sparingly in order to: provide case citations; elaborate on the text; make reference to further reading. All references (in text or footnotes) should follow the citation style outlined below. Full references should be collected at the end of the manuscript.

⁶ As adopted by, e.g., *Feminist Legal Studies*, *Social and Legal studies* and other interdisciplinary journals.

Cross-Referencing

Cross-referencing is easily facilitated by the citation method. All references are identified by means of an author's name, followed by the date of the reference in parentheses and page number(s) where appropriate. When there are more than two authors, only the first author's name should be mentioned, followed by 'et al'. In the event that an author cited has had two or more works published during the same year, the reference, both in the text and in the reference list, should be identified by a lower case letter like 'a' and 'b' after the date to distinguish the works.

Examples:

See further MacKinnon (1987, 204-208).

This point becomes clearest in the work of MacKinnon (1987a, b).

A number of feminist texts emphasise this point (Mackinnon, 1987; Kerber et al., 1987).

See further Anthony & Witt (1993)

References/Bibliography

References to books, journal articles, articles in collections and conference or workshop proceedings, and technical reports should be listed at the end of the dissertation/thesis in alphabetical order of the author's surname (see examples below).⁷ Articles in preparation or articles submitted for publication, unpublished observations, personal communications, etc should not be included in the reference list but should only be mentioned in the article text (eg, T. Moore, personal communication).

References to books should include the author's name; title of work; place of publication; publisher; year of publication; page numbers where appropriate; in the order given in the examples below.

Rose, G., *Feminism and Geography* (Cambridge: Polity, 1993), 244 pp.

Anthony, L.M. & Witt, C., *A Mind of One's Own: Feminist Essays in Reason and Objectivity* (Boulder: Westview, 1993), 58-61.

References to articles in an edited collection should include the author's name; article title; title of collection; editor's name; place of publication; publisher; year of publication; first and last page numbers, in the order given in the example below.

Morris, A., "Workers First, Women Second? Trade Unions and the Equality Agenda" in *Feminist Perspectives on Employment Law*, ed. A. Morris & T. O'Donnell (London: Cavendish, 1999), 183-202.

⁷ Subdivisions into books, articles etc are helpful.

References to articles in conference proceedings should include the author's name; article title; title of proceedings; editor's name (if any); place and date of conference; publisher and/or organisation from which the proceedings can be obtained; place of publication; year of publication, first and last page numbers; in the order given in the example below.

Mason, T., "Feminism and Post-Modernism" (Plenary address), in *Proceedings of Feminist Legal Studies Association*, ed. B. Smith (Sydney, Australia: University of Western Sydney, 1993a).

References to articles in periodicals should include the author's name; article title; full title of periodical; volume number (issue number where appropriate); year of publication; first and last page numbers, in the order given in the example below.

Grbich, J.E., "Taxation Narratives of Economic Gain: Reading Bodies Transgressively", *Feminist Legal Studies* 5/2 (1997), 131-168.

References to technical reports or doctoral dissertations should include the author's name; title of report or dissertation; location of institution; institution; year of publication, in the order given in the example below.

Rittich, K., "Recharacterising Restructuring: Gender and Distribution in the Legal Structure of Market Reform" (SJD dissertation, Cambridge: Harvard Law School, 1998)

Legal citations

Law reports: name of case in italics. For law series, please follow usual conventions⁸ eg *Webb v EMO Cargo Ltd (No. 2)* [1995] 4 All ER 577.

Statutes:

Theft Act 1968, s.5(3)

or

s.5(3) of the Theft Act 1968

Cross-references (where necessary, eg with case citations):
above, n.5, 33.

And finally, the very best of luck with your research!

⁸ As in 'traditional legal style' above.