

# Guidelines for the presentation of written work in the School of Computing Sciences

## Introduction

Your work should conform to the guidelines below, unless specifically overridden by instructions in an assignment. Written work that deviates from these guidelines is liable to be penalised<sup>1</sup>.

Additional rules for the presentation of theses, dissertations and final year project reports are covered in the relevant guidance notes and module handbooks.

## Appearance and layout

1. If the assignment specifies a word limit, the front cover or footer of the first page must contain the word count (including bibliography), as reported by your word processor or LaTeX editor. Reports that are longer than the stipulated maximum word count - 5% or more, as a general guide - are liable to be explicitly penalised.
2. Assignments specified with a page limit and presentation format will be marked strictly according to the specified criteria. This usually means that any material over the limit will be ignored. For example, the 11th page of a 10 page report will be ignored - even if it contains the conclusions and bibliography; the report will be marked as if that page had never been written.
3. Pages (excluding any title pages or tables of contents) must be numbered. Note that essays and other coursework reports should not have a separate title page, or a table of contents, and that sections should not be forced to start on a new page.
4. The LaTeX 'article' style, with a4 and 11pt options, is the preferred option and recommended means of achieving a suitable appearance. The `ueacmpstyle.cls` file provides the relevant options.
5. Style guidelines for Microsoft Word are all provided in the `cmpstyle.dot` Word style file.
6. The LaTeX and Word styles both give the same appearance. The main elements of the style are:
  - (a) The running text should be in 12pt Times or a similar serif font, with spacing either 3pt before and 0pt after or 0pt before and 0pt after and a blank line between paragraphs.
  - (b) Headings and subheadings are numbered (e.g. 1. Introduction, 3./1. Questionnaire design).
  - (c) The following heading styles are suggested:
    - Title 18pt Times or similar, bold, centred spacing: 12pt before 6pt after,
    - Heading 1 16pt Arial or similar, bold, flush left, spacing: 12pt before 3pt after,
    - Heading 2 14pt Arial or similar, bold, flush left, spacing: 6pt before 3pt after,
    - Heading 3 12pt Times or similar, bold, flush left, spacing: 6pt before 3pt after
    - Heading 4 12pt Times or similar, italic, flush left, indent 0.75cm, spacing 6pt before 0pt after.

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<sup>1</sup> Examples and the style files referred to in this document can be found at <http://www.cmp.uea.ac.uk/XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX>

- (d) Figures and tables should be numbered consecutively.
- (e) Captions should be placed immediately below the figure or table. Examples:  
**Figure 3.** Spectrograms of typical car noise.  
**Table 2.** Single word error rates (after (Cox 2000)).
- (f) The left and right margins of the A4 printed page should be 2.5cm; the top and bottom margins should be 2.5cm.

### *Keeping it together*

1. All work must be securely fastened, normally with a single staple in the top left hand corner, so that markers can read it without having to shuffle a pile of loose sheets.
2. Plastic folders should not be used. (They are slippery, causing piles of work to collapse, and are fiddly to open.)

### *Abbreviations, acronyms and numbers*

Where symbols, acronyms and units are used in a report, any which are not in everyday non-technical use should be defined. Readers should not be left to guess at their meaning.

**Abbreviations** are rarely used in reports, but, for example, if you have a report with a lot of statistics in it is acceptable to use "... c. 31% of processor waits ..." rather than "... approximately 31% of processor waits ..."

**Acronyms** should be written out in full the first time you use them, e.g.

"... Metropolitan Area Networks (MANs) grew at 20% annually in the early 1990s..."

**Trademark and copyright symbols:** You should not follow magazine and advertising practice and include registered trademark or copyright symbols in your reports (e.g. UNIX, not UNIX®).

**Numbers** below 10 should normally be written in full, except where they appear in descriptions of numeric results etc. Numbers above 1,000 should use commas to separate groups of three. The examples below are based on Zobel (2005):

### *Front matter*

A separate title page or table of contents is not necessary or desirable for technical reports and essays of 5,000 words or less. These shorter works should be presented in the format of a technical paper, similar to the example of Smith (2005).

### *Sections*

Essays and short reports (less than 3,500 words) should not normally need sub-headings. Sub-sub-headings are normally only used in works over 10,000 words (final year project reports, dissertations and theses).

### *Appendixes<sup>2</sup>*

Appendixes should be used for material that is worthy but dull and would break up the flow of the report if it were included in the main body of the text. Typically, things such as code listings, detailed experimental measurements, questionnaires, etc. are relegated to appendixes. Code listings for theses, dissertations, and final year projects should normally be supplied on CD. Your work cannot rely on material in the appendixes (i.e. a reader should be able to follow the argument without having to refer to the appendixes).

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<sup>2</sup> The plural of appendix is either appendixes or appendixes (OED).

Appendixes are not normally included in the word count, but are included in a page count.

## References and citations

In all your work it is essential to show the sources of information on which it is based and – in project reports, dissertations and theses – how your work is related to previous work in the same area. The information about each publication should be sufficient to allow a reader to easily find the publication in a library and to make an initial assessment of the publication's quality.

The notes in this section describe the standards and conventions for citations and references<sup>3</sup>. They are applicable to all written work in the School. There are two parts:

**Citation.** This is the reference in the text to the work you are referring to

"... the remainder of this section is based on the work reported in (Farmer and Watro 1989a)."

"Some writers (e.g. (Vonk 1990)) see this as one of the principal classes of prototype..."

"Gray's (1978) pioneering work in this area ..."

"Litwin (1980) developed the first linear hashing algorithm..."

**References (or Bibliography).** This is the section at the end of the report which lists the works cited, in alphabetical order.

### Text citations

1. All citations must be given using the author-date ("Harvard") system, which corresponds to the "APAlite" LaTeX bibliography style.
2. Citations should give the author's surname, the date of publication and, if required, a page number, e.g. (Knuth, 1998: 20).
3. For sources of figures and tables, give the author name and date in the caption; give the full details in the reference list.
4. Several citations together should be listed in either date order (Harvey 1996; Jones 1998; Williams in press).
5. Personal communications and unpublished data should be cited in full in the text, and should not be included in the reference list (e.g. R. A. Smith, personal communication 2009).
6. Citations to works with two authors should give both names, e.g. (Smith and Jones 2000).
7. Citations to works with three or more authors should use *et al.*, the abbreviation of the Latin 'and others' (e.g. Garcia-Molina *et al.* 2000).

There are two reasons for preferring the author-year citation format: first, it means that you become more familiar with the names of researchers in the subject, second, it makes it easier for faculty to mark your work.

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<sup>3</sup> The conventions are adapted from Cambridge University Press guidelines (January 2005). The list of publication types and the information required are based on the BibTeX specification.

## References section

1. The References section must contain only works that are cited in the text. There are never separate References and Bibliography sections. The references section is never subdivided.
2. All works cited in the text (including sources for figures and tables) must be included in the list of references at the end of the essay, report or dissertation. The references are sorted by author and then by year.
3. All references listed must be cited in the text.
4. The reference list should be headed with an unnumbered section heading 'References'.
5. Ensure that every reference is complete, giving the following minimal information:

| Type of work     | Details required  |
|------------------|---|
| book             | author(s)/editor(s), year, title, publisher (place of publication)                                  |
| part of a book   | author(s), year, title, chapter/pages, book editor(s), book title, publisher (place of publication) |
| conference paper | author(s), year, title, conference title, pages (URL/DOI)   |
| journal paper    | author(s), year, title, journal, volume (issue), pages (URL/DOI)                                    |
| manual           | organization, year, title   |
| technical report | author(s)/editor(s), year, title, institution   |
| thesis           | author, year, title, institution  |
| Web site         | author(s), year, site name/subject, URL   |

Items in parentheses are not always available, but should be included if possible.

Author names are in the form: surname initial(s), e.g. Mayhew P. J.

Many papers are available online – for these you should give the full publication details followed by the DOI. A URL alone is not adequate.

Any URL you give should be a direct reference, not a query specification (i.e. a GET method). If the URL contains ampersands (&) it is a query specification.

## Presentation of references

If you are using LaTeX and BibTeX the software will take care of the presentation of references – provided that you have supplied the BibTeX data correctly. For Word, if the authors and years of publication are correctly presented, using the guidance in this and the following section, a sort on by paragraph of the references list will give the correct ordering.

1. Works by the same first author must be in alphabetical order by author, irrespective of the number of authors, e.g.:  
Smith (2005)  
Smith, Jones and Wilson (2011)  
Smith and Wilson (2000)
2. Works by the same author(s) in the same year should be distinguished by using lower-case a, b etc., e.g.:  
(Cawley 2008a)  
(Cawley 2008b)

3. Works that have been accepted for publication or are in press should be listed as 'forthcoming' in the references list
4. Journal and conference titles may be either in full, or abbreviated, but they should all be treated the same way and must be italicised.
5. Book and journal titles normally have maximum capitalisation (all significant words start with an upper-case letter) and must be italicised.
6. Article and chapter titles normally have minimum capitalisation (first letter only upper case) and are not italicised.
7. Author names should be separated by 'and'
8. Volume and pages numbers should be given as numbers (e.g. 5, 93-122) and are not prefixed with 'Vol', 'p.' etc. Issues of a volume should be given in parentheses immediately after the volume number (e.g. 16(4), 23-29).

### **Web page references**

#### *Software and other resources*

Where you need to refer to a website for material such as the source of a program you have used, you should include it as a footnote. For example:

"For these experiments we used the Stanford POS tagger<sup>4</sup> ..."

#### *Papers*

Most papers in computing are now available online as well as in conventional printed format.

The publication details are essential because academic papers are reviewed by suitably qualified experts before being accepted for publication. The number and quality of reviews, and the acceptance criteria vary, but well-respected international journals and conferences generally have more rigorous acceptance criteria, more and better quality reviews of papers. Reputable publishers of academic books have similar review processes. These processes provide a quality assurance mechanism for academic publications, which is generally lacking for other forms of publication.

1. If you are referencing a page that is not published conventionally you should include the page's author(s) if they are named (this acknowledges their contribution) and the title of the page.
2. If the page has a date of last modification you should use this as the publication date, otherwise you should add the month and year you consulted the site in parentheses at the end of the reference and otherwise treat the page as undated (see examples below).
3. Provide the URL or DOI (see below) of a paper as well as the conventional publication details.
4. If the page has no authors or editors listed you should treat the organisation publishing the page as the author.

#### *Examples:*

These three examples (CUP 2005; Raggett 2002 and Neilsen Norman Group n.d.) show various forms of reference for online publications.

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<sup>4</sup> [nlp.stanford.edu/software/tagger.shtml](http://nlp.stanford.edu/software/tagger.shtml)

Caldwell B., Chisholm W., Vanderheiden G., White J. (eds) (2004) *Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0*, <http://www.w3.org/TR/WCAG20/>

CUP Book Production Guide: *Science, Technology and Medicine*, (2005)  
<https://authornet.cambridge.org/information/productionguide/stm/text.asp>

Neilsen Norman Group, *Intranet Usability Reports*,  
<http://www.nngroup.com/reports/intranet/>

Raggett, D. (2002) *Getting Started with HTML*, <http://www.w3.org/MarkUp/Guide/>

## DOI

Many publishers have adopted the DOI (Digital Object Identifier) standard to provide unique references to their papers – if a DOI is available for a work you reference, you should include it as part of the reference, as it should remain valid even if the URL is changed.

### *Example:*

Yan H. and Selker T. (2000) A Context-Aware Office Assistant, *ACM International Conference on Intelligent User Interfaces*, New Orleans, 276-279  
<http://doi.acm.org/10.1145/325737.325872>

## Example references

The examples below are citations and references for a book (Ginsberg 1987), two journal papers - the second of which has its volumes divided into issues (Abdelbar and Hedetniemi 1998; Ozmutlu *et al.* 2004), a conference paper (Nishiura *et al.* 2003), a technical report (Sawhney 1997), a part of a book (DeWitt 1991), a thesis (Couvreur 1997), and a manual (Sun JSGF 1998) which is only available online.

### *Examples:*

Abdelbar A.M., and Hedetniemi S.M. (1998) Approximating MAPs for belief networks in NP-hard and other theorems, *Artificial Intelligence* 102, 21-38

Couvreur C. (1997) *Environmental Sound Recognition: A Statistical Approach*, PhD thesis, Faculté Polytechnique de Mons, Belgium

DeWitt, D.J. (1991) The Wisconsin Benchmark: Past, Present and Future, in Gray, J. *The Benchmark Handbook*, Morgan Kaufmann, San Mateo

Ginsberg M. (1987) *Readings in Nonmonotonic Reasoning*, Morgan Kaufmann, Los Altos

Nishiura T., Nakamura S., Miki K. and Shikano K. (2003) Environment Sound Source Identification Based On Hidden Markov Model For Robust Speech Recognition, *EuroSpeech 2003*, 2157-2160

Ozmutlu S., Spink A. and Ozmutlu H.C. (2004) A day in the life of Web searching: an exploratory study *Information Processing and Management* 40(2): 319-345, DOI: 10.1016/S0306-4573(03)00044-X

Sawhney N. (1997) *Situational Awareness from Environmental Sounds*, Technical Report for Modeling Adaptive Behavior (MAS 738), Pattie Maes, MIT Media Lab

Sun JSGF, (1998) *Java Speech Grammar Format Specification*  
<http://java.sun.com/products/java-media/speech/forDevelopers/JSGF/index.html>

## References

Dunnett M. (1993) *Grammar and Style*, Duckworth, London

Gowers E. (2004) *The Complete Plain Words*, 3e, Penguin

Lamport L. (1999) *LaTeX: A Document Preparation System*, Addison Wesley, Reading, Mass.

Silyn-Roberts H. (1996) *Writing for Science*, Longman, London

Smith D (2005) *Hints on Writing for Computing Assignments*, Technical Report UEA School of Computing Sciences, Norwich <http://www.cmp.uea.ac.uk/XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX>

Swan M. (1995) *Practical English Usage*, O.U.P, Oxford

Zobel J. (2005) *Writing for Computer Science (2e)*, Springer, Berlin