

# Honours Thesis - Essay Style Sheet

Department of History • Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences • National University of Singapore

AS1-05-27 • 11 Arts Link • Singapore 117570

Email: [hishelp@nus.edu.sg](mailto:hishelp@nus.edu.sg)

as at 26 Feb 2026

---

## STYLE SHEET (Copyediting)

This is the style sheet for the Honours Thesis (HT) Essay format (in use from AY2023-24 onwards). As a guide for matters pertaining to academic style, *The Chicago Manual of Style*, 15th ed. onwards, is recommended. Please note that the Department uses UK spelling; *Concise Oxford English Dictionary*. Your Honours advisor can also provide guidance if you are concerned about matters pertaining to academic style.

### General points:

- The length of the HT Essay is 10,000 words, inclusive of footnotes. If the topic is one in which non-English sources are used extensively, then an additional 5% word limit (500 words) allowance is permitted. Please indicate your need for this allowance with the Honours Coordinator before submitting your HT Essay. (Please note: details regarding the submission date, upload to Canvas and file naming protocols is sent as an email note and reminders will go out to all candidates).
- The Department no longer requires hardcopies of your HT Essay, since the NUS Central Library only accepts and retains softcopies of student work.
- Please provide a title page (page 1) with the following information:
  - The title of the HT Essay
  - The name of the candidate
  - The statement 'This HT Essay is submitted for the B.A. Honours Examination in History.'
  - The year of submission.
  - Signed statement "This HT Essay represents my own work and I have duly acknowledged in the footnotes the sources and information which I have consulted for the purpose of this study. The total word count for this essay is \_\_\_\_\_ words."
- On page 2, please submit an abstract of 150 words. This usually appears before the rest of the HT Essay. Also list keywords for your thesis (four to five will suffice).
- Acknowledgements can be on a separate page (page 3) before the start of the Essay.
- Essay: Font size should be in 12-point and double spacing throughout. While preparing footnotes, please ensure there is double-spacing and 10-point font size is adopted.
- There is no bibliography required. (We encourage you to consult articles from JSEAS for a sense of the overall style and presentation).
- Pages should be numbered consecutively throughout the entire manuscript, and generous margins should be set. (Number the pages in the upper right hand corner, page 1 being the title page).
- Headings should be in bold, 12-point. Example: **The ruling power's policy on wealth.**
- Sub-headings should be in italics, 12 point. Example: *The emperor's first plan.*

The following pages provide a detailed guide to formatting, style and citation matters.

# Honours Thesis - Essay Style Sheet

Department of History • Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences • National University of Singapore

AS1-05-27 • 11 Arts Link • Singapore 117570

Email: [hishelp@nus.edu.sg](mailto:hishelp@nus.edu.sg)

as at 26 Feb 2026

---

Here is a guide to standard conventions for your HT Essay:

## 1. Spelling

For the English language, follow British spelling conventions as found in the Oxford series of dictionaries with the exception of material in a direct quote, which should follow the original source.

Authors should note the spellings of the following commonly used words:

centre, not center  
programme, not program  
colour, not color  
flavour, not flavor  
specialise, not specialize  
honour, not honor  
humour, not humor  
saviour, not savior  
organise, not organize  
labour, not labor

## 2. Capitalisation

For titles of books or articles written in languages using the Roman alphabet, capitalise the first word of the title plus the first word after a colon or semi-colon, as well as any proper nouns.

In transcribing from languages written in non-Roman scripts, capitalise only proper nouns. When in doubt, do not capitalise.

## 3. Italics

Titles of books, pamphlets and periodicals should be italicised, as should words of non-English origin except for terms that have been incorporated into the English language.

Examples of non-italicised words include *ibid.*, *per diem* and *vice versa*. Italics should not be used for titles of chapters in books, titles of articles, personal names, and names of places and organisations in the English language.

Do not italicise latin or other loan words/phrases that are now part of the English language and appear non-italicised in the Oxford English Dictionary, e.g. *ad hoc*, *inter alia*, *coup-d'état*, *ancien regime*, *fait accompli*, *per se*.

Proper nouns in foreign languages should be not be italicised, in general.

Punctuation enclosing or following italics should be non-italicised.

Avoid italicising words for emphasis.

## 4. Inverted Commas/Quotation marks

- Use single inverted commas [quotation marks] for titles of articles, unpublished works, English translations of words from another language, and short quotations.

# Honours Thesis - Essay Style Sheet

Department of History • Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences • National University of Singapore

AS1-05-27 • 11 Arts Link • Singapore 117570

Email: [hishelp@nus.edu.sg](mailto:hishelp@nus.edu.sg)

as at 26 Feb 2026

---

- Use single inverted commas for ‘alarm quotes’ (for emphasis etc.); avoid overuse of ‘alarm quotes’
- Use double inverted commas to indicate quoted material within a quotation.
- All punctuation used in connection with phrases inside inverted commas must be placed according to the sense: if the punctuation marks are part of the material quoted, they should be placed inside the quotation marks; otherwise they should be placed outside the closing quotation marks.

## 5. Quotations

- a. Fragmentary quotations must fit grammatically into the text in terms of syntax, verb tenses, personal pronouns, etc.
- b. Block quotations or extracts of more than forty words should be set off from the text by indenting them a few spaces in from the left-hand margin.

Inverted commas are not placed around block quotations.

Paragraph indentation for the first sentence of the quotation is unnecessary.

If, however, the quotation consists of two or more paragraphs, the second and any subsequent paragraphs should begin with a paragraph indentation.

Block quotations should be in size 10-point font to distinguish it from main text.

**There is no need to add ellipsis points ( ... )** at the beginning of an indented quote even if it begins in the middle of a sentence.

## 6. Brackets

- Use square brackets [ ] to enclose explanatory matter inserted into a verbatim quotation, or matter inserted to complete the meaning of a translation and intended to read as part of the translated text.
- In the Notes, the translation of the title of a book or article in a foreign language, if given, should be placed in square brackets after the original title.

## 7. Ellipses

For ellipses within a sentence use three full stops [periods] ... and for ellipses at the end of a sentence use four full stops (.....).

## 8. Numerals

- Numbers of less than two digits should be spelled out except in technical or statistical discussions involving their frequent use, or in footnotes where space saving is recommended.
- When many numbers occur within a single paragraph, maintain consistency in the immediate context for items in any one category. Do not use a mixture of numerals and spelled out numbers in the same sentence or series of sentences for the same kind of item.
- Estimated or approximate numbers also should be spelled out:  
“Between August and October 1967, Beijing sent more than twenty threatening messages to Rangoon.”

# Honours Thesis - Essay Style Sheet

Department of History • Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences • National University of Singapore

AS1-05-27 • 11 Arts Link • Singapore 117570

Email: [hishelp@nus.edu.sg](mailto:hishelp@nus.edu.sg)

as at 26 Feb 2026

---

- Fractional quantities are also expressed in figures. 'Per cent' is written as two words, and the symbol % should not be used, except in Tables.
- For dates in the main body of the text, use the following patterns:

X remained in office from 1927–1939

The Second World War (1941–45)

24 August 1971

eighteenth (not 18th) century

1890s (not 1890's)

the fifties

221 BCE and 211 CE

## 9. Units of Measure

- Use the international metric system of measurement for units of measure (length, weight and capacity).
- If other units of measure are indicated, supply metric equivalents.

## 10. Cross-references

Avoid cross-references to specific pages in the manuscript, or from one footnote to another.

## 11. Bibliographies

All bibliographic references should be included in the footnotes.

## 12. Diagrams, Illustrations, Tables, Maps

- All figures and tables should be placed in the text and captions should be supplied.
- Tables should be numbered consecutively. Titles should identify the table briefly, and should not give background information or describe results.  
(Mixing of different kinds of information in one column is to be avoided; for example, put dollar amounts in one column, percentages in another, and so on).
- The source(s) of the information presented in a table should be indicated immediately below it.

## 13. Internet Sources and Oral Histories

Refer to the *Chicago Manual of Style* for citation guidelines and/or discuss with your advisor.

## 14. Material in Asian Languages

For authoritative spellings and definitions, the following dictionaries are recommended:

*Bahasa Malaysia*

T. Iskandar, *Kamus Dewan* (Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, 1985).

*Indonesian*

John M. Echols and Hassan Shadily, revised by John U. Wolff and James T. Collins, *Kamus Indonesia Inggris* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, and Jakarta, Penerbit PT Gramedia, 1989), *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia* (Jakarta: Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, Balai Pustaka, 1989), or any other dictionary that follows the 1972 system of standardised spelling for Bahasa Indonesia/Bahasa Malaysia (Ejaan yang disempurnakan).

## Honours Thesis - Essay Style Sheet

Department of History • Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences • National University of Singapore

AS1-05-27 • 11 Arts Link • Singapore 117570

Email: [hishelp@nus.edu.sg](mailto:hishelp@nus.edu.sg)

as at 26 Feb 2026

---

### *Tagalog*

Leo James English, C.Ss.R., *English-Tagalog Dictionary* (Metro Manila: National Book Store, 1992).

For transcriptions of material in Thai or Chinese or Japanese, use the following standards:

### *Thai*

The Library of Congress/Modified Cornell System of transcription.

### *Chinese*

Romanisation should be in Hanyu pinyin.

For questionable cases, refer to Beijing Foreign Language Institute, *The Chinese-English Dictionary* (Hanying cidian) (Beijing: The Commercial Press, 1978). Omit tonal marks.

### *Japanese*

The system found in Kenkyusha's *New Japanese-English Dictionary*.

## 15. Appendices

- Each appendix should start on a new page.
- Appendices should be arranged in alphabetical sequence (Appendix A, B, C, ...)
- Each appendix should be given a title.

## 16. Citations in the Text: Names

When referring to the work of other scholars, give the full name and not the surname alone for the first occurrence in the text:

Example: 'as Anthony Reid says in his.....'

NOT: 'as Reid says in his book *Southeast Asia in the age of commerce*,  
(Note the lower-case style of the title of the book and article).

[Exceptions: Book Reviews of multi-author volumes.]

## 17. Footnotes

- a. Use abbreviated forms, e.g., 24 Aug. 1971, 18<sup>th</sup> century. For a range of years, use 1939– 45; 2000–4 or 2003–11
- b. For months use the following abbreviations: Jan., Feb., Mar., Apr., May, June, July, Aug., Sept., Oct., Nov., Dec.
- c. For abbreviations include full stops except in the case of acronyms (such as ASEAN), which should be written in capitals, and titles such as Dr for Doctor (in which the final letter of the short form is the final letter of the word written in full).
- d. Page numbers should be indicated in accordance with the following examples. Use closed en-dashes for page number ranges. You may obtain an en-dash by pressing simultaneously Alt + 0150.

## Honours Thesis - Essay Style Sheet

Department of History • Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences • National University of Singapore

AS1-05-27 • 11 Arts Link • Singapore 117570

Email: [hishelp@nus.edu.sg](mailto:hishelp@nus.edu.sg)  
as at 26 Feb 2026

---

p. 179  
pp. 107–9 [for pages 107–109]  
pp. 168–72 [for pages 168–172]  
pp. 244–9 [for pages 244–249]  
pp. 116–18 [for pages 116–118]  
pp. 178–202  
pp. 200–2 [for pages 200–202]

*Passim*, ff. (following, as in pp. 178 ff.), and *et seqq.* should be avoided.

Ibid. is allowed. (Do not italicise Ibid.)

Do not cite a footnote (fn.). Just provide the page number. Example: Ibid., p. 34.

- e. In citing references from books, give each source in full the first time it appears, arranging the elements as follows:

Author's name in the normal order,  
Title of the book italicised,  
Publication details in parentheses (city: publisher, year),  
and the page number(s) where the cited information appears.

Please refer to the following examples:

<sup>1</sup> T.N. Harper, *The end of empire and the making of Malaya* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp. 57–62.

<sup>2</sup> Mina Roces, 'The gendering of post-war Philippine politics', in *Gender and power in affluent Asia*, ed. Krishna Sen and Maila Stivens (London and New York: Routledge, 1998), p. 294.

(In this example, [a] 'ed.' means 'edited by' and should not be 'eds.' [b] there is no need to provide the entire page range of the article or chapter if the citation is for a specific reference.)

- f. To cite articles that have appeared in journals:

give the name of the author(s) in the normal order,  
the title of the article within single inverted commas ('...'),  
the name of the journal or periodical italicised,  
the volume and issue numbers,  
the year of publication,  
and the relevant page number(s).

Please refer to the following example:

<sup>1</sup> Wim F. Wertheim, 'Conditions on sugar estates in colonial Java: Comparisons with Deli', *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, 24, 2 (1993): 268–9.

- g. The title of any unpublished work (dissertation, a paper read at a meeting, or a manuscript, etc.) is enclosed in quotation marks and not italicised, including material in mimeographed form.

## Honours Thesis - Essay Style Sheet

Department of History • Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences • National University of Singapore

AS1-05-27 • 11 Arts Link • Singapore 117570

Email: [hishelp@nus.edu.sg](mailto:hishelp@nus.edu.sg)

as at 26 Feb 2026

---

x. Periodicals in print other than academic journals

*Bangkok Post*, 16 Mar 2010 (page nos are optional)

Example on how to cite unpublished works, including PhD theses:

<sup>1</sup> Lee Chae Jin, 'Chinese Communist policy in Laos, 1954–1965' (Ph.D. diss., University of California, Los Angeles, 1966), p. 25. [Please note that it is not necessary to state that a dissertation or other paper is 'unpublished'.]

### h. For references to a work already cited in full

Omit the publication details and include only the author's surname and shortened title of the book or article followed by the page numbers.

Example: Goodman, *The Dutch impact on Japan*, p. 34.

When a footnote refers to the same source as the one immediately preceding it, 'Ibid.' should be used.

Example: Ibid., p. 56.

(This means that the author retrieved the information from page 56 of Goodman's book entitled *The Dutch impact on Japan*).

Do not use 'op. cit.' or 'loc. cit.' in your notes

### i. Electronic Sources

Example: News daily, online:

<sup>1</sup> 'Nhạc sĩ Phạm Duy về Việt Nam sinh sống' [The musician Phạm Duy returns to Vietnam to live], *Thanhniên*, <http://www1.thanhniên.com.vn/Vanhua/2005/5/5/108935.tno> (last accessed on 19 Oct. 2007).

## 18. Short Forms

Take note of the following when using them in the footnotes: They are all in lower case.

vol. for volume

chapter

trans. for translated

ed. for edited