The title page should include the title of the course paper or thesis as well as a standard name block with the name of the writer, the name and code of the course or the type of thesis and the date of submission (e.g. Autumn 2020 for a thesis or 14 October 2020 for a course paper).

House style of English:
Instructions for writers of course papers and theses

Name of writer
Name and code of course or type of thesis
English
Languages and Literature
Faculty of Humanities
University of Oulu
Autumn 2020
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Appendix A. Theses in Jultika

Appendix B. Submitting thesis for final evaluation
1. Course papers and theses in English

Studying English at the University of Oulu involves writing various kinds of course papers and, for major students, a bachelor’s thesis and a master’s thesis. The house style provides general guidelines on how to prepare papers and theses; please note that teachers and thesis supervisors may have additional requirements.

All course papers and theses in the unit of English must comply with good scientific practice. The University of Oulu is committed to follow the guidelines by the Finnish Advisory Board on Research Integrity on the responsible conduct of research and procedures for handling allegations of misconduct (http://www.tenk.fi/en). As one aspect of good scientific practice, all course papers and theses should follow an appropriate scholarly referencing style (see section 4).

1.1. Bachelor’s thesis

The aims of the bachelor’s seminar are (1) to provide an introduction, through group work on relevant research topics, to the methodology, scholarly style, and formal conventions of a thesis in the discipline; and (2) to produce a thesis of 20–25 pages (about 8,000 words) in the correct scholarly form on a research topic that is agreed on with the supervisor.

1.2. Master’s thesis

A master’s thesis, also referred to as a pro gradu thesis, demonstrates the student’s ability to carry out independent research in a specific problem area relevant to their studies and the fields represented within the unit of English. In their master’s thesis, the student presents their research findings in a systematic and appropriate form.

Following the degree structure that came into effect on 1 August 2020, the student will prepare their master’s thesis as part of the course Master’s Seminar and Thesis (682436S), which is worth 30 study points. The thesis should be 55–60 pages (about 20,000 words) in length, including a list of references but excluding possible appendices.

If the student has taken the course Master’s Seminar (682382S), they should prepare their master’s thesis independently under the guidance of a supervisor. The student may choose between completing a master’s thesis worth of 30 or 40 study points, and 55–60 pages (about 20,000 words) or 75–80 pages (about 28,000 words) in length, respectively.
2. Structure and organisation

There is no fixed structure for a course paper or a thesis, but the following types of sections are typically included: an introduction, a description of the materials studied, a description of the analytic framework adopted (i.e. theory and methods), a presentation of analysis, observations and findings, a discussion and a conclusion. Consult your instructor or supervisor as well as previous papers (e.g. journal articles) and theses (see Appendix A) for examples on how to structure and organise a paper or thesis in your particular field of study.

You can use the following percentages, of the total word count, as a rough guideline for allocating space to different sections.

1) Introduction 5%
2) Description of materials 5%
3) Description of analytic framework 30–35%
4) Presentation of analysis, observations and findings 50%
5) Discussion and conclusion 5–10%

The percentages are approximate and will vary depending on the scope, topic and type of paper or thesis.

2.1. Introduction

The introduction states briefly what is studied and how, and why it is worth studying. The introduction should capture the readers’ interest and engage them with the topic. In the introduction, first establish a clear research field by introducing your broad topic and its importance, and situate your study in the field. This can be followed by establishing a space within the pre-existing research – this is where you can situate your own study within a broader context, describing how it relates to previous research. Then, spell out the aim(s) of your study, for example, in the form of a thesis, argument, or question. Finally, provide a brief outline of your paper or thesis, indicating also how this structure will help you achieve your aim.

2.2. Description of materials

You should introduce the materials that you have used in your study, perhaps setting them in a wider context and providing a clear link between the background information and the analysis. Depending
on the materials, this section may include information about possible data sets, linguistic corpora, interviews, and audio or video recordings used in the study as well as of the informants or participants involved in them. Depending on the topic of the study, this section can precede or follow a description of analytic framework. Alternatively, it can be combined with a description of methods, in which case a description of the theoretical framework forms a section of its own.

2.3. Description of analytic framework

This section explains in some detail how the topic has been studied before and how it is examined in the present study. The purpose of the section is to show the reader that you have done a thorough investigation of previous research related to the study and draw on relevant writings of other scholars, preferably in peer-reviewed journal articles. Introduce the overall analytical approach that is adopted in the study (e.g. corpus linguistics, discourse analysis), particular viewpoints and ideas that are taken on from previous research as well as individual terms and concepts that are relevant for the study, to build an understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. The analytic framework includes only those components that are actually relevant to the present study. It is useful to give the section a heading that describes the contents of the section and divide it into subsections to discuss different aspects of the theoretical and methodological framework (e.g. Syntactic and morphological theories in the study of the grammar of a text).

2.4. Presentation of analysis, observations and findings

This section constitutes the main, and longest, part of a course paper or thesis. It makes visible what you make of the material using the analytic framework that you have adopted. This is done by presenting brief, representative extracts of the material and discussing them and possibly also by including figures and tables. You need to describe, comment upon, and analyse the materials you provide. The findings may consist of making comparisons or pointing out similarities or differences between the extracts of materials and introducing the logic of categorising them. Please note that if you use interview materials, for example, this means going beyond of only summarising what your interviewees tell you. It is often good to divide the section into subsections and give each a heading that reflects the findings presented in them. This section of your thesis may also contain references to previous research that are directly related to your findings.
2.5. Discussion and conclusion

This section summarises the main ways in which the study addresses the thesis or hypothesis that was set, or answers the questions that were posed in the introduction, showing how the study adds to previous knowledge. It discusses the validity of the findings, and links the results of this study back to previous research in the field. It can also refer to any practical applications that the study may have, strengths and weaknesses of the study, and directions for future study within the field. It may sometimes be useful to separate this into two sections, with the discussion section first to summarise and discuss the findings of the study in detail. This will allow you to devote the conclusion for a more general examination of the implications, links to other research, and possible applications of the study.

2.6. List of references

A list of references must be provided, which presents all the sources referred to in the course paper or thesis, whether you have done that through summary, paraphrase, or direct quotation, with full bibliographic information. Course papers and theses prepared in the unit of English follow the referencing conventions introduced in section 4. The list of references is typically entitled References.

2.7. Appendices

It is sometimes convenient to present in one or more appendices material which cannot be discussed in full in the running text. If, for example, several sentences from a newspaper article are discussed in the body of the paper, the entire article may be included as an appendix, or, if a questionnaire was used to conduct a study, it is useful to reproduce it in an appendix. Each appendix is given a descriptive title and, if there is more than one appendix, a number or letter for indexing as well. Each appendix must also be referred to in the running text (see Appendices A and B for examples). Appendices will not count towards or against your word limit, and in fact are unlikely to be read unless they are indeed directly and highly relevant to your thesis.
3. Language use and general formatting

The aim of a course paper or thesis is to tell the reader about the study in a comprehensible, logical, and accurate way. It is also important to spell out a logical connection between the separate sections. Metatext plays an important role in underlining such a connection and helping the reader understand the research carried out: a couple of lines of introduction at the beginning of each section will tell the reader what is about to follow, and, at the end, a few summarising sentences will remind the reader what has just been shown.

3.1. Grammar and style

In writing a research report, you should use clear and precise English that is grammatically correct and appropriate in style. All research reports should be written in an appropriately formal academic register. While developing an appropriate academic voice will take time and practice, you should consider the following general points:

• use more formal vocabulary when choices are possible (e.g. *examine* instead of *look at*)
• be as precise and clear as possible
• use specialised, field-specific vocabulary as appropriate
• be relatively impersonal (do not rely excessively on ‘I’ structures)
• do not use contractions (e.g. *it’s* → *it is*)
• avoid colloquialisms and idiomatic language
• avoid rhetorical questions
• avoid sweeping generalisations (e.g. “mankind” or “a normal person worries about his job”)

You should also aim for consistency in spelling, hyphenation, capitalisation, etc. between sections. It is a common practice to avoid breaking words at the ends of lines (especially with words having no suffixes, prefixes or other suitable “cutting points”). When in doubt, it is useful to consult a dictionary for the appropriate British English or American English spelling conventions, and be sure to use your word processor’s spell-checking function.

In finalising the paper or thesis, layout, paragraphs, punctuation, and quotations should be checked carefully. Also, you should make sure that no pages, tables, etc. are missing or wrongly numbered;
that all notes to the text or tables have a number or symbol in the text or table; and that no notes are missing.

3.2. Document layout

This document has been drawn up by using the font Times New Roman (font size 12), but other commonly used fonts are also possible. The appropriate line spacing for the document is 1.5 and margins 2 cm for left and right, and 2.5 cm for top and bottom margins. Entries in the list of references can also be single-spaced.

There are two options for paragraphing. Either extra space should be left between paragraphs (a space of 6 points in this document), with no indentation at the beginning of paragraphs, or no extra space should be left and the beginning of each paragraph should be indented, with the exception of the first paragraph of a section or subsection or after a figure, table or numbered extracts.

Hyphenation, capitalisation and abbreviations should be kept to a minimum. Avoid hyphens with inter-, non-, post-, pre-, sub-, etc. The words being emphasised are entered in the text in boldface. Note that this convention should also be used sparingly. Sets of initials should have no full stops, e.g. OE, ME, USA. For the abbreviations that are not contractions, full stops are used: e.g., i.e., f., ff., c., etc.

3.3. Headings

Each main section starts from a new page. For most purposes, two levels of subheading (e.g. 1.1.1) will be sufficient. Only the first word and proper names are typed with a capital letter. Avoid empty headings, i.e. headings which are followed immediately by a subheading with little or no text in between. Also avoid hanging headings, or headings which appear on a separate page from their contents.

3.4. Extracts

It is useful to include extracts from your materials to convince the readers of your analysis, observations and findings. Depending on the kinds of materials that you use, you may wish to number the extracts or provide block quotations, for example. Consult your instructor or supervisor as well as previous papers (e.g. journal articles) and theses (see Appendix A) for examples on how this is
typically done in your particular field of study. Do not end a section with an extract, but always with some running text and possible comments on the extract.

3.5. Glosses

A word or expression which is to be glossed is italicised and the gloss itself marked off with single inverted commas (single quotation marks): for example, the Finnish word *kuningas* ‘king’ is of Germanic origin.

3.6. Illustrations

Figures and tables can be used to illustrate relevant information, which is then discussed in the running text. Each illustration should be referred to in the running text (for examples of illustrations, see Figures 1 and 2).

![Figure 1. Example of a figure](Image: Pixabay)

![Figure 2. Another example of a figure](Image: Pixabay)

In Figure 2, the image has been drawn from an online source, which is cited in parentheses after the figure caption. For another example of an illustration, see Table 1.
Table 1. *Example of a table*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Student 1</th>
<th>Student 2</th>
<th>Student 3</th>
<th>Student 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Category X</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category Y</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category Z</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Explanations of symbols, abbreviations, etc. should be typed immediately below each figure or table because they should be intelligible without the reader having to refer to the running text. Do not end a section with an illustration, but always with some running text and possible comments on the figure or table.

### 3.7. Footnotes

Notes should be kept to a minimum and they should be no more than a few lines in length. They are intended for the inclusion of additional explanatory material that is extraneous to the main line of your argument but still relevant to your topic. They are placed at the bottom of the page, as footnotes. Note indicators in the text come at a break in the text and follow terminal punctuation.¹

¹ Footnotes should be single-spaced and in a 10-point font size.
4. Referencing

A scholarly study necessarily relies and draws on previous research in terms of theoretical approaches, methodological choices and analytic findings. Any connections to relevant existing ideas, concepts, and terms must therefore be acknowledged. This is done by referring to such sources in the running text (in-text citations) and providing bibliographic information about the sources at the end of the research report (list of references).

Students of English are recommended to use the American Psychological Association (APA) style. Detailed guidelines for the APA style are available in the university library and online at, for example, http://www.apastyle.org/ and https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/.

4.1. In-text citations

When presenting an idea, concept or term developed by another scholar in the body of a course paper or thesis, you should acknowledge the source. In-text citations include the name(s) of the author(s) of an earlier study, the year when it was published and, if available, the number of the page in the publication on which the cited information can be found. Technically, in-text citations are usually either 1) direct quotes from a specific page in the source, 2) paraphrases of a particular passage on a specific page in the source or 3) a general paraphrase describing the entire source study. In-text citations have to occur at the sentence, rather than paragraph, level.

4.2. List of references

For each reference provided in the running text of a course paper or thesis, including both research material and previous research (or primary and secondary sources), bibliographic information must be provided in the list of references. Bibliographic entries usually include at least the name(s) of the author(s), the year of publication, the title of the publication and information about the publisher.

4.3. Reference management tools: RefWorks

Students of English have access to the RefWorks reference management tool (http://libguides.oulu.fi/RW) that supports the preparation of a manuscript according to a particular style and makes it possible to create a list of references automatically. Students who are preparing their master’s theses are encouraged to use RefWorks.
5. Additional notes for thesis writers

Bachelor’s and master’s thesis writers should observe some additional requirements before submitting their thesis for evaluation. Remember to write the abstracts and check current guidelines for submission.

5.1. Abstracts

For a bachelor’s or master’s thesis, provide an abstract both in English and in Finnish or Swedish. An abstract is a brief summary of the thesis: it should be about 300–500 words and provide a clear, comprehensive, and concise overview of the thesis. The abstract should inform your reader about the study, in terms of its

• aims and scope,
• methods and materials,
• findings with illustrative examples,
• and conclusions.

The abstract should work as a stand-alone text. It should summarise all of the important information in your thesis in general terms (hence, avoid jargon and overly technical language as far as possible). As the abstract is the part of your thesis that will inevitably be read the most, you should edit and proofread it carefully. For more detailed instructions, see https://www.oulu.fi/hutk/node/15334.

If asked to include abstracts in the thesis document itself, place them right after the title page, before the table of contents. Do not add numbering to the Abstract heading nor page numbering to the Abstract page(s).

5.2. Submitting your thesis for final evaluation

Once you have finalised your thesis, you need to submit it for final evaluation. Please consult your thesis supervisor and check the University of Oulu website for current guidelines (see Appendix B).
References

The last element in a course paper or thesis, before possible appendices, should be the list of references. Include the heading (References) in the table of contents, without a heading number but with page number(s).
Appendix A. Theses in Jultika

For bachelor’s and master’s theses completed in English or English Philology at the University of Oulu, see Jultika – University of Oulu repository at jultika.oulu.fi.
Appendix B. Submitting thesis for final evaluation

For information about theses and graduation at the University of Oulu and in the unit of English, see

https://www.oulu.fi/opiskelijalle/opinnaytetyo-ja-valmistuminen

https://www.oulu.fi/forstudents/thesis-and-graduation