

Department of Archaeology

NOTES ON THE WRITING AND SUBMISSION OF DISSERTATIONS

These *Notes* cover Dissertation in Archaeology (V63403) and Extended Essay in Archaeology (V63401), and should be read with care by all students taking these modules. Sections 1, 4, 5 and 6 pertain to both modules, section 2 explains the requirements for the 20-credit *Extended Essay in Archaeology* and section 3 the requirements of the 40-credit *Dissertation in Archaeology*. **Your attention is particularly drawn to Section 6 on presentation - it is important.**

2011-2012

1. Availability and Prerequisites

These are final year modules. *Extended Essay in Archaeology* can be taken in the autumn or spring semesters, while *Dissertation in Archaeology* covers both semesters.

2. Requirements for *Extended Essay in Archaeology* (20 credits)

Length: The dissertation should be 7,000 words in length.

Choosing a topic: The module convenor for *IT & Research Methods* (V62300) will supply a list of the potential topics students have selected to the Dissertations Officer, Dr Chris King (Autumn 2011-12) and Dr Jon Henderson (Spring 2011-12) after the Easter break, spring semester. The Dissertations Officer will then assign supervisors to each student, in negotiation with individual members of staff. The list of topics and supervisors (for both *Dissertation in Archaeology* and *Extended Essay in Archaeology*) will be sent to all students via e-mail. Students are strongly encouraged to make an appointment with their assigned supervisor as soon as possible. At least one meeting needs to take place in the semester *before* the module is taken as the topic may shift somewhat in discussion with the supervisor. Note that there is a form (the *Undergraduate Extended Essay Preparation and Supervision Record*) that must be signed by both student and supervisor to show that meetings have taken place beginning in the spring semester of the student's second year (see also section 4.2, below). Copies of this form can be obtained from the Taught Courses Office. This record **will be submitted with the finished extended essay** as a record of preparation and supervision.

Submission dates for Report Forms: The Extended Essay Report Form (see section 4.2, below; copies available from the Departmental Office or Archaeology Student Intranet) should be submitted to the Departmental Office or Archaeology Coursework Box by **Friday 7 October 2011 by 12:00 noon** (if taken during the Autumn Semester) or on **Friday 10 February 2012 by 12:00 noon** (if taken during the Spring Semester).

Two copies of the Extended Essay must be submitted by **12.00 noon** on the second Monday of the Spring Term (**Monday 23 January 2012**) if taken in the Autumn Semester; or by **12.00 noon** on the first Wednesday of the Summer Term (**Wednesday 2 May 2012**) if taken in the Spring Semester.

Please note that **neither of the submitted copies will be returned at the end of the examination period**, so that if you require a copy for your own use you should prepare a third. Late submission will be penalised in accordance with Departmental requirements. Extensions will be granted **ONLY** in exceptional circumstances, and will require the approval of the Head of Department well in advance.

Assessment: The essay will be assessed at the end of semester 1 (if taken in the autumn) or at the end of semester 2 (if taken in the spring). Marks will be assigned paying attention to the following categories: research design, presentation, handling of material, and understanding of the general context of the subject chosen.

3. Requirements for *Dissertation in Archaeology* (40 credits)

Length: This dissertation should be 12,000 – 14,000 words in length.

Choosing a topic: The module convenor for *IT & Research Methods* (V62300) will supply a list of the potential topics students have selected to the Dissertations Officer Dr Chris King (Autumn 2011-12) and Dr Jon Henderson (Spring 2011-12) after the Easter break, spring semester. The Dissertations Officer will then assign supervisors to each student, in negotiation with individual members of staff. The list of topics and supervisors (for both *Dissertation in Archaeology* and *Extended Essay in Archaeology*) will be sent to all students via e-mail. Students are strongly encouraged to make an appointment with their assigned supervisor as soon as possible; the topic may shift somewhat in discussion with the supervisor. Note that there is a form (the *Undergraduate Dissertation Preparation and Supervision Record*) that must be signed by both student and supervisor to show that meetings have taken place beginning in the spring semester of the student's second year (see also section 4.2, below). Copies of this form can be obtained from the Departmental Administrator. This record **will be submitted with the finished dissertation** as a record of preparation and supervision.

Submission date: During the year, Dissertation Report Forms (see section 4.2, below; copies available from the Taught Courses Office or on the Archaeology Student Intranet) should be submitted to the Archaeology Coursework Box; Dissertation Report Form 1 on **Friday 7 October 2011** by **12.00 noon**, and Dissertation Report Form 2 accompanied by a c. 3,000 word extract from your dissertation on **Monday 23 January 2012** by **12.00 noon**.

Two copies of the Dissertation, together with **the original plus one copy** of the Undergraduate Dissertation Preparation and Supervision Record, must be submitted by **12.00 noon** on the first Wednesday of the Summer Term (**Wednesday 2 May 2012**).

Please note that **neither of the submitted dissertation copies will be returned at the end of the examination period**, so that if you require a copy for your own use you should prepare a third. Late submission will be penalised in accordance with Faculty requirements. Extensions will be granted **ONLY** in exceptional circumstances, and will require the approval of the Head of Department well in advance.

Assessment: Credit will be given for successful presentation of the dissertation, and marks will be assigned paying attention to the following categories: research design, presentation quality, handling of the subject material, and appreciation of the relevant background material.

4. Choosing a topic and planning your work

4.1 Choice of topic

The dissertation should explore a subject in greater detail and at greater length than is possible in an essay, and may include original research, but **it is not a draft for a PhD!** Work for a dissertation should not be at the expense of work for your other modules, so keep a balance.

Previous dissertations are held in the Department, and it may prove helpful to look at some of these to obtain some idea of what can be done and (if you pick good ones!) how to do and present a dissertation. For access to past dissertations, apply to the Dissertation Officer.

The subject of the dissertation should lie within the range of the curriculum of the Archaeology Department, although it may be chosen to have relevance to a student's Joint Honours pairing. The subject should be discussed initially with the student's assigned supervisor during the spring semester prior to entry in the module. At least one meeting should take place during the spring semester in order that the student and supervisor agree a provisional title and plan of work over the summer (background reading, fieldwork etc.) (see also section 4.2, below).

Although the dissertation is essentially a piece of independent study, every student will have a supervisor assigned to them by the Dissertations Officer (see sections 2-3, above). It is the **student's responsibility** to make appointments with and to seek help from their supervisor. The supervisor should be kept in touch with progress, and should be requested by students to discuss any problems *as they arise*. Much of the work, including especially field and museum work, may be undertaken during the summer vacation of the preceding year (end of 2nd year).

Choosing a topic should be an active rather than a passive process. Before you select a topic you will need to do some background work; this is, in fact, a required component of *IT & Research Methods* (V62300). Read around, look in the bibliographies, in museums if appropriate, and think. We would much prefer that you come to us having done this basic work, rather than with a very vague idea of a very vague area in which you might be interested. If you are stumped, though, do come and talk to us. Archaeological dissertations can vary enormously in character; the following suggestions are not comprehensive, and are given for guidance only.

- a) Examination of an archaeological technique and its applications (e.g. computer analysis or palaeoichthyolithology).
- b) A review of the current state of knowledge in a particular field (e.g. agricultural, metallurgical or building techniques, relations between particular regions or cultural groups, analysis of layout of sites, theoretical developments).
- c) Study of a single site, building or monument, or of groups of these in a limited area.
- d) Study of the distribution pattern of certain types of artefact (e.g. specific classes of pottery, lithics or metalwork).
- e) Detailed study of a range of artefacts in a museum collection or from a limited area. This kind of project carries some risk: if the subject is not carefully chosen, it may prove to be too insubstantial, or else too ambitious and time-consuming.

If the subject of your study lies outside Nottingham, you need to consider difficulties of access to the material, and you will need to obtain permission to work in Museums or in local private collections: these permissions **must** be gained before you begin any serious work on your project. If any problems about this arise before or during your project, you must inform your supervisor immediately.

4.2 Report Forms and Preparation and Supervision Records

In the case of the 20-credit *Extended Essay* module, you are required to submit an Extended Essay Report Form in mid-October (if taken during the autumn semester) or in mid-February (if taken during the spring semester) - see section 2, above, for due dates. The report form requires you to cover the following areas:

- a description of the topic you wish to research
- an outline of the question which you think you will be able to approach and (hopefully) answer - this is the *problematic* of the research
- a *preliminary* sketch of the materials which you think you will have available, or will wish to use
- a sketch of the methodology you hope to pursue in the investigation
- a rough outline of the sections into which you think the work will fall
- a timetable giving the stages in which you will carry out the work, and when you hope to complete them

You should expect your supervisor to provide practical advice, as you are learning the ropes of research, and to help with bibliographical and other source information. Nevertheless, you should be able to use the basic bibliographical sources yourself using training you received as part of *IT & Research Methods* (V62300).

Signatures from three supervisory meetings (in the spring semester of your second year, in mid-October and prior to submission) are required for the Undergraduate Extended Essay Preparation and Supervision Record, which you must submit with the final essay (see section 2, above).

In the case of the 40-credit module, you are required to submit two Dissertation Report Forms during the year, one in mid-October and one in mid-January (see section 3, above, for due dates). *Dissertation Report Form 1* requires you to cover the following areas:

- a description of the topic you wish to research
- an outline of the question which you think you will be able to approach and (hopefully) answer - this is the *problematic* of the research
- a *preliminary* sketch of the materials which you think you will have available, or will wish to use
- a sketch of the methodology you hope to pursue in the investigation
- a rough outline of the sections into which you think the work will fall
- a timetable giving the stages in which you will carry out the work, and when you hope to complete them

You should expect your supervisor to provide practical advice, as you are learning the ropes of research, and to help with bibliographical and other source information.

Nevertheless, you should be able to use the basic bibliographical sources yourself using training you received as part of *IT & Research Methods* (V62300) and other modules.

In mid-January (see section 3, above, for exact due date), you will submit *Dissertation Report 2*. This should be accompanied by a c. 3,000 word extract from your dissertation, the exact content/topic (e.g. the draft of a whole dissertation chapter, or part of a chapter) to be decided in discussion with your supervisor. The form asks you to:

- outline any changes to the topic and/or methodological approach
- describe any difficulties encountered and how you have addressed them
- present a chapter outline of the dissertation
- present a timetable for completion

Before the Easter vacation, you need to discuss your final work plan with your supervisor. Signatures from this meeting form the fourth component of the Undergraduate Dissertation Preparation and Supervision Record, which you must submit with the final dissertation (see section 3, above).

5. Originality

The dissertation/extended essay is supposed to be your own work. It is, of course, proper for you to have assistance with such work as surveying, and perhaps with some of the mechanical aspects, but original drawings must be your own. Where figures, plates or maps are derived from other sources, they must be properly acknowledged with the source quoted in brackets after the caption of the illustration (eg 'After' (if redrawn) or 'from' (if simply reproduced) *Keynes 1956, 689, Figure 45.*'). The declaration of originality (see Section 6.1) must be included and signed.

You should also list in the acknowledgments whatever help you have received in typing/word-processing the text and in its presentation.

Plagiarism and unacknowledged copying will be treated severely.

6. Presentation

6.1 Formal requirements

The dissertation/extended essay should be presented as if for publication, with the attention to coherence, style, references, bibliography and illustrations that this implies. You are to demonstrate the graphical skills gained from the Portfolio modules, as well as the appropriate intellectual skills, and this is in part what the dissertation is designed to test.

1. Text should be produced on a letter-quality computer printer (or typed) on good quality **A4** paper, with 1½ or double spacing, or its equivalent in amounts of leading.
2. Margins at the binding (i.e. left-hand) edge should not be less than 40mm, and other margins not less than 20mm

3. The **first page** after the front cover should be the *Preparation and Supervision* form, with student/supervisor signatures for the major meetings listed. Put the original in one copy and a copy of the original in the other copy of the dissertation/extended essay.
4. Pages should be numbered consecutively, commencing with the title page, and the numbering should include appendices and bibliography. Page numbers are best placed centrally at the bottom of the page, about 10mm from the lower edge.
5. The title page should follow the form shown on the final page of these *Notes*, including the module number, full approved title of the dissertation and the full names of the author. **Do not forget to include the year of submission**
6. **The page following the title page should bear the following wording, and be signed by the student (see Section 5):**
 - I certify that:**
 - a) **The following dissertation (or extended essay) is my own original work.**
 - b) **The source of all non-original material is clearly indicated.**
 - c) **All material presented by me for other modules is clearly indicated.**
 - d) **All assistance received has been acknowledged.**
7. A Table of Contents should follow the declaration; it lists in sequence, with page numbers, all subdivisions of the text.
8. Tables, plates and figures (including maps) should have distinct sequences of numbering, and each should run continuously through the text. Each illustration must be provided with an appropriate caption. A list of these, with page numbers and in the order given, should follow the Table of Contents.
9. A List of Abbreviations used in the text and in the bibliography should be compiled.
10. Appropriate acknowledgements (see above) should follow the List of Abbreviations as a specific section at the start of the dissertation. This is **obligatory** and should formally acknowledge all help received from supervisors, other members of the department and any external assistance (loan of material etc.). **NB: it is only common politeness to acknowledge adequately such assistance as you receive from others.**
11. The text should be subdivided as appropriate, in a logical manner
12. There should be a specific 'Conclusions' section where the overall scope and outcomes of the research are made explicit and clear; indeed the 'aims' of the dissertation should be briefly stated at the beginning.
13. Appendices should follow the main text
14. A full bibliography, **using the style recommended below**, should be placed at the end
15. Large scale maps and drawings are to be avoided where possible. If you do use them, they may be folded and placed in a stout pocket attached to the inside back cover of the dissertation
16. **If you use a typist make sure that they are is fully aware of these requirements** - this is **your** responsibility!

17. The dissertation should be presented appropriately bound - comb-binding or perfect binding are acceptable - loose-ring binders are generally not. Comb-binding can be done fairly cheaply by the Hallward Library
18. Your name and the title of the dissertation should appear on a panel on the front cover, together with the year of submission. See specimen title page at the end of this document.
19. **Two copies of the dissertation/extended essay should be submitted** which are non-returnable. Should you wish a copy for yourself, you should produce **three** copies.

6.2 Production

There is usually a bottleneck at the final stage, with a limited number of printers being used by all students; in your planning, therefore, allow plenty of time for your masterpiece to be finished - it cannot be done by magic at the last minute. University word-processing facilities are available to students in the ISCRA's and if you do not have access to your own computer or printer you should use them (see the undergraduate handbook for details). It is worthwhile, if you are to proceed in this way, to discuss your needs with a member of staff at the start of your dissertation work, since other software (spreadsheets or databases) may make your work simpler. **Also make sure you allow enough time for binding.**

6.3 Style

The style of writing should be objective, clear, concise and well-argued, and above all, readable.

- a) If you can't spell, use a dictionary or spell-checker (and make sure it has not missed anything!)
- b) Pay attention to grammar and punctuation
- c) Keep sentences short, but not too short, do not be repetitive, and try to keep the language varied
- d) Present your information systematically, and document it accurately (see below on references)
- e) To avoid breaking the continuity of an argument, use appendices for raw data, lists and suchlike
- f) Where necessary use footnotes for subsidiary information. Although the use of footnotes is useful for some historical and epigraphic material, in general they should be kept to a minimum
- g) Simple bibliographical references should be given in the text, using the Harvard system, as detailed below.

6.4 Illustrations

Illustrations should be an integral part of the work, and their production should be taken into account in your initial planning. Think from the outset what contribution illustrations can best make, and then consider the best form they can take. They should occur at the appropriate place in the text wherever possible. For advice in this area, ask David Taylor.

- a) Where original maps and drawings have to be made it is essential to allow adequate time to execute them
- b) Make sure the size of the drawings will be suitable, and remember that it is always better to prepare a large original and then reduce it to page size than to prepare a page-sized original. Remember to leave a 40mm binding margin at the left-hand edge!
- c) If you use fold-outs (i.e. A3 folded in half), you must leave some space at the extreme **right-hand edge** of the A3 sheet, which is then cut off, or your fold-out will be firmly bound at both ends. If this is obscure, think about it
- d) As noted above, scanned illustrations may be used (with acknowledgement of source), but make sure they relate properly to your text: someone else's plan may well omit the very detail you are referring to, or show it poorly. Redrawn (or scanned and manipulated) illustrations based on someone else's must be acknowledged (see above)
- e) Black-and-white or colour photographs of suitable quality may be included, but make sure that they show what you wish them to, and are necessary: they may be expensive, and sometimes a good drawing will be better.
- f) Photographic prints should be on single weight paper or firmly mounted on cartridge paper. Scanned photographs are sometimes easier to include, but you are advised to check on quality: if the scanner has poor resolution the final result can be very disappointing. The new technology does not always represent a step forward, and you may prefer to opt for prints on photographic paper even if the latter are more expensive.
- g) Make sure that each illustration is numbered and provided with a caption. The caption should normally be at the bottom, but where the illustration is bound sideways, the top should be to the left and the caption should run along the right-hand edge
- h) All lettering on illustrations should be neat and legible. Use of Letraset or other transfer lettering is advisable, or of computer-generated letter-quality text, unless you are a calligrapher, but do learn to use transfer lettering properly. Captions may, of course, be typed
- i) If you do use a flat-bed scanner, be warned: image files can often take up considerable disk space. Use JPEG format if possible – this takes less space than, say BMP or TIFF files.

6.5 References in the text

References must be provided to document your text. Do not simply lift sections of text and hope we will not notice: this is plagiarism and is an academic offence. Use the Harvard system. As far as this affects the Bibliography at the end of the dissertation, see section 7. Here we are concerned merely with the giving of references **in the text**. The required information is:

- a) Author
- b) Date (with the addition of a letter where there is more than one publication by the author in that year listed in your bibliography)
- c) Page number(s)

Omit the page number if the reference is to the source generally.

Thus a reference may be given within the sentence

- 'It has been stated by Schmuck (1986a: 102–103) that

or at the end of the sentence or section

- '.... It can be seen, then, that Piltdown Man is genuine (Schmuck 1986a: 102–103).'

If necessary, more than one reference may be included within the brackets in the last example. Two or more works by the same author in the same year are distinguished, as above, by lower case letters after the year. Two or more authors with the same surname are distinguished by initials. **Make sure that there is an entry in your bibliography for every source referred to in the text!** In this context, if you have a computer-based bibliography, copy references to a separate file as you use them.

6.6 Noting the bibliography

While you are collecting material for your dissertation/extended essay, you should note accurately the sources of information used. This is often conveniently done using a reference management programme.

The basic information you will need to note for books is:

Author, initials, Date. *Title of work* (italic). (Number of volumes, if appropriate).
Place of publication: Publisher. Any notes you want to add, including page numbers of relevant sections.

For an article in a journal or multi-author book:

Author, initials, Date. 'Title' (between single quotes), *Journal* (italic), volume no, inclusive pages.
(for a book: in Initial, Editor Name (ed) *Title* (italic), inclusive pages. Place of publication: Publisher). Any notes you want to add including page numbers of relevant sections.

For sources with no author, e.g. Royal Commission *Inventories* or the *Victoria County Histories*, use a suitable abbreviation in place of the author's name, here 'RCHM' and 'VCH + county name', respectively. For archival documents without author use either an abbreviation of the title, or, use an abbreviation for the archive which holds the document plus its accession number, thus APS = Acts of the Parliaments of Scotland, NLS 3201 = National Library of Scotland, MS 3201. Vary the system to suit your needs!

If in doubt, either do the best you can, or ask someone. If you prefer just to keep a running list of sources, follow the conventions given below for the final Bibliography, to make sure that you don't miss out anything vital ...

6.7 How to present the bibliography: model entries

- a) In all cases, where an author has produced more than one work in the same year, these should be distinguished by lower case letters, eg Smellie, W 1779a; Smellie, W 1779b
- b) In all cases, what is given in italics below should either appear in *italics* in your bibliography if you are using a computer printer which can handle them, or **should be underlined** if your text is being typed.

Books:

Anquandah, J., 1982. *Rediscovering Ghana's past*. London: Longman.
Wertime, T. A. & J. D. Muhly (eds), 1980. *The Coming of the Age of Iron*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

If the book forms part of a series:

Fitzhugh, W., 1972. *Environmental Archaeology and Cultural Systems in Hamilton Inlet, Labrador*. [Smithsonian Contributions to Anthropology, 16.] Washington (DC): Smithsonian Institution Press.

[Treat British Archaeological Reports like this.]

Articles:

Barich, B., 1974. 'La serie stratigraphica dell' uadi Ti-n-Torha', *Origini* 8: 7-182.

Kutzbach, J-F. & F. L. Otto-Bliesner, 1982 'The sensitivity of the African-Asian monsoonal climate to orbital parameter changes for 9000 years BP', *Journal of Atmospheric Sciences* 39, 1177-1188.

If the article forms part of a multi-author work:

Austen, R. A., 1979. 'The trans-Saharan slave trade: a tentative census', in H. F. Gemery & J. S. Hogendorn (eds) *The Uncommon Market*: 23-76. New York: Academic Press.

Unpublished theses, etc (Titles are NOT underlined or in italics):

Vaughan, P., 1981 Lithic microwear experimentation and functional analysis of a Lower Magdalenian stone assemblage. Unpublished PhD dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia.

Published document or inscription collection where 'author' listing is undesirable:

ERS *The Exchequer Rolls of Scotland*. Stuart, J et al (eds), 1878-1908. Edinburgh: Constable.

Manuscript sources:

It is recommended than these be placed in a separate section of the Bibliography, headed as above.

Notice of repairs 1746 Urquhart of Craigston Papers. Craigston Castle.
Aiken, D., 1764 Survey of the Cromarty Estate 1764. Scottish Record Office, Edinburgh, SRO 2309.
RHP 10795 Plan of Bogriffie, Nielsbrae, and other possessions on the lands of Fintray. 1822. Scottish Record Office, Edinburgh.

Electronic sources

Szabo, N. 2005. 'An explanation of the Kula ring.'
<http://szabo.best.vwh.net/kula.html> [Date accessed: 2 Sept. 2010]

For further examples, see the 'notes for authors' published in various journals. Most helpful are those in *Archaeological Journal* 142 (1985), xiii-xvi, and in the *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland* 110 (1978-80), 566-574. Use appropriate abbreviations for journal titles - examples will be found in all major British periodicals, and the lists at the start of *British Archaeological Abstracts*, and the advice given in the CBA's *Signposts for archaeological publication* (which merits general attention), are invaluable. Give a list of bibliographic and other abbreviations at the beginning of your dissertation, after the List of Contents. **Always pay attention to punctuation and capitalization, and make sure it is uniform.** One standard has been used here - there are others. Be sure to be consistent. We have a tendency to check references at random to ensure accuracy, so be accurate!

UNIVERSITY OF NOTTINGHAM

Department of Archaeology

'A Study of Very Tiny Objects from an Archaeological Site'

by

Glyb Denial

Module V63403 (*or V63401*)

Dissertation presented for BA Hons in Archaeology, May 2011