Preparation of material to high standards of accuracy (roughly those expected of a manuscript submitted to a publisher) is an essential academic skill. The Department of History and Welsh History therefore requires that assessed coursework is presented neatly and according to acceptable scholarly standards in terms of both layout and referencing. Referencing practice varies from area to area within the discipline, but we will expect you to use the format outlined here in all assessed work, including essays, projects and dissertations.

I: PRESENTATION OF THE MAIN TEXT

All assessed coursework should be presented in A4 page layout, either double spaced or 1.5 spacing, with margins of at least 2.54 cm/1 inch on all sides.

Each page of the typescript should be numbered.

For essays, the essay title should be underlined or presented in bold type. Neither your name nor student number should appear on any page of your essay. For dissertations you should provide a cover page that details your name and the dissertation title.

Indent the first line of a new paragraph consistently, except immediately after a sub-heading, when the paragraph should start flush with the left-hand margin. There is no need for extra space between paragraphs. Avoid too many short paragraphs, as well as over-long paragraphs.

Footnotes should be numbered consecutively (1, 2, 3, etc, not i, ii, iii…) and presented either as endnotes at the end of the essay or as footnotes at the bottom of each page.

Use UK English spelling and punctuation and refer to the Concise Oxford Dictionary if in any doubt. Use ‘z’ rather than ‘s’ in such words as ‘organize’, where there is a choice. However, when quoting material from another source always use the original spelling.

II: PRESENTATION OF THE BIBLIOGRAPHY

Unless otherwise stated, all assessed coursework should include a bibliography of works consulted at the end of the main text.

Sub-divisions of the bibliography

If you have used both primary sources and secondary sources in your work, you should divide the bibliography into sections:

1. Primary sources (including manuscript sources and published printed sources such as parliamentary papers, printed collections of manuscripts, newspapers, contemporary published material, etc)
2. Secondary literature (books, articles, theses).
3. A third section for website-derived material may also be included.

Many essays will be based on secondary literature alone. In such cases no sub-division of the bibliography is required.

1. Primary sources

NB: this section is most likely to be relevant to Year 3 Dissertation students.

Bibliographical reference to manuscript sources (ie unpublished sources) should list the following:

i. name of manuscript collection
ii. name and location of archive repository,

You may also give brief further details, for instance, the reference numbers of files consulted, or an indicative range of dates. However, do not list individual documents. Manuscript primary sources should be presented in plain text.

The titles of published sources (for instance newspapers, journals, or books) that you are treating as primary sources should be presented in italics.
Examples:

CAB and FCO files, The National Archives: Public Record Office, Kew

School log books 1939-45, Ceredigion Museum, Aberystwyth

Daily Mirror; February-August 1910, National Library of Wales.

J.A. Hobson, Imperialism: A Study (London, 1902)

2. Secondary literature

Secondary literature can be presented in a single alphabetically arranged list or be subdivided into one or more of the following categories: books, articles, chapters in edited collections, theses.

When presenting books in the bibliography of secondary literature, use the following basic layout model.

i. author's name (surname first, followed by first name or initials)
ii. full title of work (italicised)
iii. place and date of publication.

Layout for articles in journals follows the same basic rules, but with a few additions:

i. name of author of article (surname, first name or initials)
ii. article title (plain text, in single quotation marks)
iii. title of journal (in italics)
iv. volume number of journal (in Arabic or roman numerals)
v. year of publication (in brackets) (place of publication NOT required for articles)
vi. full page reference for article

Layout for chapters in edited collections* again follows the same basic rules, as follows:

i. name of author of chapter (surname, first name or initials)
ii. chapter title (plain text, in single quotation marks)
iii. editor name(s) (surname, first name or intials)
iv. title of edited collection (in italics)
v. place and year of publication
vi. full page reference for chapter

*Nb., if you are listing more than one chapter from the same edited collection in your bibliography it is best practice to list the edited collection only, not the separate chapters.

Please pay particular attention to punctuation. Author name and title of work should always be followed by full stops not commas.

Book and journal titles should be italicised (to denote ‘published works’), and should be capitalized throughout. The titles of articles in journals, the titles of chapters in edited collections, and the titles of unpublished theses should not be italicised but should be presented in plain text, in single quotation marks. Article, chapter or thesis titles should not be capitalized.

Using a hanging indent can improve the appearance of the bibliography but is not essential.

Examples:

Books (single author, or edited collection with single editor)


Books (multiple authors or edited)


Articles in journals

Chapters in edited collections


Theses

Unpublished theses are presented in the same way as books, but since theses are unpublished the title is enclosed in quotation marks and is not italicized, and instead of publication details, list the degree, the awarding university, and the date.

Example:

3. Websites

For website references in the bibliography, list the title of the website, the url of the website home page and the date you accessed the website.

Example:

III: PRESENTATION OF FOOTNOTES

The purpose of the footnote is to provide the reader or examiner with the information necessary to judge the reliability and comprehensiveness of your evidence and (should they wish) to find the referenced source for themselves.

Footnotes should be used in the following cases:

• All assertions and information crucial to your argument should be footnoted.
• Direct quotation from primary source or secondary authority needs a footnote
• Paraphrase amounting to virtual quotation needs a footnote

The reference given should be unambiguous, but should be brief and avoid repetition.

Reference notes can be placed at the foot of the page (‘footnotes’), or at the end of the essay ('endnotes'). Footnotes rather than endnotes are greatly preferred and are recommended as best practice.

Footnotes should be single-spaced, with a double or a one-and-half space between each note. Use Arabic numerals (1, 2, 3, 4) not Roman numerals (i, ii, iii, iv).

The footnote reference number should usually appear at the end of the sentence in the text to which it refers.

1. Footnoting primary source material

References from original material should give as much indication of the nature of the material used as necessary. Consult with your supervisor if you are unsure how to reference your primary sources. However, the following general rules apply.

Manuscript references should list the following information, preferably in this order:

i. document details (including date).
ii. file reference
iii. name of manuscript collection (where appropriate),
iv. name and location of archive repository,

Example:
Home Intelligence Report, 16-23 July 1941, INF1/292, The National Archives: Public Record Office, Kew

The first reference to the manuscript collection and/or archive repository should be in full. Subsequent references should where possible use a short form, which should be indicated in the first reference. Please check with the archive repository to see if they have a preferred short form of reference.

Examples:
The National Archives: Public Record Office, Kew (hereafter TNA: PRO).
House of Lords Record Office, London (hereafter, HLRO)
Modern Records Centre, University of Warwick (hereafter MRC)
Newspaper references should give the newspaper title (italicized), date, and page number if available. In some cases (for instance when citing an article with a significant title and/or a named author) it may be appropriate to include the author name and/or article title (in single quotation marks).

Examples:

Daily Mirror, 5 November 1910, p.6
Hannen Swaffer, ‘Something Hitler Can’t Blitz’, Daily Herald, 5 November 1942, p.2

Parliamentary debates (sometimes referred to as Hansard):

For House of Commons debates use the abbreviation HC Deb, followed by volume number, date, column number(s) (using abbreviation cc.). For House of Lords debates use the abbreviation HL Deb, vol no, date, col.no.

Example:

HC Deb, 163, 8 May 1923, cc. 2166-9

2. Footnoting secondary literature

When you first refer to an item in a footnote, provide the full reference as in the bibliography but in a slightly different order, and with commas rather than full stops in between, as follows:

i. Author name (first name or initial first, then surname)
ii. full title
iii. place and date of publication (in brackets)
iv. page number(s) (use p. to reference a single page; pp. to reference a range of pages)

Capitalization rules are the same as for the bibliographical references, that is, capitalize book or journal titles but not the titles of the individual journal articles or book chapters.

On the second and every succeeding reference to the same item, use a short title: surname, short version of the article or book title, and page number.

Examples:

Books

Short title:
4. Thomas, Religion and Magic, pp. 106-120,

Articles

Short title:

Articles in Collections

Short title:

c. Footnoting websites

Give a full document description including date, the url of the webpage on which the document appears, and the date it was accessed.

Example:

The use of Latin abbreviations (ibid, passim, op. cit., etc.) in footnotes is increasingly rare, and we no longer recommend their extensive use, though the use of ibid. to shorten a footnote that comes after a note with the same material is acceptable.

IV: MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS

1. Quotations
Quotations should be set in single quotation marks (‘   ’) if in the main text, with double quotation marks (“   ”) reserved only for a quotation within a quotation. (nb., This is English practice; American practice is the other way round).

Short quotations should be incorporated into the main text. Long quotations (over three or four lines long) should be indented and separated from the main text by a space above and below. They should be single-spaced, and should not be set within quotation marks.

If you omit text from a quotation, you must mark the omission with an ellipse (three spaced dots: . . .). If the omission comes at the end of a sentence, use four dots.

Where you quote a passage that begins in the middle of a sentence in the original, you may wish to begin the quotation with an ellipse. If you are using a quotation to begin a sentence but the quotation itself did not begin a sentence, do not just introduce a capital letter into the original: instead use square brackets ‘[T]he.’

2. Italics
Italicise titles of all published materials (books, newspapers, journals and pamphlets, etc), also films, plays, TV or radio programmes, also names of ships.

Words in foreign languages should be italicised except where they have passed into ordinary English usage (most manuals provide a list of these). Foreign place-names and personal names are not italicised.

You may also use italics for emphasis within your own prose.

3. Capitalization
The modern tendency is to capitalize as little as possible. We recommend you use capital letters sparingly and for the specific rather than the general.

Thus, for instance, use ‘the king’, but ‘King George V’; ‘the Church’ (if the institution); but ‘the government’.

Offices of state should be capitalized (‘the Prime Minister’), as should government ministries (‘Ministry of Defence’).

Political parties take capitals (‘the Labour Party’), but political movements do not (‘the labour movement’, ‘liberalism’, ‘communism’, ‘capitalism’, etc.).

Book, journal and newspaper titles should be capitalized throughout.

4. Numbers and dates
All numbers up to one hundred and all higher numbers that can be expressed in two words (eg two thousand) should be written out in full; otherwise use figures. However, where a sentence or group of sentences contain a large number of numbers below and above one hundred, it is common sense to use figures instead.

References to volume, chapter or page numbers, to dates and years, or to percentages, are given in figures.

Where a sentence starts with a number, it should always be spelled out in full.

Dates should appear as follows: 8 November 1945. In footnotes use the name of the month, not the number (though you may abbreviate the name of the month: 8 Nov 1945).

The century number should be spelled out in full: the twentieth century, not the 20th century
Decades should be presented as follows: the 1930s, not the 1930’s or the Thirties.

Use an oblique stroke for a year, such as a financial or academic year, that covers more than one calendar year: 1998/9; the years 1995/6-1997/8.

Write ‘from 1924 to 1928’ or ‘in the period 1924-28’, not ‘from 1924-8’; write ‘between 1924 and 1928’ not ‘between
5. Acronyms and abbreviations

An acronym is an abbreviation usually made by using the initials of a longer series of words (e.g., BBC for British Broadcasting Corporation).

The first time you use an acronym you should introduce it in full. Then use the acronym thereafter. Do not use full stops between initials (BBC not B.B.C.)

Example:
The United Nations Human Rights Commission (UNHRC) considered the allegations against the Chinese government.

A few acronyms are so commonplace that they can be used without spelling out their long form. For instance, USA, USSR.

V: FURTHER READING:

1. Research Guides

(These usually contain a section on writing and presentation)

2. Guides to Presentation and Layout


3. Guides to Writing Style

There is a great range of style manuals addressed to very different audiences. Something can be gained from almost any of them. Two examples of the genre are:
Despite its title this book contains a wealth of advice on good writing.