



Information Sheet for Long Essays and Dissertations

All Undergraduate long essays and dissertations are to follow the norms detailed in this information sheet.

1. LENGTH

BTheatre (Hons) Long Essay

5,000 words, excluding Notes, Bibliography, and Appendices.

BA (Hons)

9,000 words, excluding Notes, Bibliography, and Appendices.

2. TEXT CONVENTIONS & REFERENCING SYSTEM

Theatre Studies follows the [MHRA Style Guide 4th edition \(pdf version\)](#) for text conventions, referencing as per the 'The Author–Date System' (see MHRA Section §7.13, [online here](#)) with its Bibliography (see §8.4, [online here](#)), and all other format matters. **Students should in the first instance refer to the 'SPA Text Conventions and Referencing'**. Students are urged to familiarise themselves with this style early in the course and to adopt it when writing essays and other assignments.

3. PRELIMS

The following order should be followed:

- i. Title-page: use the 'Title Page Template for UG Dissertations' available [here](#).
- ii. Abstract
- iii. Dedication (if any)
- iv. Acknowledgements (if any)
- v. Table of Contents
- vi. List of illustrations/maps/tables/graphs/etc.

4. SUBMISSION OF BTheatre (HONS) LONG ESSAY and BA (HONS) DISSERTATION FOR EXAMINATION

Students will submit their long essay OR dissertation as an electronic copy via VLE by **the working day closest to 15 May of the final year**. After the examination, students will submit the final version in electronic format via email to the departmental secretary. Students need to also submit a signed declaration of authenticity. The signed declaration of authenticity will not be part of the dissertation but will be submitted as a separate document.

5. PRACTICALITIES

(a) During the second year, students' attention will be drawn to guidelines regarding possible themes/topics for their long essay OR dissertation. Students will then submit a short

proposal including a tentative title (see 'Further Guidelines' below). The department reserves the right to the final decision on the matter. Supervisors and research topics cannot be changed without the department's permission.

(b) Students are to consult their supervisor regularly. No consultation with the supervisor is to be sought after 1 May of the third year, that is, two weeks prior to the deadline for submission.

(c) The supervisor is expected to read and make remarks on each section of the long essay OR each chapter of the dissertation, once only, following which it is the student's responsibility to make the suggested changes and corrections. Towards the end, the student may submit to the supervisor the whole draft in time for the latter to give their final advice before 1 May.

(d) The supervisor's role is to guide and coach the student in research, methodology, and other skills, as well as to discuss content and interpretation, but it is not their role to proof-read the document or correct errors of grammar or syntax.

(e) Students will complete a Supervision Report Sheet (obtainable [online](#)) within forty-eight hours of each meeting.

(f) Meetings may be replaced by other means of communication (e.g. email, zoom). Students are encouraged to make the most of their communication time with supervisors, to be prepared, and to stick with any deadlines and tasks that have been agreed. Students should inform their supervisor of any problems that might potentially impact negatively their progress.

(g) It is the student's responsibility to be aware of the implications of plagiarism and of the University's policy on the matter. See the '[University Guidelines on Plagiarism and Collusion Guidelines](#)'. See also '[FAQs on the Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence Tools](#)'.

(h) Although registration for the long essay OR dissertation study-unit is done in the third year, students are strongly advised to start work on it as early as possible, and to take advantage of the summer recess following their second year of studies.

Further Guidelines for BTheatre (Hons) and BA (Hons) Students

YEAR TWO

March/April

By a date announced by the department, you will submit the following information in the Google Form on the [Theatre Studies Resources](#) page:

- (1) Tentative long essay OR dissertation title.
- (2) Summary of proposed topic, to include:
 - (i) hypothesis, i.e. '*what*' you will be focusing upon (be as clear as possible),
 - (ii) '*how*' you will discuss your hypothesis (including the relevant bibliographical, historical, theoretical/philosophic detail).

The above should be presented in the form of a single paragraph, not divided into sections or in point form. Length 250–300 words.

The department reserves the right to the final decision on both research topic and supervisor. Following the submission of your proposal you will be assigned a supervisor. You will then meet your supervisor to plan the way forward.

May

By the first week of May or as otherwise indicated, you will submit the following information to your supervisor:

- (1) Updated title, updated proposal, and updated bibliography.
- (2) Tentative structure, including provisional descriptions of each section (for long essays) OR chapter (for dissertations).

You will meet your supervisor to discuss this material and to prepare for the next task, which involves:

- (1) Definitive title for the long essay OR dissertation.
- (2) Definitive section structure for the long essay OR definitive chapter structure (with titles and a summary of each chapter) for the dissertation. You should aim to have five to six sections OR chapters (inclusive of Introduction and Conclusion). Ensure that the stipulated length is respected.

You should now be able to start individual work on your long essay OR dissertation. Ideally, you would have already started the writing process.

Summer

Personal work on the long essay OR dissertation, including:

- (1) research/reading,
- (2) writing according to your chapter structure.

Note: Although it is possible to anticipate deadlines, your supervisor will not be able to read chapters in July and August.

YEAR THREE

Semester 1

October

At the beginning of your third year, you will hand in at least one long essay section OR dissertation chapter. You are reminded to pay close attention to the departmental text conventions indicated above.

Semester 1 – Semester 2

During this period you are expected to work regularly on your long essay OR dissertation in consultation with your supervisor. It is essential that you stick with deadlines and tasks you have agreed with your supervisor.

Semester 2

May

You will submit your long essay or dissertation by the working day closest to 15 May as per the indications above.