



Writing a Proposal for Long Essays and Dissertations

This document will help you write a proposal for your undergraduate long essay or dissertation. The proposal is to be formatted according to the '[SPA Referencing and Text Conventions Sheet](#)' and submitted on the '[Long Essay and Dissertation Proposal Form - Undergraduate](#)'. For more details refer to the '[THS Information Sheet for Long Essays and Dissertations](#)'. Your proposal should be about 500 words long. It should include:

Personal details

- At the top of the proposal include: Name, Surname, I.D. Card Number, Course – e.g. B.Theatre (Hons) or B.A. (Hons).

Tentative Title

- The title should be short, direct, and to the point. After drafting a title, check if there are any superfluous words that can be omitted.
- The title is to clarify your area of research. Therefore, it should include clear terms.
- The following are examples of good titles: 'Enlightening the Senses: Audience Experience in Immersive and Sensorial Theatre'; AND: 'The Stanislavsky/Grotowski Connection: Training and Performance'.
- Do not articulate your title in the form of a question.

Proposal Content

- The first sentence should encapsulate the main aim or objective behind your proposal. What are you trying to achieve?
- For example: 'The dissertation will explore Stella Adler's methodology on characterisation in actor training, with particular emphasis on the role of the playwright and text.' OR: 'In this dissertation overarching characteristics within modern theatre will be defined through the theories and practices of Max Reinhardt and Bertolt Brecht.'
- You might wish to think of this opening sentence as a hypothesis, i.e. something that you are trying to prove, articulate, demonstrate, etc.
- Be prepared to revise this sentence a number of times. It is a key sentence, which means it is normal to go through different variations.
- Expand more on this first statement and the theatre reality, practice, practitioner, etc. contained within. This is where you give more detail. Why is this research topic worth pursuing? What are the key points? Is an initial definition required? Is a brief historical contextualisation necessary?

- The proposal should also include a brief methodology. In essence, this relates to the question 'How?', as in 'How will I achieve my objective?'
- Methodologies can take various forms, depending on the project. You might wish to include, for example: key productions or examples; important sources; theoretical frames; use of interviews, observation of performances, etc.
- Indicate number of chapters and their contents. These will certainly change and, at this stage, chapter summaries will necessarily be very short, even telegraphic. They will, however, indicate a progression in the dissertation.
- Your last sentence might include a statement about the expected results. At this early stage, what do you think will emerge from your research?

Bibliography

- Include a bibliography of relevant sources. Suggested number: 15–20.