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**Faculty of Letters and Languages**  
**Department of English Letters and Language**  
<https://fll.univ-adrar.dz/dept-en/>



**GUIDE TO MASTER'S  
THESIS/DISSERTATION FORMAT**

**(Version 1)**

# Contents

<b>I. General Guidelines</b>	1
1. Paper Size	1
2. Margin Issues	1
3. Page Number	1
4. Font	2
5. Character Size	2
6. Spacing & Indentation Issues	2
7. Structuring Tables and Figures	2
8. Footnotes & Endnotes	2
9. Chapters and Sections	3
10. Page Header	3
<b>II. Structuring the Main Parts of the Thesis/Dissertation</b>	4
1. The Opening	4
2. The Body	4
3. The End	4
<b>III. Format Guidelines for the Different of the Thesis/Dissertation</b>	7
1. Dedication	7
2. Acknowledgements	7
3. Abstract	7
4. Table of Contents	8
5. Lists of Tables and Figures	9
6. Lists of Abbreviations and Acronyms	10
7. General Introduction	10
8. Literature Review	11
9. General Conclusion	11
10. Formatting the List of References	12
11. Writing the List of Appendices	15

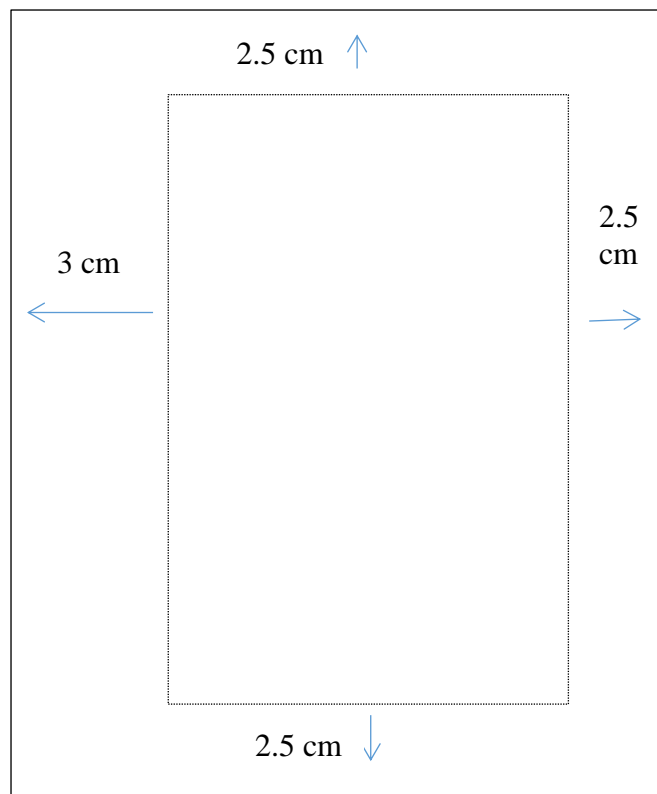
# I. General Guidelines

## 1. Paper Size

It should be A 4-size paper for the whole text of the thesis/dissertation. The text should also appear on one side of the paper.

## 2. Margin Issues

The left-hand edge of the paper should be 3cm for printing issues, while it is 2.5cm for all sides as figure1 shows:



## 3. Page Number

Page number (in TNR 12) should appear at the center of the page bottom. The first part of the thesis/dissertation\* should be numbered using Roman numerals (i, ii, iii, iv, etc.) including dedication, acknowledgements, abstract, table of contents, list of abbreviations,

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\* In the USA, a thesis is shorter than a dissertation and is performed to earn a Master's Degree while a dissertation is for a PhD. In Europe (including Britain), it is the opposite. So, both terms are correct depending on what variety of English you use to write your research paper.

list of acronyms, list of figures, list of maps, and list of tables. General introduction, chapters, general conclusion and appendices should be numbered using Arabic numerals.

#### **4. Font**

It is preferred to employ Times New Roman (TNR) for all the text.

#### **5. Character Size**

- Headings and sub-headings should be written in size 14 (i.e. **TNR 14**, bold).
- The text should be written in size 12 (i.e. TNR 12), including quotes and headings/titles of tables, maps, figures, etc.
- Footnotes/ endnotes and sources of tables, maps, figures, etc. should be 2 points different from the size of the whole text (i.e. TNR 10).

#### **6. Spacing & Indentation Issues**

- All the text should be double spaced except for block quotes, they should be single-spaced.
- Paragraphs should be indented 1 cm.
- All the text should be justified (i.e. left and right).

#### **7. Structuring Tables and Figures**

Placement of the headings depends on the style adopted for thesis/dissertation writing (see how to structure tables and figures according to APA and MLA guidelines).

#### **8. Footnotes & Endnotes**

- In MLA style, the footnotes (not for referencing) are put at the bottom of the page separated from the text with a line of 5 cm long. Their size is 10 points.
- In APA style, the footnotes are avoided and replaced with endnotes by the end of each chapter of the thesis/dissertation.
- Numbering both footnotes and endnotes should be in Arabic numerals.

## 9. Chapters and Sections

- Chapters should be accompanied by a number either in Arabic or Roman numerals. The chosen form should be used consistently (i.e. same form all along the thesis/dissertation):

**e.g.:**            **Chapter One,**  
                      **or Chapter 1,**  
                      **or Chapter I**

- Headings should be numbered according to their chapters

**e.g.:**

- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Literature and Society

- Sub-headings should be indented in comparison to headings

**e.g.:**

- 1.2 Literature and Society
  - 1.2.1 Literature

## 10. Page Header

General introduction, chapters and general conclusion should contain a page header.

For chapters, the header chapter should be put in the left side while the second part of the header is put on the right side.

**e.g.:**

**Chapter One:** **Literature Review**

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**Figure 2. Header for chapter one (Taken from a student's thesis/dissertation)**

## II. Structuring the Main Parts of the Thesis/Dissertation

A thesis/dissertation should contain three main parts:

- The opening
- The body
- The end

### 1. The Opening: it contains

- Front page
- Dedication
- Acknowledgements
- Abstract (with keywords)
- Table of Contents
- List of Abbreviations (if any)
- List of Acronyms (if any)
- List of Figures (if any)
- List of Maps (if any)
- List of Tables (if any)
- List of Appendices (if any)
- General Introduction

### 2. The Body: it contains

- First chapter: A literature review
- Second chapter: research methodology and design (research tools)
- Third chapter: results (analysis, interpretation, recommendations and implications)

**NB:** The organization of the body depends on the field of research, the subject being explored, and the supervisor.

### 3. The End: it contains

- General conclusion
- Works cited in MLA guidelines and References in APA style

- Appendices
- A cover page containing a summary in three languages (Arabic, French & English) with their keywords.

The following figure provides a sample of a final thesis/dissertation front page for Master's students (both specialties). The sample front page is available on department webpage and other spot to be announced by Head of Department:

**AHMED DRAIA UNIVERSITY – ADRAR**  
**FACULTY OF LETTERS AND LANGUAGES**  
**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LETTERS AND LANGUAGE**



Title

**Thesis/Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment (US sp.)/Fulfilment (UK sp.) of  
the Requirements for a Master's Degree in Didactics/ Literature and Civilization**

**Presented by:**

First name last name (with no titles)

**Supervised by:**

Prof./ Dr./ Mr./ Mrs./ Miss/ Ms.

**Board of Examiners**

- Prof./ Dr./ Mr./ Mrs./ Miss/ Ms.

Chairperson

- Prof./ Dr./ Mr./ Mrs./ Miss/ Ms.

Supervisor and Rapporteur

- Prof./ Dr./ Mr./ Mrs./ Miss/ Ms.

Examiner

**Academic Year: 20.. – 20..**



### III. Format Guidelines for the Different Parts of the Thesis/Dissertation

**1. Dedication:** it is optional (for family and relatives)

**2. Acknowledgements:** it is also optional. It is a dedication for an academic purpose. It contains the following:

- Supervisor
- Members of the committee
- Your teachers
- Librarians
- Colleagues
- Parents (if they help you from an academic purpose)
- Friends (if they help you from an academic purpose)

### 3. Abstract

The abstract is written in one non-indented paragraph (structured abstract). It should not exceed 350 words depending on the length of the work (between 250 and 350 words). It should be justified on both sides (left and right), written in TNR 12, and double-spaced. When it comes to its structure, it should contain the following features:

- Background
- The focus
- Sampling
- Research tools
- Summation of the findings
- Recommended points

For the field of '**didactics and linguistics**', students are required to write an informative abstract containing the above features. For the field of '**literature and civilization**', students need to write a descriptive abstract containing the following points:

- Background/context
- The focus
- Sampling (if any)

- Research tools
- Summation of the findings

#### **4. Table of Contents:**

It contains all the headings and sub-headings found in the whole thesis/dissertation (i.e., the three parts of the thesis/dissertation) as figure 3 shows:

**NB:** The heading ‘table of contents’ should be written in bold and centered.

### **Table of Contents**

<b>Dedication</b>	II
<b>Acknowledgements</b>	III
<b>Abstract</b>	IV
<b>Table of Contents</b>	V
<b>List of Abbreviations</b>	X
<b>List of Figures</b>	XI
<b>List of Maps</b>	XII
<b>List of Tables</b>	XIII
<b>General Introduction</b>	1
<b>Chapter One: Title of Chapter One</b>	
<b>1.1 Introduction</b>	7
<b>1.2 Subtopic</b>	7
1.2.1 Subtitle	8

1.2.2	Subtitle	9
<b>1.3</b>	<b>Subtopic</b>	11
<b>1.4</b>	<b>Subtopic</b>	12
1.4.1	Subtitle	13
1.4.2	Subtitle	13
<b>1.5</b>	<b>Subtopic</b>	13
1.5.1	Subtitle	14
1.5.2	Subtitle	18
1.5.2.1	Detail	18
1.5.2.2	Detail	20

*Figure.4. A sample for the table of contents (Adapted from a student’s Master thesis/dissertation)*

**NB:** For the field of ‘**literature and civilization**’, there is no need to include the number of the chapter before each entry (i.e. before titles and subtitles).

## 5. Lists of Tables and Figures

They should be put on separate pages following the number of their chapters. The headings should be accompanied by a page number, as shown in the following example:

### List of Tables

<b>Table</b>	<b>page</b>
3.1 First Table/Figure Title	54
3.2 Second Table/Figure Title	55
3.3 Third Table/Figure Title	56
3.4 Fourth Table/Figure Title	56

*Figure.5. A sample for the list of tables according to APA guidelines (Adapted from a student’s Master thesis/dissertation)*

**NB:** For the field of ‘**literature and civilization**’, figures, maps, tables, etc. are given numbers as follows:

**Table 1:** Title of Table 15

**Table 2:** Title of Table 32

... and so on. Same format should be adopted for figures, maps, etc.

## 6. Lists of Abbreviations and Acronyms

- They should be put on separate pages and contain the keywords used in the text.
- Concerning the abbreviated forms, they should be defined in the text.
- When the abbreviation or the acronym is used for the first time in the text, it should be put between brackets.

Figure 6 gives an overview of how to structure the list of abbreviations:

### List of Abbreviations

CALL	Computer-Assisted Language Learning
DOI	Diffusion of Innovation
ELT	English Language Teaching
ESL	English as a Second Language
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IT	Information Technology
IWB	Interactive Whiteboard

*Figure.6. A sample for the list of abbreviations (Adopted from a student’s Master thesis/dissertation)*

## 7. General Introduction

- The length of the general introduction is linked to the length of the paper.
- No headings or sub-headings are included.
- Preferably no quoting or paraphrasing
- The basic features of the general introduction are:

- Background/ Context
- Problem statement
- Research focus
- Research objectives
- Research questions
- Research hypotheses (if any)
- Sampling (if any)
- Research tools
- Outline of the chapters
- Research limitations (if any)

## 8. Literature Review

The literature review is a roadmap for the student since it provides guiding approaches and theories to understand a given research work and develop another point of departure for more scholarship. In this sense, it helps the student as follows:

- It summarizes previous scholarship (experience/knowledge/methodology) on the subject.
- It helps the writer to show the importance of the subject being investigated and opens the gate for more scholarship.
- It shows the importance of the field of work.
- It helps to identify the loose ends (incomplete parts) to figure out what needs to be done.

**NB:** Including citation in the review of the literature should be done according to the style being adopted (APA or MLA guidelines).

## 9. General Conclusion

It is the final part. Your thesis/dissertation should end with a well-constructed conclusion because it denotes an incomplete work if it is not well-designed and structured. The conclusion is generally too long in comparison to the general introduction, it may take several pages. However, its length depends largely on the length of the paper. It should be concise and address the topic; it is rather a summary of the findings. It should answer the

research questions and confirm the validity of the hypotheses. The following points should be taken into account:

- You have to summarize all the important findings depending on the hypotheses.
- You should present your recommendations to open the gateway for more research in the field.
- You should avoid giving an account of the literature review, no scholars and no quotes should appear in your general conclusion.
- You have to know how to demonstrate your understanding of the topic to your reader. He/she should have a good impression that you have mastered the subject well.
- You can also mention that there is a gap in the literature that addresses the topic and call for more scholarship.
- You have to show the importance of your research work to the field by presenting a condensed summation of the results.
- Your findings can be taken as new insights to enhance the field of research with new approaches and theories.

On the other hand, there are many points that you have to avoid in writing your general conclusion:

- You have to be careful concerning the length of your conclusion, i.e., it should be concise because a lengthy one can contain unnecessary information.
- You should not give many details about the methodology or the findings. It should address implications, insights and evaluations.
- You should not include negative findings or unproven hypotheses. You can make them a basis for more research on the topic being investigated.
- You have to avoid writing too much about how your research has contributed to new knowledge in the field. Indeed, you have just to give a succinct summary.

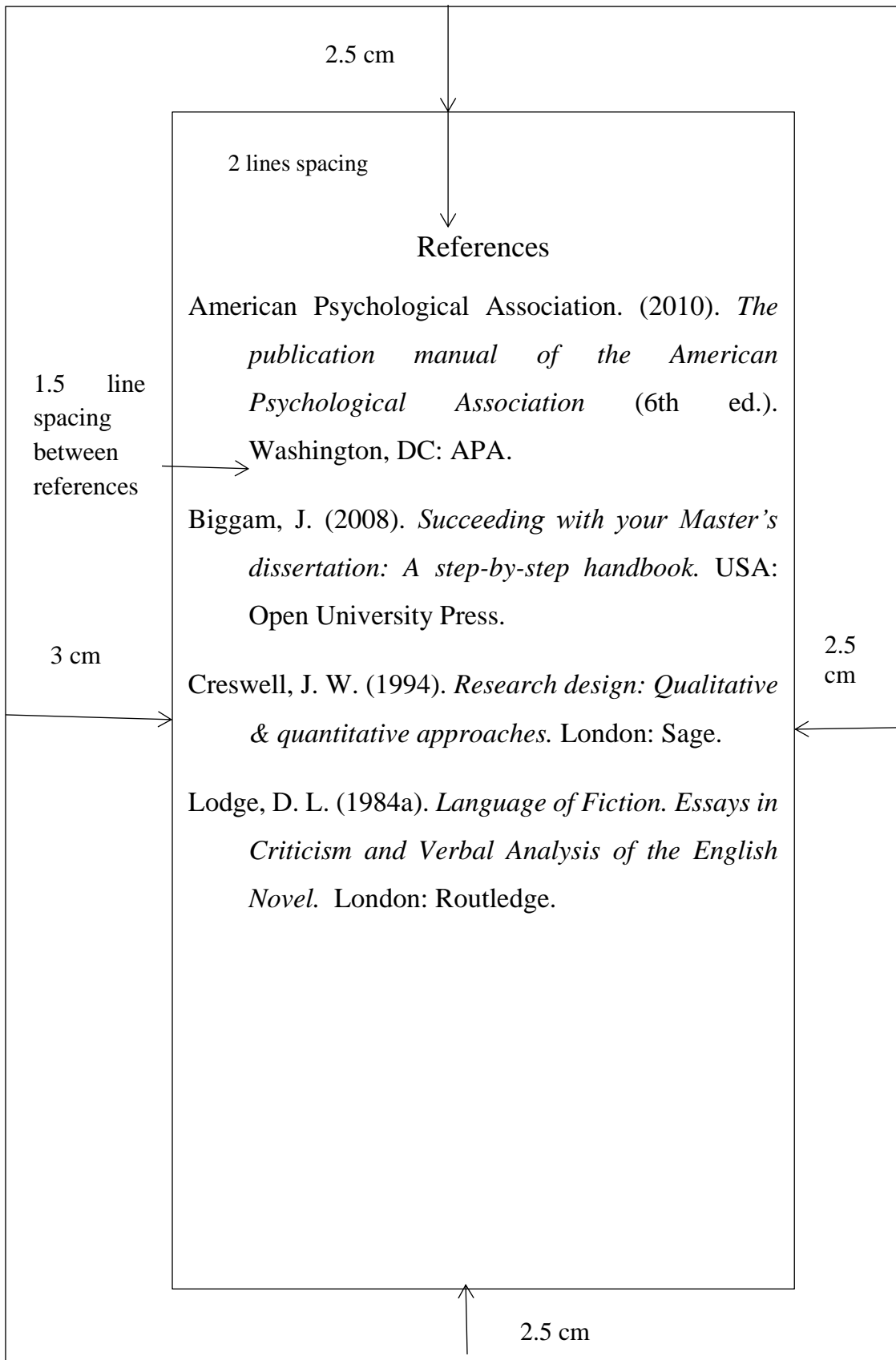
## **10. Formatting the List of References**

Listing references is an important part of an academic piece of writing. The student has to identify all sources found in the text by listing them in the list of references. Listing references differs from one style to another. In the department of English Letters and Language in Adrar, APA style is recommended for the field of **'didactics'** and MLA style for the field of **'literature & civilization'**.

- The heading for APA style is '**References**' and should be centered and written not in bold. For the MLA style, it is '**Works Cited**' and should be written in bold and centered.
- The references are organized following the alphabetical order.
- It is also important for the student to leave a space (0.5 cm) in the second line of the reference, i.e., the hanging indent format (in both styles).

**NB:** The student has to read the APA (7<sup>th</sup> ed.) and MLA (8<sup>th</sup> ed.) guidelines which are available on the Net and can be downloaded for more information about how to write the list of references.

Figure 7 below gives an overview of the format of the list of references (for APA style):





## 11. Writing the List of Appendices

It generally contains the questionnaire, the interview and concise additional information about the subject, such as biographies of authors, summaries of novels and main characters. They can be divided into sections and each should have a number and a title. They should also be put on a separate page, organized following chronological order (A, B, C, D or 1, 2, 3, 4). The title of the appendix is listed under the word appendix.

To write a well-structured appendix, the following points should be taken into consideration:

- The appendix should be placed after the references.
- Each appendix should be put on a separate page and at the center and then followed by the title.
- Appendices are also numbered after the References.
- The use of one appendix or multiple appendices depends on the length of your paper and the additional information you want to include.
- It should appear in the table of contents.
- It remains optional, i.e. the student sometimes does not need the appendix unless his/her supervisor asks him/her to include more information on the subject, such as the questionnaire. Hence, it can be taken for the following reasons:
  - ✓ It avoids too many details to be included in chapters and, therefore, interrupting the analysis.
  - ✓ Including it in the text may also interrupt the reader from taking a general overview of the topic.
  - ✓ They can be added by the end if there is a problem with the length; thus, some information can be excluded and included in the appendix.
  - ✓ It shows your understanding of the research problem.
  - ✓ The appendix is also a good place to put some more maps and images if you think that they are helpful.
  - ✓ All your appendices should be referred to in the text.

**NB:** The appendix should be written in your style and does not contain the works of other scholars. In the case of biographies, you can summarize or paraphrase and include the reference, and if your questionnaire is adopted you have to mention the scholar (reference).

The following figure gives some details about formatting the appendix:

