

IF ONLY I KNEW HOW TO DO IT...

How to study effectively at university?

WRITING AN ESSAY / HOME ASSIGNMENT / THESIS

The course is supported by the project EFOP-3.4.3.-16-2016-00005 „Korszerű egyetem a modern városban: Értékközpontúság, nyitottság és befogadó szemlélet egy 21. századi felsőoktatási modellben”.

Steps and rules of writing an essay/assignment

Choosing the topic

- Obligatory vs. freely chosen topic
- Better writing ← interesting, you have previous knowledge in it
- Divergent vs. concentrated topic
- Accessibility of literature
- Can you include own study / experiment / survey?
- How much time do you have? – length of writing

Steps and rules of writing an essay/assignment

Finding sources

- Find literature sources and summarize their content
- + any other source → more information on your topic
 - oral communication
 - radio/television program, interview – related to your topic
- Sources – library, internet
- Too many sources
 - First: sources that are closest to your topic
 - Fundamental sources – cited by everyone (can be older than 5 ys)
 - Recent publications (last 5 ys)
 - Home assignment: 5-8 sources
 - Thesis: 20-25 sources
- Literature search – new aspects, relations
- Other sources:
 - Interview
 - Survey / questionnaire
 - Statistical studies

Steps and rules of writing an essay/assignment

Taking notes/Preparing a summary

- Different from taking notes while studying
- Checking the whole source, but notes only about parts interesting for you
- Summary
- Add your own notes, ideas
- Bibliographical data of the source!!!
 - Author, title, place and year of publishing
 - Journal: title, volume, page numbers
 - Photocopy – include bibliographical data!
- Old-fashioned: cards → arrange them in new order
- Modern: one or several Word files

Steps and rules of writing an essay/assignment

Preparing a draft

- First draft – source finding – according to topics
- Structure of the writing – logical order of main topic and subtopics
 - whole writing
 - chapters
- Can include:
 - Short content of each part
 - References you want to include
- Keeps you in line – against diverging
- 3 units: introduction, main part, summary/final conclusion

Steps and rules of writing an essay/assignment

Format and style

- Most difficult: to start
- Draft, notes from literature sources help
- ! NOT enough to put pieces of literature sources after each other
- Rephrase with your own words, interpret sources, arrange in new order
- Connect thoughts
- Indicate clearly which is your own idea, and what have you taken from someone else!

Steps and rules of writing an essay/assignment

Format and style

- Synthesis: compare and interpret the opinion of multiple authors on the same issue
- Include your own thoughts / opinion, as well
- When taking sides – prove it, support with evidence
 - Reliable sources – **secondary research** outcomes
 - **Primary studies** (own experiments)
- Be consequent!
 - Format
 - Content (do NOT contradict yourself)

Steps and rules of writing an essay/assignment

Format and style

- Scientific terminology vs. everyday language use
- Write clearly, make it easy to understand
- Appropriate *style: proper use of language*, follow rules of spelling
- SIMPLE (easy to comprehend, shorter sentences)
- CLEAR (precise writing)
- CLOSED (finish your thoughts, provide conclusions, summarize)

Steps and rules of writing an essay/assignment

Format and style

- **Objectivity** – avoid personal statements, writing in first person
- Avoid phrases like "I was surprised by finding..." "I got excited"
- Instead of "In my opinion", "I think", "To my mind" rather use **impersonal phrases** ("it seems", "results indicate", "it is suggested").
- Include your own ideas, but not your personality should dominate
- Writing in first person – e.g. when writing about how you chose your topic (personal motivation)

Steps and rules of writing an essay/assignment

Format and style

- **Highlight** – **bold** or *italics*
- Outlook – reflects quality of your writing, represents the author
- **Figures**
 - Related to the topic!
 - What can be read from the figure, should not be included in your text
 - Number each figure, give them a title, if necessary indicate the source
 - Refer to figures in the text
 - High quality figures, easy to understand
 - Flow charts
 - Appendix

Steps and rules of writing an essay/assignment

Structure

1. Introduction:

- Topic choice
- Significance, timeliness of topic
- What do you intend to study? Why is it interesting for you?
- Aims, hypotheses
- Methodology – How do you want to prove your hypotheses?
- Refer to the structure / units of your writing

Steps and rules of writing an essay/assignment

Structure

2. Main part:

- Literature review, theoretical background
 - Applied methods
 - Your own results, analyses, conclusions
 - Discussion
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- You should provide answers for the questions in Introduction

3. Closing part / Summary:

- Summary of the whole work
- Final conclusions, significance of work

Steps and rules of writing an essay/assignment

Formal requirements

- Title page
- Main body of text + notes
- Bibliography / References
- Appendix (e.g. photos, tables, graphs)
- Lists (e.g. list of abbreviations, list of figures)

- Formal requirements of **thesis**:

https://aok.pte.hu/docs/th/file/GYTK/Handout_on_thesis_writing_GYTK_2019.pdf



UNIVERSITY OF PÉCS
Faculty of Pharmacy

Handout and guide for student's to prepare and defend the thesis
- summary of the most important information -



The aim of the thesis is to develop the student's skill to get the substance by independently studying and scientifically elaborate the chosen field of pharmaceutical science, acquire the use of the library and the methods of literature research and be able to formulate their data and conclusions briefly and precisely. The writing of thesis is a serious intellectual activity which requires conscious and intense work.



2. Formal requirements

| | |
|------------------|---|
| Length | The minimal length of thesis shall be 30-50 typewritten pages without the table of contents, references, figures/charts and other annexes. |
| Language | The language of the thesis, the review and the documentation shall be identical with the language of the training. The thesis may be submitted in a foreign language upon the student's request based on the proposal of the head of department with the Dean's permission. |
| Font size | 12 |
| Recommended font | Times New Roman |
| Line space | 1,5 |
| Margins | Right, top, bottom: 2,5 cm; Left 3,5 cm |
| Printing | A/4 pages (29,7 cm x 21 cm) only on one side |
| Cover | The word „Thesis” and the title of the thesis, in the bottom right corner the name of the author and the year (year of defense) |
| Inside cover | Name of the institute/department offering the topic (top center of the page), full title of the thesis (center of page), student's name and below that the consultant's name and position (bottom left), place of the training (city, Pécs) and year (bottom center of the page). |
| Submission | In two bound copies and in electronic format (uploading to Neptun). |
| Page numbering | After the inside cover, in the bottom right corner of the page. |

Steps and rules of writing an essay/assignment

Citation, references

Bibliography

- The information source must be referred to with accurate indication of bibliographical data in case of both a literal quotation or a paraphrase (quotation reformulated with own words).
- The student commits plagiarism if he/she uses someone else's intellectual property (idea, wording, the result of someone else's work) as his/her own, without indicating the original source. It is not plagiarism if the student uses the given work in the frame of fair use, meaning that he/she cites the given work or a part of it – in the length reasonable based on the type and length of his/her own work and faithfully representing the original – indicating the source and the author (refers to it).
- The thesis must use and refer to at least ten scientific, identifiable literature.
- We suggest to use the citations with one of the following two methods:
 - The **ordinal number of the citation** can be indicated at the end of sentence in square braces [1]. If we quote more than one author within the same sentence, but in different parts of the sentence, it should be indicated right after the cited thought, eg.: „...many think writing a thesis is good [2], while others think it is unnecessary [3]”. The ordinal number of the citations must increase continuously. The number shall be given where it first appears in the text and if it has to be referred to later as well, the original number should be used. Only in this case can a smaller number follow a bigger one.

The data of the sources has to be named at the end of the thesis, in the „Bibliography” according to the following:

- In case of periodicals / articles the author's family name and the initial of the last name. Title of the publication. Title of periodical (Year) volume number: page number. – For example:

Steps and rules of writing an essay/assignment

Citation, references

- [1] Needham D. S., Wong I. C. és Campion P. D. Evaluation of the effectiveness of UK community pharmacists' interventions in community palliative care. Palliat Med (2002) 16: 219-225.
- In case of three or more authors after the third the „and co.” or „et al.” expressions can be used depending on the consultant's suggestion.
- In case of one author the name (A); two authors separated with an „and” (A and B); three authors separated with a comma then an „and” (A, B and C). Academic and professional titles shall not be indicated.
- In case of books or a chapter of a book the name of the author(s), the title of the book (in case of a part of the book this shall be preceded by the title of the chapter and the name of the editor(s), the publisher, the place of publishing, the year of publishing, pages (from... to) – For example:
 - [2] Vincze Z. és Zelkó R. Gyógyszerügyi szervezést. Medicina Könyvkiadó, (2008) 1-10.
- In case of electronic sources naming the author and the publication is still required before attaching the URL. The date of visiting the online content is also necessary. For example:
 - [3] UP FP Code of Studies and Examinations https://pte.hu/sites/pte.hu/files/files/Adminisztracio/Szabalyzatok_utasitasok/PTE_SZMSZ/5mell-tvsz20170201.pdf (visited in May 2017)

The other option is the **author-year method** meaning the last name of the author and the year of publishing of the cited article or book.

- In case of one author: eg. (Rácz 1974)
- In case of two authors: eg. (Szendrei and Csupor 2009)
- In case of more authors: eg. (Kéry et al. 2000) or (Kéry an co. 2000) – It does not matter which form we choose, but only one of them shall be used consistently through the whole writing.
- If we combine the thoughts of several authors in one sentence or paragraph the authors shall be listed in order of the year of publishing. (eg. Kéry et al. 2000, Soós 2004, Dános 2006, Szendrei és Csupor 2009).
- If we use the author's name in the text only the year of publishing shall be put in braces (eg. . „according to the observations of Dános (2006)...”, or „based on the experiments of Csupor (2004)...”).