

Dear students,

there are a lot of requirements to your thesis papers and I am going to add even more. They are of a formal nature and it is VERY important that you observe them. Please observe them right now, at this stage of writing because later you will forget to change and I will give you a lower grade for non-compliance.

Best regards

olga

Some formal requirements to bachelor and term papers

Authorship

The authorship of the paper shall be stated clearly. If there are formal requirements issued by the university (e.g. special template for the cover page), please follow them.

Table of contents

For **long papers** and **papers with complex structure** (meaning a lot of chapters divided into sub-chapters which can be, in their turn, divided into smaller parts) a table of contents should be made. The table of contents shall contain all the structural parts. List of abbreviations (if used) and list of literature are structural parts.

Table of contents for long papers shall contain the respective page numbers.

For creation of your table of contents please use the tool in your Word Editor (look in the panel for an instrument called something like "Indexes and Tables" or use Help to find and use it). It is easy and practical to use, because it creates Table automatically and you can easily update it.

Abbreviations

If a paper contains **a lot of abbreviations** (e.g. more than five), there shall be a list of abbreviations, preferably at the beginning, and it shall be indicated in the table of contents.

Disregarding the use of the list of abbreviations, all the abbreviations shall be explained in the text before the first use.

e.g. *The European Union (further – EU) consists currently of 27 Member States.*

Only the most common abbreviations (for example, etc = et cetera, e.g. = exemplis gratia) do not belong in the list of abbreviations.

Use the abbreviations consistently (the same abbreviation all the time) through the whole paper.

Quotations

Quotation is an explicit reference or allusion in your paper to another work or a passage from this work.

Quotations can be divided into two groups: direct and indirect. Direct quotations (citations) are verbatim (word for word) reproductions of somebody else's words. Such citations shall be indicated by quotation marks in the beginning and in the end of citation and contain a reference to their source. Long cited passages (e.g. an article of a law, directive some other document or especially nice and precise description taken from a scientific paper) can be emphasized further by using italics or by putting them in a separate paragraph while highlighted by a smaller font and/or italics.

Indirect quotations mean non-verbatim reproductions and/or summaries of somebody else's

thoughts or ideas or using other information from other sources. Such quotations do not require quotation marks, but still need a reference to the source where the information in question has been taken from.

There are certain **rules regarding quotations** which one needs to comply with. Direct citations can be used in a rather limited number of cases:

- short and very precise expressions, descriptions of some situation or phenomenon which can be ascribed to a particular author;
- verbatim reproduction of (parts of) somebody else's speech, answer during an interview, words as regards a particular occasion;
- verbatim (really exact wording – if there are any, even slight changes, no quotation marks used) reproduction of legislative and other documents.

Very **long direct quotations** (one paragraph and more) are admissible **only if** re-telling their content in your own words would significantly change the content.

Be careful not to use too many direct quotations and to make unnecessary quotations in your paper: this creates an impression of non-autonomous work and may even amount to plagiarism. Indirect quotations shall bear traces of autonomous interpretation and evaluation.

Requirements to references

You have to **properly refer** to every source **first time** you mention in the paper. Proper reference means: complete title, author or the organ which adopted the document, number, date and place of publication (for documents – official publication). If the document is unpublished (like a lot of documents of the European Commission; be attentive – it is written in the document itself if and where it was published) or published only online, then - internet or other source where you have found it. For documents which are not laws, conventions, directives etc (if they have no articles, numbered paragraphs etc.), you have to name the page you refer to. The same applies to books, monographs, scientific papers etc.

Case law also requires a complete reference (the name of the court, official name of the case, number, date and place of official publication) plus the paragraph of the judgement you cite or refer to.

If you have accessed an information source via the internet, you have to state it by giving the web-address and the date of last access.

No reference is required to the facts of common knowledge (e.g. *The Earth goes around the Sun*).

Please remember that all the sources have to have a complete bibliographical description in the list of literature.

Please consider the following logic for choosing the exact place where to put your reference mark. If you put the footnote mark for a reference before the period, it means that reference relates only to one word or short phrase right in front of the footnote mark. The footnote mark after the period refers to the whole sentence. The footnote mark in the end of the paragraph refers, as a rule, to the whole paragraph.

There are also certain requirements to the sources you may or may not refer to in a scientific paper. First of all, being lawyers, you need to try and refer to the **primary sources** what, in our case, means legislation and non-legislative documents. If a document is written in a foreign language and you do not speak this language, you have to refer to the official/authorised translation.

Comment 1: If you are writing on a European law or international law topic, references to unofficial/unauthorised translations of documentations are unacceptable. As you know, official languages of the EU are plentiful and it is

difficult to imagine that you do not at least one of them. International law documentation can generally be found in English, French and Spanish, so the choice here is pretty good as well.

Comment 2: if you decide to give a verbatim translation of a document, which was not officially translated into the language you are writing your paper in, you may do so, but please make a note on your authorship in parentheses after every translated piece.

Only if a legislative source is not available to you in original due to some historical reasons (e.g. Hammurabi laws) or if you cannot refer to the original because it is written in a rare language and there is no official translation, only then you may refer to a secondary source. Secondary source is the source which is not original and merely reproduces the complete document in question or parts of it. Because of this derivative character, secondary sources cannot be completely relied on: they interpret the original and may therefore distort the content or reproduce it incorrectly.

Second requirement to the nature of the sources for your scientific paper is to use only the **reliable/credible sources**. Obviously, an original document is a credible source of information as regards the content of this document. Now, the same can be said in case we want to refer to an opinion or interpretation by a particular scholar: the primary source of reference would be works of this particular scholar, not interpretation of his/her works in papers of others.

The problem of credibility acquires a special significance when in your own scientific work you have to deal with the question interpretation from what source you can use. The rule of a thumb here would be that the source you refer to should have an author (meaning, there is at least one person responsible for the content and we know exactly who this person is). Preferably, the source of information should be controlled by a third person (or persons) for correctness and reliability. This is usually the case with all quality (non-electronic) publications: books and monographs are controlled by correctors and editors, articles in magazines and newspapers are also edited and peer-reviewed. Currently, more and more online publications (especially, in electronic magazines, working papers of various organisations) are also edited and/or peer-reviewed.

Keeping this in mind helps you to avoid such obvious mistakes as referring to summaries of legislation made by the European Commission for general information of citizens, referring to Wikipedia article or to a somebody's blog.

List of literature

A list of literature is an **obligatory structural part** of a paper, but can be titled in different ways (e.g. "Literature", "List of literature", "List of references" etc). Please remember that the title "List of authorities" is usually used in claim and response papers that parties to a legal dispute argue in the court.

List of literature shall contain exclusively, but completely the sources you have referred to in your paper.

Please consider the distinction between the sources that you use as a central source of information and justification and support for your arguments and the sources to which you refer to merely in order to prove some unimportant fact. The first group of sources consists of legislation, other documents, case law, scientific articles and monographs and similar. All these sources belong in the literature list. The second group of sources does not belong in the literature list. The example of the sources of the second group would be a newspaper article of a purely informative character (not analytical) to which you refer in order to prove some fact that took place in the past.

e.g. *The terrorist attack in Domodedovo Airport in Moscow demonstrated clearly the need for increased security measures at important infrastructure objects.*

(Reference: *Moscow bombing: carnage at Russia's Domodedovo airport*. BBC)

News: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-12268662>, accessed on 12.02.2011)

The descriptions of the sources in the literature list shall be complete: author, proper title, place (for documents – official place) and date of publication; for online publications – internet address and the date of access.

Intervals between the words

Use one-space interval between the words. There is a special tool in Word Editor to control this.

Some remarks on the content – various

Please remember that now the Lisbon Treaty is in force. Refer to this Treaty; references to other Founding Treaties are allowed only in historical context.

If you are writing in English please decide which variant of English you are using (British or American) – and stick to it throughout the whole paper. The same is applicable to the grammar: it vary a bit, so please choose your preference and use it all the time.

Try to avoid long and complicated paragraphs. Each paragraph – ideally – should contain one thought or idea. Do not pack a lot of ideas in one paragraph: it is very difficult to comprehend them and the overall context.

Plagiarism

I am rather strict about plagiarism and any attempt of it. Therefore please be very thorough with your quotations and references. Any similarities in your papers and any failure to make a proper reference would be interpreted not in your favour.

To understand better what plagiarism means you can refer to the Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary (electronic version of a famous (American) English dictionary), where you will find a definition of the verb „to plagiarize“ and can deduce the meaning of plagiarism. To re-phrase a bit the dictionary's definition, plagiarism means the act or the result of stealing and passing-off the ideas or words of another as one's own; using another's production without crediting the source; a theft of a complete literary or scientific work; presentation as new and original ideas or products derived from an existing source.

In the internet you can find a great amount of instructive literature about what actions can be considered plagiarism (it is a very complex and multi-facetted problem!) and how to avoid it. I would advice you to visit www.plagiarism.org where you can find a lot of useful information in this regard, a lot of tips and techniques of citation, rules of using information sources etc.

As an example, please consider the following broad and very exemplary definition of plagiarism on this web-site: http://www.plagiarism.org/plag_article_what_is_plagiarism.html

„All of the following are considered plagiarism:

- turning in someone else's work as your own
- copying words or ideas from someone else without giving credit
- failing to put a quotation in quotation marks
- giving incorrect information about the source of a quotation
- changing words but copying the sentence structure of a source without giving credit
- copying so many words or ideas from a source that it makes up the majority of your work, whether you give credit or not (see our section on "fair use" rules).“

Also, a mere translation of somebody else's work or its parts does not make it your own autonomous paper.