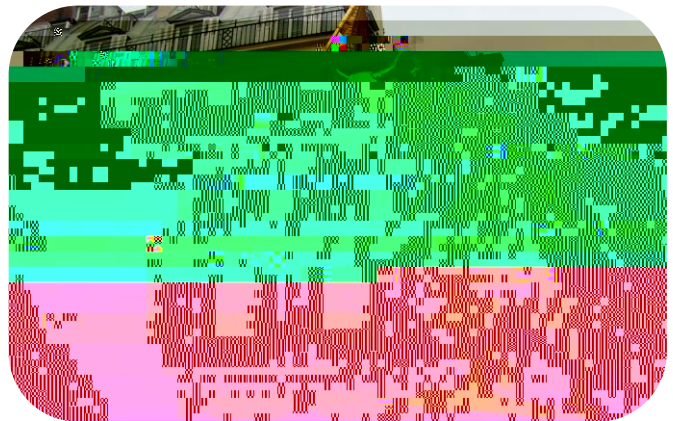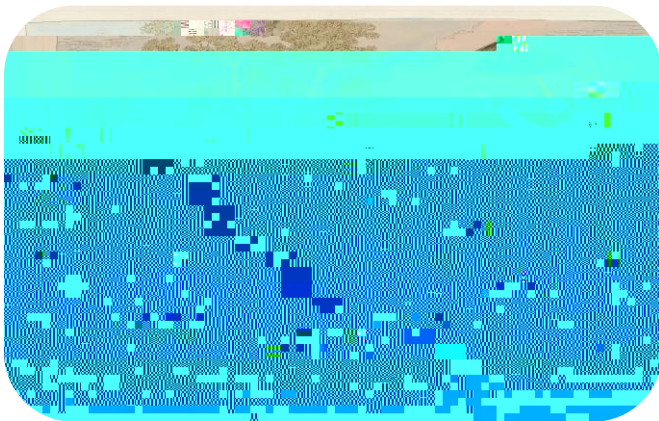# Department of History ConciseGuide To Essay Writing

PHASE 3:   WRITING

    11. Assemble material in logical sequence
    12. Write a first draft, including footnotes
    13. Link paragraphs into a coherent argument
    14. Revise the draft
    15.
    16. Does it address the specific question?
    17. Add bibliography
    18. Carefully proof-read it

To find further scholarly sources, use keywords to search the library catalogue (accessible via   on the library site) for books on your topic. The MultiSearch function is useful for finding journal articles (but make sure you check that they are from scholarly journals, rather than newspapers, magazines, etc). Other sites like JSTOR and Historical Abstracts (accessible from the library site) offer more tailored search options.

If you require assistance with your research, there are a variety of people who can help. Your lecturer and tutor can guide you towards the most important sources. The library also runs

sites like history.com; educational pages aimed at school students; and blogs or personal genealogical sites.

If a site is not recommended by your lecturer or tutor, and you are uncertain about its suitability, it is a good idea to check with your tutor before using it as a source. You can expect to have poor-quality online sources highlighted and, potentially, penalised by your marker.

Wikipedia

Wikipedia has millions of articles on all facets of history, but there are two reasons why students should not rely on it for essay research. The website is not academic; it is open source. While the online community that runs it has become more rigorous in its fact-

save time and re-checking when you construct your footnotes. Make it clear to yourself in your notes where you are copying down a direct quotation, and where you are making notes in your own words. This will help to avoid any accidental plagiarism.

Underlining and highlighting are poor substitutes for note-making; they merely *identify* sentences which you think may be relevant or important. You still need to digest their ideas and record them in your own words.

Never underline or highlight in a library book or journal; that is vandalism.

Distinguish between *factual information* (evidence) and *interpretative material* (argument). *interpretation* of the topic, noting factual details only when they form significant supporting evidence for their argument. Also be alert for gaps or silences in your sources.

Avoiding Plagiarism

It is a serious academic issue( )-209(sel2Qqt)64004Bs imETkuCoW*7smncitunchisue( )-20-89(fa)mETdisl

area of discussion to the next, building up to a whole and complete argument. If you cannot see a link between one section or paragraph and the next, think again about your structure.

How far you are comparing and contrasting evidence and interpretations.

Be flexible: keep modifying your plan as your grasp of the subject improves. Try rearranging the sequence of main points to find the most coherent and convincing flow of argument.

Unless explicitly permitted within a particular course, via a statement from the course coordinator in the course guide and on the Ako|Learn site, **the use of generative AI in any aspect of the construction of your History essay or other piece of History assessment is prohibited**. If any use of generative AI is detected in your work, it will be treated as dishonest academic practice and will be liable for penalties as a form of academic misconduct.

introduction becomes much easier to compose. You as the author now know what comes next, and how to link all of your main themes together in two or three succinct paragraphs.

The *conclusion*, meanwhile, has two purposes: to summarise and synthesise. The conclusion reiterates, using different phrasing, the key findings of the essay. It then needs to assess the broader significance of the findings.

Construct your essay as a sequence of *paragraphs*. There is no set number of paragraphs that is ideal for an essay   assignments of different lengths and complexity will require different levels of discussion. If in doubt, seek advice from your lecturer or tutor. An effective paragraph should contain ONE central idea or statement, usually expressed either as an opening topic-sentence, with supporting evidence and discussion in the middle. The last sentence should provide a link or springboard to the next paragraph, perhaps by pointing out that another issue remains unresolved, or that a contrasting viewpoint needs to be considered. Aim at clear, concise expression. Avoid ambiguity. Keep asking your

While drafting, enter footnote references at any point where you quote, borrow, adapt or summarise ideas from, or use statistics from other sources. You may wish to leave your full referencing to the end, but should put enough in a footnote (e.g., surname, page reference) to allow you to acknowledge your sources accurately later. Remember that footnotes should always follow punctuation.

Allow time to set your first draft aside for a while. Then re-read it, asking yourself whether your argument is clear and proceeds logically from one point to the next. Be ruthless with any repetitions, irrelevant examples, ambiguities and clumsy or long-winded sentences.

Quotations

These should be used sparingly, and short ones are more effective than long ones. Strong use of quotation adds vital detail to your broader discussion, such as giving direct insight into a

unique points of interpretation by a historian. Avoid quoting other historians on matters of fact. Quotations should be brief and apt and must be carefully integrated into your argument. Blend them in by identifying their author and context and explain their significance or meaning. Remember that quotations are pieces of evidence and need to be interpreted. You must show that you understand the significance of the quotations you have selected. If you leave them in isolation to speak for themselves, the reader may miss your intended point. Depending too heavily on quotation may result in your marker skipping the quoted material in search of your own view. Every quotation must be indicated by quotation marks and supported by a footnote that includes a specific page reference.

Check the length

Passive: It was the storming of the Bastille on 14 July 1789 that signalled the entry of

Book

One author

1. Michael Pollan, *The Omnivore's Dilemma: A Natural History of Four Meals* (Penguin, 2006), 99 100.

2. Pollan, *Omnivore's Dilemma*, 3.

3. Pollan, Michael. *The Omnivore's Dilemma: A Natural History of Four Meals*. Penguin, 2006.

Two or more authors

1. Geoffrey C. Ward and Ken Burns, *The War: An Intimate History, 1941–1945* (Knopf, 2007), 52.

2. Ward and Burns, War, 59 61.

3. Ward, Geoffrey C., and Ken Burns. *The War: An Intimate History, 1941–1945.* Knopf, 2007.

For four or more authors, list all of the authors in the bibliography; in the note, list only the

1. Dana Barnes et al., *Plastics: Essays on American Corporate Ascendance in the 1960s . . .*
2. Barnes et al., *Plastics . . .*

Editor, translator, or compiler instead of author

1. Richmond Lattimore, trans., *The Iliad of Homer* (University of Chicago Press, 1951), 91 92.

2. Lattimore, *Iliad*, 24.

3. Lattimore, Richmond, trans. *The Iliad of Homer*. University of Chicago Press, 1951.

Editor, translator, or compiler in addition to author

1. Gabriel García Márquez, *Love in the Time of Cholera*, trans. Edith Grossman (Cape, 1988), 242 55.

2. García Márquez, *Cholera*, 33.

3. García Márquez, Gabriel. *Love in the Time of Cholera*. Translated by Edith Grossman. Cape, 1988.

Chapter or other part of a book

Article in a newspaper or popular magazine

Pear noted in a New York Times art
they are commonly omitted from a bibliography. The following examples show the more
formal versions of the citations. If you consulted the article online, include a URL; include an
access date only if your publisher or discipline requires one. If no author is identified, begin
the citation with the article title.

New Yorker, January 25, 2010, 68.

New York Times, February 27, 2010, accessed February 28, 2010,
http://www.nytimes.com/2010/02/28/us/politics/28health.html.

New Yorker, January 25, 2010.

New York Times, February 27, 2010. Accessed February 28, 2010.
http://www.nytimes.com/2010/02/28/us/politics/28health.html.

Article in a digital historical newspaper archive such as PapersPast

If using digital historical newspaper archives, such as PapersPast (Aotearoa | New Zealand),71(a)-5( )-69(N

Review. http://www.nytimes.com/2006/04/23/books/review/23kamp.html.

Thesis or dissertation

Imaginaires
(PhD diss., University of Chicago, 2008).

Imaginaires

Imaginaires
PhD diss., University of Chicago, 2008.

*Note

Common Footnote Abbreviations (Latin):

c.	*circa*	=	about
cf.	*confer*	=	compare with
etc.	*et cetera*	=	and the rest
et.seq.	*et sequential*	=	and what follows
ibid.	*ibidem*	=	in the same place
i.e.	*idest*	=	that is
n.b.	*nota bene*	=	note well: important
op.cit.	*opere citato*	=	in the work cited
q.v.	*quod vide*	=	which see (i.e. look it up!)
viz.	*vide licet*	=	namely, or in other words

Using and Citing Electronic Sources

http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/charters/declaration_transcript.html

Book published online

If a book is available in more than one format, cite the version you consulted. For books consulted online, list a URL; include an access date only if one is required by your publisher or discipline. Books consulted in a fixed-page format that matches a printed counterpart can be cited without naming the format (as if it were print). If no fixed page numbers are available, you can include a section title or a chapter or other number.

1. Jane Austen, *Pride and Prejudice* (New York: Penguin Classics, 2007), Kindle edition.

1. Philip B. Kurland and Ralph Lerner, eds., *The Founders' Constitution* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), http://press-pubs.uchicago.edu/founders/.

2. Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*.

2. Kurland and Lerner, *Founder's Constitution*, chap. 10, doc. 19.

3. Austen, Jane. *Pride and Prejudice*. New York: Penguin Classics, 2007. Kindle edition.

3. Kurland, Philip B., and Ralph Lerner, eds. *The Founders' Constitution*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987. http://press-pubs.uchicago.edu/founders/.

Article in an online journal

Include a DOI (Digital Object Identifier) if the journal lists one. A DOI is a permanent ID that, when appended to http://dx.doi.org/ in the address bar of an Internet browser, will lead to the source.

     American Journal of Sociology 115 (2009): 411, doi:10.1086/599247.

     American Journal of Sociology 115 (2009): 405 50. doi:10.1086/599247.

The Becker-Posner Blog, February 21, 2010, http://uchicagolaw.typepad.com/beckerposner/2010/02/double-exports-in-five-years-posner.html.

Becker-Posner Blog, The. http://uchicagolaw.typepad.com/beckerposner/.

E-mail or text message

E-

bibliography. The following example shows the more formal version of a note.

1. John Doe, e-mail message to author, February 28, 2010.

Essays must conform to the prescribed word-limit; nor should they fall far short of the limit. The word-limit applies to the text or main body of your essay; it does not include footnotes or bibliography. Most markers will allow a margin of up to 10% either side of the limit without

Completing work for another student which is then submitted by that other student for credit for a course in the Department of History.

Including made up or fabricated material in work submitted for credit for a course in the Department of History.

Collaborating in the preparation of answers for take home tests unless advised otherwise in the take home test instructions.

If you are in doubt about any of the above with respect to a particular course, you should discuss the matter with the lecturer concerned. See also the University Discipline Regulations, Dishonest Practice and Breach of Instructions Regulation, and Academic Integrity Policy refer to UC Calendar and UC web.