

THESIS GUIDELINES

The thesis is the single most important element of the master's degree. It is a test of the student's ability both to undertake and complete a sustained piece of independent research and analysis, and to write up that research in a coherent form according to the rules and conventions of the academic community. As the official language of study at IEAS is English, students are required to write the thesis in English to a standard that native speaker academics would find acceptable. A satisfactory thesis should not only be adequate in its methodology, in its analysis and in its argument, and adequately demonstrate its author's familiarity with the relevant literature; it should also be written in correct, coherent language, in an appropriate style, correctly following the conventions of citation. It should, moreover, have a logical and visible structure and development that should at all times assist the reader's understanding of the argument being presented and not obscure it. The layout and physical appearance of the thesis should also conform to university standards.

The purpose of this document is to outline the standard requirements and guidelines that a master's thesis should adhere to in the area of organisation and writing skills in order to be accepted at IEAS.

1. Thesis Length, Language and Format

1.1. Length

The length of the thesis should be no less than **40 pages without appendices (60.000 characters, without spaces)**.

1.2. Language

The thesis should be written in English. Quotations should normally be in English, with the original language included in a footnote where appropriate. Exceptions are short phrases in Latin or French typically used in English, such as '*raison d'être*' or '*inter alia*' which should be written in italics. For specific guidance in this area, students should consult their supervisor. Book titles, magazine titles, and newspaper titles may appear in their original language as long as English translations are given in parentheses or in a footnote.

1.3 Ordering of parts

Parts of the thesis should be ordered as follows:

1. Title page	Required
2. Acknowledgements or dedications	Optional
3. Table of contents	Required
4. List of Figures, Tables or Illustrations	Where required
5. List of Abbreviations	Where required
6. Body of the thesis	Required
7. Appendices	Where required
8. Glossary	Where required
9. Bibliography/Reference list	Required

Students should consult their department as to whether any other discipline specific components should be included and if so where.

1.4 Layout and Appearance

- The thesis should be computer printed on white A4 paper, single-sided, in Times New Roman 12pt. **Double-spacing** should be used in the text of the thesis. **Single spacing** should be used in long tables, block quotations separated from the text, footnotes, and bibliographical entries. Paragraphs should be indented.
- Margins should be one inch or 2.5 cm on all sides, and page size should be set to A4. Pages should be numbered at the bottom in the centre, using Arabic numerals (1, 2, 3) starting with the first page of the thesis proper (i.e. the first page of the introduction). Pages prior to this should be numbered with lowercase Roman numerals (i, ii, iii.)
- Chapters should start on a new page, but sections and subsections should not.

1.5 Structure of initial parts

1.5.1 Title page

The title page should provide the following information in the following order:

- The full title of the thesis
- The candidate's name
- The department and name of the university
- The supervisor's name
- The place of submission
- The year of submission

See the sample title page at the end of this document for an example of title page layout.

1.5.2 Acknowledgements

This is an optional page acknowledging people who provided the author with assistance in the thesis project, notably, but not only the thesis supervisor.

1.5.3 Table of Contents

The thesis must have a table of contents page listing chapter headings, section headings and sub-headings, Appendices and references as well as their corresponding page number. The table of contents should be made after final editing so that pages referred to in the table of contents are correctly numbered.

1.5.4 List of Figures, Tables or Illustrations

If appropriate, a separate list of figures, tables, or illustrations should be included on a separate page immediately following the table of contents.

1.5.5 List of Abbreviations

If the thesis makes use of a large number of abbreviations that may be unfamiliar to a reader, providing a list of them can act as a useful guide.

1.6 Structure of final parts

1.6.1 Appendices

Appendices may be needed for formulae, maps, diagrams, interview protocols, or any

similar data that are not contained in the body of the thesis. These should be provided after the conclusion in the logical order they are mentioned in the main body. A list of appendices should be drawn up, each being given a consecutive number or a letter, and placed in the table of contents. If there are several appendices each should receive a title. If the thesis includes non-paper appendices such as computer data, software, or audio-visual material, students should consult departmental guidelines as to how to append and refer to these.

1.6.2 Glossary

A list of special technical words or acronyms may be necessary. This is particularly true if the subject deals with a new area with a specialised vocabulary that the average reader in the discipline might not be familiar with, such as the Internet. This list should come after the appendices.

1.6.3 Bibliography/Reference List

A list of the sources used in the thesis must be supplied which complies with the same departmental style guidelines used in the body of the thesis – this list should include *only* those sources cited and consulted used for the thesis. See the corresponding stylesheet (MLA, Chicago, APA etc.).

2. Structure of the thesis

The thesis should be divided into logical chapters and include an introduction and a conclusion. The thesis must have a clear identification of theme and a statement of thesis, preferably in the form of one or more thesis paragraphs; all further chapters and statements must be related to this central topic or question. The text (arguments, agreements and disagreements) must be organised coherently so that the point you make and your flow of thoughts must be clear for the reader.

The thesis must, naturally, conclude with a well articulated conclusion which is supposed to be the culmination of your proposed arguments.

Excluding the introduction and conclusion, the thesis will normally be expected to have not less than three and not more than six chapters, unless this has been agreed with the supervisor.

2.1 Appropriate use of chapter headings and subheadings

Headings should be distinguished from the surrounding text by a larger point size, a different font, bolding, italics, or a combination of these. All headings of the same level should use the same style, and headings at lower levels should be less prominent than those at higher levels.

All headings should be left-aligned, except chapter headings, which may be centred. A heading at the bottom of the page must have at least two full lines of text below it. Otherwise, the heading should begin on the next page. Captions related to visual material (graphs, tables, maps) should appear on the same page as the material itself.

3. Language and Style

The thesis should be written in an appropriate formal academic style.

The thesis should wherever possible use gender neutral language, avoiding the use of male-specific words such as ‘man’ or ‘chairman’ where these could be considered inappropriately exclusive or discriminatory.

Students should make every effort to ensure that the thesis is free from grammatical, lexical and punctuation errors. Not only should a computer spellchecker be used, but the student should also proof-read the thesis to check that errors do not remain that are not detected by the spellchecker. The thesis should consistently use **either** American **or** British spelling but should not alternate between the two.

4. Use of sources and citation style

All source materials, primary or secondary, published or unpublished that are the intellectual property of authors or institutions other than the writer of the thesis must be credited and correctly cited in full, including illustrations, charts, tables, etc.

Plagiarism and its consequences

Students must be aware that **plagiarism** is a **crime** which has its due **consequences**.

The possible forms of plagiarism:

1. **word by word quotes** from a source used as if they were one’s own ideas, **without** quotation marks and without identifying the **sources**;
2. **ideas** taken from a source, **paraphrased** in the essay-writer’s own words and used as if they were his/her own ideas, **without** identifying and properly documenting the **source**.

Failure to acknowledge one’s sources constitutes plagiarism and will result automatically in a failing grade.

4.1 Use of Citation Styles

All citations should include a reference in the body of the text to the author as well as an entry in the bibliography/reference list. How this should be done is indicated by the citation style chosen for the thesis (e.g. Chicago, MLA, APA, etc.) The thesis should consistently use a single citation style as specified by the department or supervisor.

4.2 Quotation, paraphrase and summary

Source material should be quoted where the precise wording is specifically relevant or significant, and the quotation always clearly marked as required by the citation style, including page numbers. Sources may be paraphrased or summarised where exact wording is not essential, but care should be taken not to change the original meaning through paraphrase, and all paraphrased and summarised sources must be fully cited, including page numbers. Where a quotation has been changed (for example, capitalisation, punctuation, emphasis changed or a pronoun replaced by a noun), the changes should be clearly indicated according to the citation style used.

Although interaction with existing research in the field is a requirement for all academic writing, no part of the thesis should normally consist purely of summarising the work of others, unless approved by the supervisor. Summarised or quoted source material should not be left to stand on its own, but should be introduced, explained, analysed and the purpose of its use made clear. Where different sources are compared or contrasted, it should be made explicit to the reader both that this is being done and why.

Care should be taken to ensure that the reader is in no doubt as to where a cited author's ideas end and the comments of the author of the thesis begin. Where there is doubt, the cited author's name (or s/he) can be used in the sentence with an appropriate verb reporting what that person has said so as to distinguish it from the ideas of the author of the thesis.

5. The submission of the thesis

All students have to upload the thesis to the DEA system by **November 30** in the autumn semester and by **March 31** in the spring semester and also they have to submit a hard copy (spiral bound) to the [IEAS library](#) (room 101).

6. Assessment of the thesis

The theses will be assessed on the basis of the following criteria:

- the articulateness of the thesis of the paper;
- the clarity of the position you take;
- the quality of the arguments;
- the use and integration of your secondary sources into the essay;
- the coherence of the structure;
- scholarly documentation;
- the level of your language.

The theses will **not** be evaluated on the basis of what your supervisor's position is in a certain issue but on the basis of the originality, quality and elegance of your argument.

Concluding comments

It is the duty of the student to ensure that the thesis meets the standards described above, and the duty of the supervisor and department to ensure that the student takes the necessary steps to meet these requirements. Where a thesis fails to meet the requirements in one or more areas, it may be returned for revision and resubmission, or in the case of plagiarism, a failing grade awarded. Students are encouraged to familiarise themselves with the above guidelines and to seek help from the supervisor whenever necessary and in good time.

Sample Title Page

**THE ECONOMIC INFLUENCE OF THE
DEVELOPMENTS IN SHIPBUILDING TECHNIQUES,
1450 TO 1485**

By
Jim L. Dixon

University of Debrecen
Institute of English and American Studies

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Debrecen, Hungary
2003