Generic Thesis Style Sheet

* This document is an example of a style sheet. But it will be different for every thesis and will include particular words and other styles that appear in any individual thesis.
* This document has a list of style rules etc. But it is not necessarily formatted identically to the thesis. The formatting of the thesis is found in *Generic Thesis Chapter Template*.
* Normally the most general rule is that everything has to be consistent and unless your supervisors say otherwise, use a particular style (this document is based on APA for example).

## Supervisor’s Comments / Edits

* The following are some notes based on one supervisor’s comments. It’s helpful to get a supervisor to make comments on some early work so the advice can be incorporated into later writing and the style sheet. (Obviously the following arose from a particular situation so they are not relevant to every researcher-supervisor situation.)
* **use shorter sentences** rather than a semi-colon to join independent clauses.
* **introducing quotations**: it seems that it’s fine to have block quotations without any direct reference or introduction even though it might seem a bit abrupt. When there is an introductory comment it can just be followed by a colon, e.g., “She wrote:”
* **vary the introductory verb** for quotations (said, remarked, added, elaborated, etc.)
* **capitalise** the beginning of quotations in most (all?) cases
* aim for a more **formal, and academic style**
* don't use **passive voice**; so: not “she was not left with many options” but say, “she did not have many options.”
* don't use **colloquial language** and terms, e.g., not “along the road towards diagnosis”, and not “they were not good communicators, meaning families missed..." [“meaning” should be “with the result that”].
* be careful to **define terms** and to **explain background**, e.g., ‘future-ready’ was not defined and although it seems obvious, in this sort of work it's appropriate to define it. That ensures you use words accurately and the reader knows how you are using them. What does 'uneducated' mean for example?
* words to watch (maybe be more specific): 'issues', 'within' (when you just mean 'in'),

## Style Issues

* **headings**: don’t number them; leave it to Word’s automatic numbering
* **overall style rules**: consistency is the important thing but stick to APA for referencing and when in doubt
* **referencing t/diaries:** Jane said, “I didn’t do it.” Another said, “I did!” [Peter].
* N for referencing transcripts.
* Use square bracketed references [Kate] after both block and in-text quotations *unless* the text already makes it clear who the speaker/writer is (so omit it).
* final period *after* an in-text citation, so: “... he’s a good boy” [Kate].
* **referencing other works:** normal APA system: (Blogs, Jones, & Smith, 2013, p. 27)
* **editing transcripts**: do minor edits for punctuation and grammar but not style
* **headings** with quotations are fine
* **quotations**: not italics; either in double quotation marks for short ones (except quotes within quotes) or block quote style “Q” for longer than 40 words (acc. to APA)
* **single quotation marks** to emphasise words, e.g., ‘playing the system,’ ‘normal’ e.g., to introduce a word or phrase used as an ironic comment, as slang, or as an invented or coined expression. Use quotation marks the first time; thereafter, do not use quotation marks. (APA, p. 91).
* **serial comma** in list of three or more before ‘and’ and ‘or’: “I had lunch with my parents, Kevin Rudd, and the Queen.” (The comma before the ‘and’ makes it clear that Rudd and the Queen are not my parents.) “It was red, or blue, or green.”
* **comma before conjunctions** (and, but, or) if they join two stand-alone clauses
* **the comma splice** is a grammatical sin, that’s one there. (I.e., don’t join two independent clauses with a comma; use a semi-colon if they are related closely—like that one—or a full stop.)
* **final punctuation** inside quotation marks; so, Many dream images were characterised as ‘raw,’ ‘powerful,’ and ‘evocative.’
* **agreement of number**, e.g., it’s “the board is aware ...” not “the board are aware ...”
* **using ‘where’ and ‘as such’ as links**; try and find more appropriate links
* **remember ‘that’**: don’t assume it. E.g., not “Some suggested they eat ...”, but “Some suggested that they eat ...”
* **dashes**: use hyphens for ranges (123-124) and use em dashes—like this—for setting off words. Don’t use en dashes anywhere.
* **ellipses**: space before and after ... like that. No need for ellipses at start and end of quotations.
* **italics** to introduce key or technical terms like the term *term*. Not quotation marks.
* **title case** (capitals for major words) for headings 1 and 2, not 3, 4 etc.
* **changing quotations**: it’s okay to change the case of the first letter of a quote and to put a period at the end if it’s a whole sentence, even if not in the original.
* **tense**:
* **Present:** If your **introduction** discusses present-day issues, so: "Students today *are* reading...." In your **conclusions**, for example: "The long-term effects *are* not yet understood, but *seem* to indicate …"
* AND: This paper reports (present) on research done (past). So, This study aimed (past: ref to the research not the current paper)
* **Past:** During a **literature review**, the discussion concerns the previous work of others. So: "Smith (2002) *noted* that...." In your own procedures and **results**, so: "The participants *completed* the test …"
* **Present Perfect:** For **past actions that do not have a definitive date**, so: "Institutional review boards *have included* outsiders...." In addition, if **an action began in the past but continues** into the present, for instance: "Researchers *have been studying* the phenomenon …"

## Spelling / Capitalisation

* This list will grow as various issues specific to a particular thesis are clarified. It may simply include reminders of spelling to be careful of.
* generally use British spelling (watch those ...ize words)
* Asperger syndrome; also AS and Asperger’s, ASD
* Chapter, Figure, Table: capitalised if referring to your own: In Table 1 in Chapter 2
* day-to-day (compound modifier)
* e.g. and i.e. both take periods and comma afterwards; cf. does not take a comma
* future-ready, future-readiness
* healthcare
* high-functioning (compound modifier)
* led (past of to lead)
* program (now fine for British spelling says Macquarie Dictionary)
* special-needs (compound modifier); so, A special-needs child has special needs.
* special-school (compound modifier) Special-school models work in special schools.

### Examples of APA in-text referencing

* See also the La Trobe guides at: <http://www.lib.latrobe.edu.au/referencing-tool/apa-6>
* According to Palladino and Wade (2010), “a flexible mind is a healthy mind” (p. 147).
* In 2010, Palladino and Wade noted that “a flexible mind is a healthy mind” (p. 147).
* In fact, “a flexible mind is a healthy mind” (Palladino & Wade, 2010, p. 147).
* “A flexible mind is a healthy mind,” according to Palladino and Wade’s (2010, p. 147) longitudinal study.
* Palladino and Wade’s (2010) results indicate that “a flexible mind is a healthy mind” (p. 147).