

Rules & Guidelines

of the Boards of Examiners of the
Faculty of Philosophy, Theology and Religious Studies

as stipulated in Article 5.8 of the Education and Examination Regulations
(Part 1: General section) for the degree programmes of the Faculty of Philosophy,
Theology and Religious Studies.

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Article 1 – Scope

These *Rules and Guidelines* apply to the interim and final examinations in all degree programmes of the Faculty of Philosophy, Theology and Religious Studies, hereinafter referred to as: the programmes.

Article 2 – Definitions

The terms used in these regulations, if they also occur in or pursuant to the prevailing Structural Regulations, have the meaning given to them in those regulations; if they also occur in any of the Education and Examination Regulations (EER) of the programmes, they have the meaning given to them by that EER. In addition, the terms below are defined as follows:

- a. paper: the written product of a candidate created as part of the internal examination of a course component or practical course such as an assignment, project, paper, essay, literature study or thesis.
- b. committee of examiners: the committee which is appointed by the Board of Examiners to assess a Master's thesis and the corresponding oral defence.

Article 3 – Composition of the Board of Examiners

1. The dean determines the number of members of the Board of Examiners.
2. The members, being heard by the Board of Examiners, are appointed by the dean on behalf of the Executive Board. The dean appoints the chairperson on behalf of the Executive Board.

Article 4 – Day-to-day operation of the Board of Examiners

1. The Board of Examiners appoints a vice-chairperson who replaces the chairperson in their absence.
2. The Board of Examiners appoints a secretary, from its own ranks or elsewhere, who shall be responsible for preparing for the meetings and implementing decisions, among other tasks.
3. The chairperson and secretary are responsible for the day-to-day operation of the board.
4. The Board of Examiners confers the chairperson, the vice-chairperson and the secretary the authority to sign, jointly or independently, certain documents on behalf of the board.

Article 5 – Board of Examiners' mode of operation

1. The Board of Examiners may adopt bylaws which further regulate its mode of operation. The Board of Examiners meets at least six times per year.
2. The Board of Examiners makes decisions on requests for admission, exemption, extra interim examinations, changes in the examination programme and special arrangements, as well as on objections, complaints and reports of suspected fraud.

3. The Board of Examiners makes decisions on such requests (e.g. objection, complaint, suspicion) within a period of one month. The board shall notify the parties concerned immediately about its decision.
4. In urgent cases, the chairperson can make a decision outside the meeting on behalf of the board. Such a decision is reported no later than the next meeting to the other board members.
5. Decisions of the Board of Examiners may be appealed within six weeks to the university's Examination Appeals Board.
6. The Board of Examiners conducts an annual quality assessment of the final Bachelor's and Master's papers and takes quality assurance measures.
7. The Board of Examiners conducts an annual quality assessment of the interim examinations and takes quality assurance measures.
8. The Board of Examiners appoints the committee of examiners, which is responsible for assessing the thesis. By making this appointment, they confer the examiners with the authority to sign graduation documents.
9. The notification of fraud (suspected or otherwise) made by an examiner or invigilator shall be processed by the Board of Examiners in accordance with the procedure adopted for this purpose as specified in Appendix A (Processing fraud notifications) in these *Rules and Guidelines*.

Article 6 – Provisions concerning examinations

1. Without prejudice to the provisions in the EER, the Board of Examiners is responsible for determining the time and location of the interim examinations, the deadlines for the submission of assignments, and the method and deadlines for registering and deregistering for interim examinations. The Board of Examiners shall delegate these tasks to the Director of Education.
2. The Board of Examiners is responsible for timely publication of the time and location referred to in the first clause. If the time is changed, this will be publicised in an adequate fashion. The Board of Examiners shall delegate this task to the Director of Education.
3. A candidate who has not registered on time for an interim examination cannot take that examination, unless the corresponding conditions for admission to the examination have been satisfied.
4. A candidate who decides not to participate in an interim examination is required to deregister for the examination and report this as soon as possible to the corresponding examiner. In case of timely deregistration for an interim examination due to sickness or other exceptional personal circumstances, the Board of Examiners can decide that the examination can be retaken under conditions to be determined at a later time. If the candidate fails to take an interim examination without prior notification, the Board of Examiners can impose a sanction.

5. The Board of Examiners arranges the surveillance of written interim examinations and adopts invigilator regulations for this purpose. The Board of Examiners can provide additional instructions. The Board of Examiners shall delegate this task to the Director of Education.
6. Students are obligated to follow the instructions of examiners and invigilators. If requested to do so, students must provide suitable identification.
7. Failure to follow the instructions, even in part, can be classified as fraud by the Board of Examiners.
8. The duration of an interim examination is such that the candidate has a reasonable amount of time to answer all questions.
9. Candidates who arrive more than 15 minutes after the start of an interim examination are prohibited from participating. Candidates are not permitted to leave the examination room during the first half hour after the examination begins.
10. Special arrangements in connection with disabilities are only implemented on the basis of a prior recommendation from the Student Affairs Office and a supervision agreement, provided that the student concerned has submitted a timely request for special facilities to the examiner.

Article 7 – Specific tasks of the examiner

1. The examiner is responsible for interim examinations that are suitable in terms of form and content.
2. The examiner ensures that the interim examination takes place in an orderly fashion.
3. The examiner can decide that candidates will not be allowed to take examination questions home after the interim examination.
4. The examiner determines which aids a candidate is permitted to use during the interim examination and announces this in a timely fashion before the examination.

Article 8 – Fraud and plagiarism

1. Fraud is defined as any act or omission of a candidate which partially or completely prevents a correct assessment of their knowledge, understanding and skills.
2. Plagiarism is defined here as using published or unpublished texts or files of other authors, whether or not paraphrased, without indicating that this has been quoted and/or without citation of the source. Plagiarism is a serious form of fraud.
3. If fraud is ascertained or suspected by an invigilator during an interim examination or by an examiner during the assessment of a paper or interim examination, they will notify the candidate immediately, make a note of this on the answer sheet or paper and prepare an official report.
4. At the request of the invigilator or examiner, the candidate is obligated – immediately or at the end of the interim examination – to relinquish any evidence. Refusal to do so can be regarded as fraud and will be reported.

5. Suspicion or detection of fraud will be reported immediately in writing by the invigilator or examiner to the Board of Examiners, and the board will receive a copy of the official report.
6. The candidate concerned will be given the opportunity to respond in writing to the official report before the Board of Examiners makes a decision on the matter.
7. Before the Board of Examiners makes a decision, the examiner and candidate will be heard in each other's presence. After hearing the parties concerned and reading the report, the Board of Examiners can impose a penalty if fraud is ascertained. The nature and severity of the fraud, as well as any repeated fraud, also determine the penalty to be imposed.
8. In case of fraud, the Board of Examiners can impose the following penalties, among others:
 - declare interim examination or paper invalid;
 - impose substitute or supplementary requirements regarding the interim examination or paper;
 - exclude the candidate from the next examination opportunity for the relevant component;
 - prevent the candidate from taking interim examinations or the final examination of the degree programme for a maximum of one year;
 - following consultation with the Dean, the Executive Board can be requested to terminate the enrolment of the candidate.
9. Following the determination and announcement of the result of an interim examination, the Board of Examiners will initiate an investigation if it suspects or ascertains fraud. In that case, after hearing the examiner and the candidate and considering the relevant reports, the Board of Examiners can impose a penalty in accordance with clauses 7 and 8 of this article if it ascertains fraud.
10. Reports are processed in accordance with the procedure as set down in Appendix A of these *Rules and Guidelines*.

Article 9 – Exemptions

1. A request for exemption will be submitted to the Board of Examiners in writing and supported with reasons.
2. Before deciding, the Board of Examiners will hear the examiner concerned.
3. The Board of Examiners decides within one month after receiving the request.
4. The Board of Examiners may attach conditions to the decision to grant a partial or full exemption.

Article 10A – Assessment of the Master’s thesis in Philosophy

1. The requirements for the assessment of Master’s theses have been established for each of the degree programmes in the appendixes to these *Rules and Guidelines*. Examiners apply these requirements during the assessment of those components.
2. At least three weeks before the submission deadline of the thesis, the thesis supervisor requests the Board of Examiners to appoint a committee of examiners.
3. The committee of examiners consists of a 1st examiner (also the chairperson), a 2nd examiner and the permanent examiner. The 1st examiner is usually the thesis supervisor, but as the occasion arises this may be departed from.
4. The permanent examiner is appointed for a period of two years by the Board of Examiners.
5. The 2nd examiner is a member of the faculty’s academic staff. If the nature of the thesis gives cause, the Board of Examiners can appoint a 3rd examiner who is not a member of the faculty’s academic staff. In that case, the phrase “2nd and 3rd examiner” should replace “2nd examiner”.
6. When the supervisor determines that the thesis is finished, i.e. that the thesis is satisfactory in his/her judgement, then the supervisor submits the thesis to the Board of Examiners. The Board of Examiners ensures that the other examiners receive a copy of the thesis.
7. Within two weeks after the submission date, the permanent examiner and the 2nd examiner inform the 1st examiner about their assessment, indicating whether they assess the thesis as satisfactory.
8. If one or more examiners assess the thesis as unsatisfactory, then the student will be requested to revise their thesis with the aim of eliminating the deficiencies specified by these examiners. Thereafter, the procedure will resume from clause 6.
9. If all examiners assess the thesis as satisfactory, the oral defence can take place.
10. Before the defence, the student submits two printed copies of the thesis to the Board of Examiners.
11. The student defends their thesis in the presence of the 1st and 2nd examiner. If deemed appropriate, the permanent examiner can also be present at the defence.

12. After the defence is completed, the examiners who were present will prepare a written explanation of their assessment for the Board of Examiners, while taking the oral defence into account. These documents will be handled confidentially by the Board of Examiners.
13. Anonymised evaluations, based on the above-mentioned documents can be a topic of deliberation for the Board of Examiners.

Article 10B – Assessment of the Master’s thesis in Theology and Religious Studies

1. The requirements for the assessment of final Bachelor's papers, Bachelor's theses and Master’s theses have been established for each of the degree programmes in the appendixes to these *Rules and Guidelines*. Examiners apply these requirements during the assessment of those components.
2. At least one month before the submission deadline of the thesis, the thesis supervisor requests the Board of Examiners to appoint a committee of examiners.
3. The committee of examiners consists of a 1st examiner (also chairperson), a 2nd examiner and the permanent examiner, who is appointed annually by the Board of Examiners. The 1st examiner is usually the thesis supervisor, but as the occasion arises this may be departed from.
4. The 2nd examiner is a member of the academic staff, but is not a member of the same key chair as the 1st examiner. If the nature of the thesis gives reason, the Board of Examiners can appoint a 3rd examiner. In that case, the phrase “2nd and 3rd examiner” should replace “2nd examiner”.
5. When the 1st examiner judges that the thesis is finished, i.e. that the thesis is satisfactory, then the student submits three copies of the thesis to the Board of Examiners through the Student Administration. The Board of Examiners ensures that the other examiners receive a copy of the thesis.
6. Within two weeks after the submission date, the permanent examiner informs the Board of Examiners and then the 1st and 2nd examiners through the Student Administration by using the approval form.
7. If one or more examiners determine that the thesis is unsatisfactory, that assessment is communicated through the Student Administration with the 1st examiner, who then requests the

student to revise the thesis in accordance with the objections of the examiners. After this, the procedure is resumed from clause 5 of this article.

8. If all examiners assess the thesis as satisfactory, the oral defence can take place. For this purpose, the student arranges the date with the examiners and informs Student Administration.
9. Before the defence ceremony, the student submits four printed copies of the thesis and one digital copy to the Board of Examiners through the Student Administration.
10. The student defends the thesis in the presence of the 1st and 2nd examiners. If deemed appropriate, the permanent examiner can also be present at the defence.
11. Preceding the oral defence, the 1st and 2nd examiners assess the Master's thesis independently from each other based on a standard form with assessment criteria (see appendixes). After this they submit their assessments independently to the permanent examiner. The permanent examiner then sends these two assessments to the 1st examiner to complete the provisional assessment of the Master's thesis. If the assessments deviate by more than 1.5 points from each other, the permanent examiner requests a 3rd independent reader to assess the thesis. Based on these three assessments, the permanent examiner then determines the provisional assessment of the Master's thesis.

The oral defence is assessed jointly by the 1st and 2nd examiners. The committee of examiners determines the final mark by calculating the average mark of the two (or three) assessments of the Master's thesis (80%) and the joint assessment of the oral defence (20%).

The 1st examiner then completes the final assessment form (see appendixes) based on the two (or three) assessments (including the joint assessment of the oral defence). Finally, the 1st examiner can, in their role as supervisor, raise or lower the final mark by up to 0.5 points based on an assessment of the supervision process.

The 1st examiner then submits the final assessment form to the Student Administration (including the separate assessment forms from the 1st and 2nd examiners).

After completion of the final examination, the 1st examiner forwards the form with final assessment to the student.

Article 11 – Determination of the examination results

1. The final examination of a degree programme is passed when all interim examinations have been passed and the Board of Examiners, based on a supplementary review, concludes that an examination certificate can be awarded. During this process, moreover, the Board of Examiners determines whether the student complies with the conditions in the Education and Examination Regulations with respect to the knowledge, understanding and skills that are necessary for obtaining a degree.
2. Contrary to the provisions in the first clause, the Board of Examiners may decide that the supplementary review can be omitted.
3. Before the examination certificate is awarded, the Board of Examiners determines whether the candidate has satisfied all conditions.

Article 12 – Distinction

In compliance with the relevant provisions in the EER of the degree programme, the Board of Examiners awards a distinction when the corresponding conditions have been satisfied.

Article 13 – Unforeseen circumstances and hardship clause

1. In cases not covered, or insufficiently covered, by these regulations, the Board of Examiners will decide.
2. In individual cases of extreme unfairness, the Board of Examiners is entitled to make an exception to the provisions in the EER and these *Rules and Guidelines* in favour of a student.

Article 14 – Entry into force

1. The *Rules and Guidelines* go into force on 1 October 2015.
Thus adopted by the Board of Examiners of the Faculty in their General Meeting on 30 June 2015.

Processing fraud notifications
(Article 8 of these *Rules and Guidelines*)

1. If an examiner or invigilator ascertains fraud or has a reasonable suspicion of fraud, they must notify the Board of Examiners immediately. The examiner/invigilator provides the following:
 - the interim examination, answer sheet or paper ;
 - any other evidence;
 - the official report.

2. The examiner/invigilator receives a written confirmation of the notification (***fraud letter 1***). If the matter concerns a student in a programme that is taught in English, the correspondence is conducted in English.

3. Within one week, the candidate is invited to a hearing with the board (***fraud letter 2***). In addition, the candidate can also make a written statement. If necessary, the examiner/invigilator and candidate are heard in each other's presence. The hearing takes place within two weeks after the notification of suspected fraud.

4. After reading the documents and hearing the candidate (and possibly the examiner), the board makes a decision. If fraud is ascertained, the board imposes a penalty. The nature and severity of the fraud (as well as any repeated fraud) determine the severity of the penalty. The candidate is informed in writing about the decision of the board (***fraud letter 3***). This letter includes the following:
 - the decision;
 - The grounds on which the decision is based;
 - the penalty (if a penalty is imposed).

The examiner is informed about the outcome of the proceedings.

- 5 Timetable:
 - Day 1 notification by examiner/invigilator,
written confirmation of receipt sent to examiner;
 - Day 8 candidate is invited to the hearing;
 - Day 15 hearing;
 - Day 22 decision of Board of Examiners.

REQUIREMENTS FOR FINAL BACHELOR'S PAPER IN PHILOSOPHY

Requirements

Formal requirements

Formal requirements are the requirements that must be satisfied to be eligible for assessment. If a final Bachelor's paper does not satisfy the formal requirements, it will not be assessed by the corresponding committee, and the student must revise and resubmit the paper.

The final Bachelor's paper:

1. is typewritten A4 format,
2. consists of the following components:
 - Title page with the following information:
 - Title
 - Name
 - Student number
 - Date of submission
 - First reader
 - The statement: "Paper submitted in completion of the Bachelor's degree programme in Philosophy of the Faculty of Philosophy, Theology and Religious Studies at Radboud University Nijmegen"
 - Number of words,
 - The following statement on the page after the title page: "I hereby declare and promise that I have independently prepared this final paper, titled TITLE, that no other sources and aids other than those I reported in the paper were used and that I have cited the sources of passages in the paper for which the wording or meaning was taken from other works, including electronic media." We trust that you are speaking the truth with the above statement
 - Table of Contents
 - Introduction in which the research problem is presented; the research topic is defined; the research question is explained and the research method or approach is presented
 - Explanation with a substantiated argument, in which differing points of view are discussed and a position on the material is specified.
 - Conclusion that presents the outcomes of the study
 - Bibliography,
3. has line spacing of at least 1.5,
4. is 5,000- 6,000 words long (including notes, excluding title page and bibliography),
5. has a file name based on the following format: [last name] [first name] [V1 or V2] [Title of paper]. For example: Descartes René V1 Meditations,
6. uses one of the two systems described in the Chicago Manual of Style consequently and correctly,
7. is written in grammatically correct Dutch using complete sentences,

8. is a .doc(x) file,
9. has numbered pages.

Criteria

Criteria are the requirements that must be satisfied to earn a passing mark.

The final Bachelor's paper:

1. is clearly structured: the content and form are aligned,
2. it is the result of careful research in a well-defined area,
3. demonstrates knowledge of matters related to the subject that is addressed by means of philosophical inquiry,
4. demonstrates the ability to take the various steps in a philosophical inquiry: formulating a research problem and research question; gathering and processing the relevant literature; supporting a choice or a standpoint with arguments and drawing conclusions,
5. demonstrates careful handling of the consulted literature (in references, the bibliography and in summaries), also by how the texts are placed in their relevant historical contexts.

REQUIREMENTS FOR FINAL BACHELOR'S PAPER IN THEOLOGY, RELIGIOUS STUDIES, ISLAMIC STUDIES***Requirements***

The final Bachelor's paper is typewritten in A4 format and is 7,000-8,000 words long, including notes and references.

The paper:

- has a title page that includes:
 - the title
 - the name and student number of the author
 - The name of the supervisor
 - the statement "Final Bachelor's paper for the Bachelor's degree programme NN¹ of the Faculty of Philosophy, Theology and Religious studies at Radboud University Nijmegen"
 - and the month and year in which the paper was completed,
- has a title (and possibly a subtitle) covering its contents,
- has a concise summary (a maximum of 120 words),
- is written in good, clear, grammatically correct Dutch or English (this applies *mutatis mutandis* to theses written in any other language),
- is the result of independent work in accordance with the article 'Fraud in final examinations and exam components' of the relevant Education and Examination Regulations.
- makes a clear distinction between different styles (arguments, criticism, questions, paraphrases, quotations, etc.),
- follows the conventional structure of an academic paper (e.g. title, introduction, problem, aim and research question, elaboration, conclusion),
- is clearly subdivided into sections (e.g. chapters, sections, paragraphs, appendixes, index),
- has a consistent reference style and a separate bibliography compiled according to a conventional system,
- quotes source texts or uses an official translation,
- acknowledges one's own or quoted translations.

If two or more students jointly write a paper, besides the jointly written chapters, the separate contributions of each student must be recognisable as such.

¹ NN: please fill in the name of the degree programme.

Aim

The final Bachelor's paper is the result of independent and careful research (literature-based) in a well-defined, self-chosen area. The paper demonstrates careful handling of the consulted literature (in references, the bibliography and in summaries), also by how the texts are placed in their relevant historical contexts. With a successfully completed final Bachelor's paper, students demonstrate that they are able to independently investigate a research question and answer the question in an academically credible fashion. This then means that students possess:

- knowledge of matters related to the topic addressed by the research (literature-based) in Religious Studies or Theology,
- the ability to take various steps in a religious-academic or theological investigation (literature-based):
 - o formulating a research question
 - o gathering and processing the relevant literature
 - o using the gathered material to develop a clearly structured argument
 - o supporting a choice or a standpoint with arguments, drawing conclusions.

**REQUIREMENTS FOR THESIS IN PHILOSOPHY (60 ECTS) AND
PHILOSOPHY OF A SPECIFIC DISCIPLINE (120 ECTS)**

Requirements

- The thesis
- 1 comprises 30 to 60 A4 typewritten pages, excluding footnotes and bibliography (12,000 to 24,000 words), unless the structure/content justifies a different length,
 - 2 has a title (and possibly a subtitle) covering the content of the thesis,
 - 3 is written in good, clear, grammatically correct Dutch or English (this applies *mutatis mutandis* to theses written in any other language),
 - 4 makes a clear distinction between different styles (arguments, criticism, questions, paraphrases, quotations, etc.),
 - 5 follows the conventional structure of an academic paper (e.g. title, introduction, problem, aim and research question, elaboration, conclusion, summary),
 - 6 is clearly subdivided into sections (e.g. chapters, sections, paragraphs, appendixes, index),
 - 7 has a consistent reference style and a separate bibliography compiled according to a conventional system,
 - 8 quotes source texts or uses an official translation,
 - 9 acknowledges one's own or quoted translations.

Criteria

- The thesis
- A. is the result of independent research,
 - B. should have a research problem and question that are clearly defined and relevant to current developments in the field,
 - C. should contain a logical, objective and reasoned discussion of the research problem and questions (i.e. should form a logical unity from research problem to conclusion),
 - D. should discuss the literature relevant to the study,
 - E. should contain functional references, quotations, appendixes etc. that support the development of the argument.

REQUIREMENTS FOR RESEARCH MASTER THESIS IN PHILOSOPHY

The thesis contains two parts: (i) an independent, publishable article (20 EC), and (ii) a project proposal (10 EC). The criteria that the two parts of the thesis must satisfy are as follows.

1. The publishable article

The length and structure of the publishable article must reflect the norms typical of journal publications in the philosophical sub-discipline in which the student specialises. It is evident that these norms are different in the fields, say, of formal logic or of the history of medieval philosophy. However, there are some obvious requirements that any publishable article must satisfy:

- It must be the result of independent research.
- It must make an original contribution to the field of research.
- It must respond to a clearly formulated, well circumscribed and relevant question or problem, which reflects the state of the philosophical debate.
- It displays traditional qualities of a philosophically worked-out argument such as consistency, sound analysis, coherent argumentation, etc.
- It shows knowledge of the relevant literature.
- It contains references, quotations, appendices, and bibliographies that reflect the state of the art in the philosophical sub-discipline in which the student specialises.

2. The research project

The research project takes the characteristic form of an application, of the type that one might submit in an application for a PhD position at a Dutch university or for a research grant of the Dutch Science Foundation (NWO). It must contain the following components:

- Title of the project
- Abstract (maximum 200 words)
- Description of the proposed research (2.500 words maximum)
 - Introduction / status questions
 - Research question
 - Research lines / elaboration of research
 - Research method
- Key words (5)
- Work programme and timetable
- Summary for non-specialists (500 words)
- Bibliography
- Curriculum Vitae.

REQUIREMENTS FOR THESIS IN THEOLOGY, RELIGIOUS STUDIES, ISLAMIC STUDIES

Requirements

The thesis

- comprises 30 to 60 A4 typewritten pages, excluding footnotes and bibliography (between 12,000 and 24,000 words), unless the structure/content justifies a different length,
- has a title (and possibly a subtitle) covering the content of the thesis,
- is written in good, clear, grammatically correct Dutch or English (this applies *mutatis mutandis* to theses written in any other language),
- is the result of independent work,
- makes a clear distinction between different styles (arguments, criticism, questions, paraphrases, quotations, etc.),
- follows the conventional structure of an academic paper (e.g. title, introduction, research problem, research aim and research question, elaboration, conclusion, summary),
- is clearly subdivided into sections (e.g. chapters, sections, paragraphs, appendixes, index),
- has a consistent reference style and a separate bibliography compiled according to a conventional system,
- quotes source texts or uses an official translation,
- acknowledges one's own or quoted translations,
- if two or more students write a thesis together, it should include both jointly written chapters and separate contributions by each student.

Criteria

The thesis

- is the result of independent research. The thesis should be the creative outcome of sound reflection. For this reason, it should not be confined to a mere reproduction of the writings and opinions of other authors,
- should be an independently written text showing critical insight and independent, well-founded judgement. It should therefore not be a purely subjective account of personal experience,
- should relate the study of an author, theme or practice to a relevant context (social, historical, religious, literary, etc.),

- should have a research problem and question that are clearly defined and relevant to current developments in the field,
- should contain a logical, objective and reasoned discussion of the research problem and questions (i.e. should form a logical unity from research problem to conclusion). The introduction to the thesis should describe and justify the chosen method and outline and justify the structure of the thesis,
- should discuss the literature relevant to the study. The chosen literature for the thesis must be justified and the literature should be clearly and correctly acknowledged,
- should be written in correct, consistent language using an objective, readable style,
- should contain functional references, quotations, appendixes etc. that support the development of the argument,