

Essay Presentation and Technique

Rose Bruford has a [style guide](#) for written submissions, please refer to this when preparing your work for submission

What follows is a short summary of the basic style.

Please use this page set up for all submitted work:

- **Please use an easily readable font**, such as Times New Roman/Arial
- **Font Size** - the style guide suggests 11 or 12, we would prefer 12 point
- Please use Black ink
- Number pages, put the Cover sheet as page one.
- **All work MUST be DOUBLE SPACED**, Margin both sides of page and top and bottom (about 3cm.)
- Put a space after punctuation, especially full stops.

Always add a **Cover Sheet** (which you will find on the VLE) filled out with module number, assignment number and your name. Make sure that this is attached to your essay so both are sent as **one** file. Make sure that you save the file with the correct labelling so that it matches the labelling you give it when you send it.

Preparing to write your essay

See the guides "[Answering Questions](#)" and "[Dissecting a question](#)" for some initial information on getting started and some of the pitfalls to be avoided. Academic keywords, which are frequently used in essay titles, indicate the approach or style that you are expected to adopt – a useful list of keywords and their definitions can be found [here](#)

Writing your essay

Put the assignment title in full at the top of your essay. This is important as it will help focus your thoughts as you write.

Keep the essay formal - personal statements are inappropriate. Always use third person.

The [Guide to Writing Assignments](#) looks at essay format, critical/academic writing, creating an argument and using secondary sources critically.

Use your Tutor to help you!

Contact your Tutor in advance if you are having problems with an assignment – please do not leave such discussions until the submission date! Tutors are happy to look at DRAFTS but not final versions. These will be COMMENTED on only – not marked in the normal way. They will indicate irrelevances and where you need to add material – they will **not comment in detail** – this is in line with other Higher Education establishments as detailed marking would not be in the interest of fairness to other students.

Extensions and Mitigating Circumstances:

There may be occasions where you feel you might need an extension. If this is the case then please complete an [Extension Form](#) on the VLE and submit to the Programme Director in advance of the submission date otherwise the submission will be classed as a non-submission and the penalty system will be invoked.

In circumstances where the agreement of a 2 week extension is not sufficient you may wish to consider submission of an application to the mitigating circumstances committee. Full details of when this might be appropriate and how to make the application can be found in the [Mitigating Circumstances Policy](#) document.

Referencing

Rose Bruford College uses Harvard style for all academic work

There are a number of Harvard styles and there are various online tools and apps that you may wish to investigate to help with referencing - what is important is **CONSISTENCY** – please **do not** mix styles in your assignment. Here is a good link for one Harvard style:

http://guides.library.lincoln.ac.uk/ld.php?content_id=26426164

What follows are some guidelines for using primary and secondary sources and referencing the types of source most commonly used in assignments for the Opera Studies modules.

When offering your own opinion or ideas support them with evidence. Avoid subjective comments such as ‘good’, ‘superb’ without supporting evidence saying why they are good. If you do not support these words they become merely opinions.

Sources

PRIMARY SOURCES are the actual music and writings of the composer in question
SECONDARY SOURCES are books **about** the subject **written by others**. These must be used for quotes to support your argument.

How to use Quotes in your essays

You need to show how these support/affect your argument - do not just add them as decoration. They need to be introduced and commented upon. Don't leave the reader wondering why they have been used.

ALL quoted material must be fully referenced (plagiarism is a form of academic misconduct. Follow this link for the [College Policy on Academic Misconduct](#).

Quotations from libretti should be set on a new line with the character's name.

Short prose quotations are placed within the body of the text, precluded by a comma and contained in double quotation marks (" "). Longer quotes are indented and set on a new line with the reference added at the end.

All quotes must fit grammatically into the sentence of the text. **ANY** alterations made to a quote must be clearly indicated with **editorial square brackets** [], even if the alterations are only to amend grammar e.g.

Cooke argues that in Delius' Violin Concerto: 'the whole material of the work, thematic and rhythmic, [...] evolve[s] out of its initial two-bar motto'. (The original read 'is evolved').

Omissions of sentences/phrases are indicated using three dots inside square brackets [...].

The exact page reference detailing author surname, date of publication and page number should be noted in an **in-text** reference, immediately after the quote, in the body of the text. (it should not be put in a footnote) e.g.

"....." (Smith:1997:46)

Put the full details of the book in the bibliography, listed alphabetically by author surname:

Bibliography

Smith, Alan (1997) *Opera Today* London: Evans & Evans.

When quoting sequentially from the **same source and page** 'ibid' can be used – this refers to the book and page referenced in the preceding quote.

When you take someone else's ideas and express them in your own words or just change some of the words this is called **PARAPHRASING** and must be fully referenced like a direct quote because you are using another person's thoughts/ideas.

Rule of Thumb:

Anything which does not come directly from you needs to be referenced!

When citing specific

Operas:

Titles of works - *italicise* OR underline - be consistent, use only one style

Technical musical terms are always italicised e.g. *allegro*

Aria titles must appear in full in double quotation marks with normal type.

When discussing a libretto present tense is customary.

Be careful not to fall into the trap of describing the plot (if the libretto is not well known you can add a synopsis in an Appendix – this saves words in your assignment) as your essay needs to **analyse** rather than **describe**.

Use Roman numerals for Acts and scenes, e.g. Act II, sc. iv

Music Examples

Music examples must be clearly labelled with aria name and bar number; tempo markings; clefs; time and key signatures and instrumentation. These can be scanned into the text. They may also be added at the end in a separate section where each example needs to be numbered to correspond with the numbers used in your text.

With all music examples **highlight the salient points** in some way to indicate which specific part you are referring to. This can be done in various ways e.g. with highlighting or inserting arrows, crosses, circles etc.

Please follow this link to a brief podcast about [how to take score examples](#):

Internet

The full web address must be given for all material obtained from Internet sources. This list should be added after the books in the Bibliography with a subheading 'Internet sources' and arranged alphabetically **with the date you accessed it** (as websites go down and may not be available when the reader looks at your work):

Title. Web page, Date accessed. Available URL (web address)

Discography

Discographies are written at the end of essays when CD/DVD booklet notes have been used.

These are listed as:

Composer. *Title* Conductor. Company name and recording number. Date of issue. Format (CD, DVD etc.):

Wagner, R. *Die Walküre* Solti. EMI 4367, 1965, CD re-release.

Foot Notes

These are for additional information needed to elaborate a point in the text but which is not crucial to your argument. They are placed at the bottom of the page automatically when you click on 'add footnote' in the Reference section of your tool bar – your computer will automatically number them and change the number should you make any adjustments later.

Appendix/Appendices

These are sections added at the end and are text based. Each one deals with a specific point and is numbered Appendix 1, Appendix 2 etc.

Bibliography

Here **all** texts, journals, newspaper articles, CDs, DVDs, notes and websites consulted for the essay, whether quoted in the text or not, should be listed alphabetically, by author surname.

Entries detail the following with this punctuation:

author/editor surname, initial. Date of publication in brackets (If there is no date of publication 'nd' is used) title (*italicised*), place of publication: publisher.

Example:

Radice, Mark A. Ed. (1998) *Opera in Context* Oregon: Amadeus Press.

NB: Make sure that the assignment, End Notes, Appendices and Bibliography all have their own separate pages – do not start any of them at the bottom of a previous page.

Submitting your Work

When your assignment is complete, it should be uploaded to the relevant submission link on your module page on the VLE. See the document "[How to submit your assignment](#)" for step by step guidance.

Check list for Submitting work

Order of pages:

- Cover sheet
- Essay pages
- (Music Examples if not placed within the text)
- Appendices
- Bibliography