

**Formatting Guidelines for Research Paper**

**at NG University**

**- Compact Version -**

This document is a guide on how to format your Research Paper. The focus of this compact guide is on the most important formatting elements that you must pay attention to. Examples illustrate those elements and help you to understand how to format your paper.

**Generally, the formatting guidelines at NG University are based on the APA style. Additional instructions might however be added for certain situations.**

The formatting elements in this guide include:

* General Settings in Word
* Heading Levels
* Table of Contents
* References
* Tables and Figures

# General Settings in Word

The table below shows some of the basic settings you have to use in the Word document of your paper.

Table 1  
Basic Word Settings

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Aspect** | **Recommended Setting** |  |
| Paper Size | A4 | Apply these to your entire Word document |
| Margin Settings | Top: 2,54 cm (1 inch), Bottom: 2,54 cm (1 inch), Left: 3,17 cm (1.25 inch), Right: 3.17 cm (1.25 inch) |
| Page Numbering | Add Page Numbers with the format  1, 2, 3, and so on. The alignment of page numbers is centered at the bottom of the page. |
| Page Breaks | Start a new page for every new main chapter (e.g., Literature Review) |
| Font | Arial or Times New Roman | Use these instructions as the settings for the button “Normal” text.  Every paragraph that is not a Heading will automatically be formatted according to these settings. |
| Font Size | 11 (Arial) or 12 (Times New Roman) |
| Font Color | Black |
| Line spacing | One and a half spacing (1.5) |
| Alignment | Justified or Left-Aligned |
| Indentation | Indent the first line of each new paragraph by 1,25 cm (0.5 inches) |

# Heading Levels

One of the most fundamental elements in the structure of a paper are headings. The formatting of headings at NG University is based on the APA style which defines several “Heading Levels” and provides instructions on how to format those different levels. Those instructions include the justification of headings, whether or not the heading should be bold or italic, the capitalization, whether or not the heading is indented, and where you should start the body text. An overview of different Heading Levels is shown in the table below. It is recommended to generally define Headings with the proper settings in your Word file. Further below you find an example which illustrates the formatting guidelines for Heading Levels.

Table 2  
Overview of different Heading Levels

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | Format |
| Heading Level 1 | **Centered, Bold, Title Case Capitalization Font Size 16**  **Paragraph Distance:**  **Before: 42 Pt**  **After: 30 Pt** |
| Heading Level 2 | **Left-Aligned, Bold, Title Case Capitalization Font Size 14**  **Paragraph Distance:**  **Before:36**  **After: 18** |
| Heading Level 3 | **Indented, bold, Sentence case capitalization, Font Size 12**  **Paragraph Distance:**  **Before:18**  **After: 12** |
| *Note.* Go to https://apastyle.apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines/capitalization/title-case for more information on how to realize “Title case Capitalization” | |

# Table of Contents

Every thesis must contain a Table of Contents. If you define all of your headings in Word, creating a Table of Contents with the in-build function in Word is easy. The example below is the Table of Contents for this document and illustrates the formatting for a table of contents.

Apply the following guidelines for your Table of Contents:

* Use the heading “**Contents**” without numbering it
* Except for the heading “Contents”, use the same font, font size and line spacing as in your main text.
* Usually only heading levels 1-3 are included in the table of contents.
* Entries in the table of contents are left-aligned with an additional indent for each heading level. For example, look at 4. (Heading Level 1), 4.1 (Heading Level 2), and 4.1.1 (Heading Level 3) in the example below)
* The formatting guideline for different heading levels as explained above do not apply here! For example, in the table of contents below, no heading is bold.

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# References

References are an essential part of scientific work. Your paper is going include many references. For detailed instructions on the use of references please look at the detailed guide “Requirements for writing a Bachelor or Master Thesis at Nehemiah Gateway University”.

To give a short illustration on the use of references see some selected examples below.

## Examples for Parenthetical Citations

### Example 1

The role of the teacher’s voice is even more important during online teaching because other aspects of body language are missing (Bao, 2020).

### Example 2

University Courses can easily be transformed to online teaching (Skulmowski & Daniel Rey, 2020).

## Example for a Narrative Citation

### Example 1

Xhelili et al. (2021) found that Albanian students have a positive opinion about the role and benefits of technology to education during the COVID-19 pandemic.

## Example for a Direct Citation

### Example 1

Bao (2020) explains that “In traditional in-class teaching, body language, facial expressions, and teachers' voice are all important teaching tools”.

## Creating a Reference List

Shown below is an example of a reference list including the citations that are used in the examples above.

Pay attention to the following formatting instructions in a reference list:

* Use “**References**” as the heading of your reference list
* Font, font size and line spacing for each reference list entry have the same format as the main text of your paper
* Reference list entries are presented in alphabetical order.
* For each reference list entry, each line except the first line is indented

References

Bao, W. (2020). COVID-19 and online teaching in higher education: A case study of Peking University. *Human Behavior and Emerging Technologies*, 113-115.

Skulmowski, A., & Daniel Rey, G. (2020). COVID-19 as an accelerator for digitalization at a German university: Establishing hybrid campuses in times of crisis. *Human Behavior and Emerging Technologies*, 212-216.

Xhelili, P., Ibrahimi, E., Rruci, E., & Sheme, K. (2021). Adaptation and Perception of Online Learning during COVID-19 Pandemic by Albanian University Students . *International Journal on Studies in Education*, 103-111.

# Tables and Figures

Tables and Figures are found in every thesis or paper and require a certain formatting too. APA style includes certain guidelines on the preparation of tables and figures which will be explained in the following.

## Tables

Whenever you include a table in your thesis or paper follow the APA guideline for tables as explained in the following. The example below will help you to understand the instructions.

* Remove all vertical lines from your table
* Use horizontal lines only where necessary for clarity.
* Add a table number above the table in bold letters (**Table 4** in the example below).
* Add a brief title, in italic and with title case capitalization, below the table number (*Past Graduates of Bachelor and Master Program* in the example below).
* Tip: Use the “Insert Caption” function in Word to add table number and title (If you use this function, Word automatically numbers tables which is also going to help you create a list of tables easily.)
* If you want to add a note, place it below the table by writing “*Note.*” (italic) followed by the note (“The graduation for some students in 2020 was delayed due to COVID-19” in the example below).

**Table 4**  
Past Graduates of Bachelor and Master Program

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Year of Graduation | Bachelor | Master |
| 2017 | 12 | 5 |
| 2018 | 15 | 4 |
| 2019 | 10 | 8 |
| 2020 | 7 | 2 |
| Total | 44 | 19 |

*Note*. The graduation for some students in 2020 was delayed due to COVID-19

## Figures

When you include a figure in your thesis or paper make sure you follow the formatting guidelines as follows:

* Add a figure number above the figure in bold letters (**Figure 1** in the example below).
* Add a brief title, with title case capitalization and italic letters, below the figure number (*Favorite Color* in the example below).
* Tip: Use the “Insert Caption” function in Word to add a figure number and title (If you use this function, Word automatically numbers tables which is also going to help create a list of tables easily.)

**Figure 1**

Favorite Color

## List of Tables and Figures

If you included tables or figures in your thesis or paper, you must include a list of tables and a list of figures at the beginning of your thesis or paper. If you used the “Insert a caption” function in Word whenever you included a table or a figure in your document, creating a list of tables and figures is easy. Under “References” you can add a list of tables or figures and Word automatically creates them.

See the examples below for a List of Tables and a List of Figures.

Makes sure you apply the same font, font size and line space that you apply to your entire document. Use the Headings “List of Tables” and “List of Figures” without numbering and treat them as a Level 1 heading.

**List of Tables**

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