

ESSAY GUIDELINES

UCL Cognitive Neuroscience MSC/MRes

2016-17 academic year

Some of the taught modules will be assessed with a 2,000-3,000 word essay. Below are guidelines to help you write these essays. If you have further questions, do not hesitate to contact the Programme Director or Module Convenor.

1. General format

Which Master's modules do these guidelines apply to?

The guidelines below apply to the Current Issues II: Elaborative and Adaptive Processes module and Current Issues III: Translational Research module. Guidelines about the assessments of the other modules are provided in class.

How should the essays be formatted?

Essays must be word processed. A legible standard font (e.g. Times Roman or Arial size 12), A4 format and double spacing should be used. New paragraphs should be indented or separated by an empty line and either the left or both edges should be justified.

What should the title page look like?

Essays must contain a title (cover) page that is separate from the essay itself. An example is given below. To ensure that marking is blind you should **not** put your name or student number anywhere on the essay. You will be given a unique identifying candidate number at the start of the year, which should appear on the front cover. The title page should contain the name of the module, the essay question you have chosen to answer, your candidate number, the date of submission, and the word count of the essay.

Current Issues in Cognitive Neuroscience II:
Elaborative and Adaptive Processes

How can studies of brain-damaged patients
inform models of language processing?

Candidate: MKKN4
Word count: 2,659

Should I put the UCL logo on the cover page?

This is not necessary.

How long should the essay be?

Essays should be 2,000-3,000 words in length. Penalties for overlength coursework apply, as specified in your Handbook. Everything from the first word of the introduction to the conclusion counts. The word count excludes the cover page and reference list, but everything else counts, including in-text references and legends of diagrams if these are used.

Is there a lower limit on essay length?

There are no automatic penalties for work that is below the minimum essay requirement. However, such essays usually attract lower marks because they do not demonstrate wide reading, integration, and penetrating insight.

Can diagrams be included?

Sometimes diagrams can increase the clarity of an essay and so diagrams may be included if necessary. They must be numbered and titled (immediately below) and may be inserted into the body of the text. It is not customary to include tables or data in essays. Diagrams that are copied or redrawn from other sources must be directly acknowledged. Titles and legends count towards the word limit.

Can the essay have sections and headings?

This is a matter of individual taste. We generally recommend using headed sections as this makes the structure of the essay explicit to the reader. A typical 2,000-3,000 word essay would perhaps contain 4-6 headings. Avoid using too many sections.

Can the essay have footnotes and endnotes?

These should be used very sparingly, if at all. If something is important enough to be said, it should normally be stated in the main text. Footnotes are preferable to endnotes. Footnotes and endnotes count towards the word limit.

Should pages be numbered?

All pages should be numbered.

What reference and writing style should I use?

You are expected to use the style of the American Psychological Association (APA – see www.apastyle.org).

2. Deadlines and submission

How should essays be submitted?

Essays must be submitted in Word doc, rtf or pdf format via Moodle on or before the specified deadline. If you have problems with Moodle, contact the Teaching Administrator as soon as possible via email (cogneuro_admin@ucl.ac.uk), attaching a copy of your essay.

Should I also submit a hardcopy?

No – only an electronic submission is needed.

Do deadlines have to be met?

Yes. There are strict regulations about deadlines. Penalties apply to late submissions unless there are approved extenuating circumstances. Carefully peruse the Handbook of your Master's programme.

How many copies should I submit?

You should submit one electronic copy of each essay. Please keep a copy for your own records.

My memory stick got corrupted and I lost my work. Can I apply for an extension?

Computer malfunctions are not usually considered to be valid extenuating circumstances. Be sure to keep multiple copies of coursework, and do not keep them all in the same place. Cloud computing can help in this respect.