Please ensure that your thesis meets the formatting requirements listed below, referring to the **Thesis writing guide** for more detail where necessary. Your supervisor will indicate if there are any additional formatting requirements for your field of study or type of project.

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| --- | --- |
| **x** | **General formatting requirements** |
|  | Document type: .pdf, or .doc file |
|  | Font: Arial; 10.5 or 11 point |
|  | Spacing: 1.5 lines in the body of the text; single-spaced for figure legends |
|  | Margins: 2 cm on all sides |
|  | Justification: align left |
|  | Page numbers: on every page except the cover page |
|  | Turnitin score < 15% |
|  | For hardcopy submission: printed on white A4 paper, bound with the title page visible |
| **x** | **Ethics** |
|  | Where necessary, any ethical approval clearly detailed |
|  | Any conflicts of interest stated |
| **x** | **Title Page** |
|  | Project title |
|  | Your name and registration number |
|  | Your supervisor’s name |
|  | Submission statement, with your degree name, your signature, and the date |
|  | Total word count present and correct (Word count must be ≤ 5,000 words excluding title and contents, abstract, list of abbreviations, tables, figures, figure legends, acknowledgements, reference list) |
|  | Departmental address, followed by the month and year of submission |
| **x** | **Contents Page** |
|  | Headed by “Contents” or “Table of Contents” at the top of a new page |
|  | Each item listed with the correct corresponding page number |
| **x** | **Abstracts** |
|  | **Technical abstract:** 225-250 words |
|  | * includes background, methods, results, and conclusions |
|  | * includes all significant findings described in the work |
|  | **Lay abstract:** 225-250 words |
|  | * no jargon or technical language |
|  | * understandable by a high-school student |
|  | Word count provided underneath each abstract |
|  | No references included in the abstracts |
| **x** | **Acknowledgements** |
|  | Begin at the top of a new page |
|  | Include anyone who has helped you with your work |
| **x** | **List of abbreviations (optional)** |
|  | Begin at the top of a new page |
|  | Abbreviations listed in alphabetical order and defined |
|  | Use of non-standard or uncommon abbreviations avoided where possible |
| **x** | **Text (Introduction, Methods, Results, Discussion)** |
|  | Paragraph formatting: consistent spacing and indentation used throughout   * first or last line of a paragraph not orphaned on a page |
|  | **Headings and sub-headings** used to break up the text into logical sections |
|  | * Consistently formatted throughout (font size, line spacing, justification, etc.) |
|  | **Spelling and grammar:** Spell-and grammar-check used, and text manually checked for errors |
|  | * Checked for commonly misused homophones, e.g. “too” and “two”, and commonly misspelled words |
|  | * Checked for commonly misused words, e.g. “which” versus “that” or “affect” versus “effect” |
|  | **Citations** in the text follow a consistent and correct style |
|  | * placed at the end of a sentence or clause, before the closing punctuation mark, e.g. “… kinase (Smith et al., 1987).” or “….kinase [1], which…” * where citing several works, all enclosed within a single set of brackets |
|  | Statistical methods clearly stated (in methods or where appropriate) |
|  | Acronyms parenthetically defined at first use, e.g. deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) |
|  | Correct use of SI units and metric prefixes, e.g. kg |
|  | Very large or very small numbers expressed in scientific notation, with the correct number of significant figures |
|  | Correct formatting of chemical names and formulae |
|  | Correct formatting of any symbols, e.g. , etc. |
|  | Correct use of any subscripts and superscripts, e.g., H2O, not H2O; *ade*+, not *ade*+ |
|  | Correct formatting of species names:   * Binomial species names used, e.g., *Homo sapiens* rather than human * Species names italicized, properly capitalised, and written in full on the first use, e.g., *Escherichia coli*, and abbreviated thereafter (*E. coli*) * Strain names or serovar names not italicized, e.g., *Escherichia coli* BL21; *Salmonella enterica* subsp. *enterica* serovar Typhi * Virus names formatted according to ICTV guidelines |
|  | Gene and protein names correctly formatted:   * Gene names italicised, protein names not italicized * Capitalised correctly: e.g., for bacteria the gene name is written *dnaA* and the protein name, DnaA; for yeast the gene and protein names are capitalized (e.g. *ADE2* and ADE2); conventions for other organisms vary |
|  | **Introduction** begins at the top of a new page |
|  | * places the study in context, demonstrates relevance, comprehensively analyses recent published work in the field |
|  | * ends with a statement of the project hypothesis and aims |
|  | **Results** described with a description of the rationale and design for each experiment, an outline of what was done, followed by a description of the data and a brief conclusion |
|  | **Discussion** includes an interpretation of the data, not just a repetition of the results |
|  | * cites previously published studies relevant to the findings presented |
|  | * ends with a clear conclusion relating to the hypothesis |
| **x** | **Methods** |
|  | Sufficient detail given for replication, including (where necessary): temperature, pH, media/buffer recipes, centrifugal speeds in x g, number of replicates, etc. |
|  | Sources given for any chemicals, cell lines, instruments, programs, etc. used |
|  | Correct accession numbers provided for all publicly available data used |
|  | Where necessary, sex and/or gender reported for cell lines, animal models, or study participants |
|  | References any previously published methods where used, with any modifications clearly noted; any novel methods described in full |
|  | Written in the past tense and usually, passive voice |
| **x** | **Figures and Tables** |
|  | Each figure or table immediately follows its first mention in the text |
|  | Resolution sufficient to clearly visualise all aspects of the figure without blurriness or distortion (suggested 300 dpi minimum) |
|  | All figures and tables checked for accessibility: font and font size legible, colour-blind safe data visualisation, alt text |
|  | **Titles:** All figures and tables correctly numbered and given appropriate titles |
|  | * Figures consecutively numbered beginning from Figure 1; Tables consecutively numbered beginning from Table 1 * Compound figures have panels clearly labelled beginning from A |
|  | **Legends:** |
|  | * All figures have an appropriate legend that allows a reader to interpret the figure without reference to the main text. |
|  | * Tables have brief legends only if needed to define abbreviations or symbols |
|  | * For figures or tables taken from published sources, the legend includes a reference to the original work. |
|  | Title and legend correctly placed for each figure/table:   * On the same page as the figure or table. (For full-page figures where it is necessary to continue onto the next page, this is clearly indicated.) * For figures, directly beneath the figure; for tables, directly above the table |
|  | Amino acid or nucleotide sequences are in Courier or another monospaced font |
|  | All symbols and abbreviations used are defined |
|  | Numerical data reported with the correct number of significant digits corresponding to the magnitude of experimental uncertainty |
|  | Correct scientific formatting followed as appropriate for each figure type, e.g. axes properly labelled for graphs, scale bars given for micrographs |
|  | Any image manipulation or statistical analysis used to produce the figure or table clearly stated |
| **x** | **Reference list** |
|  | All works cited in the text appear in the reference list |
|  | Primary sources cited wherever possible (the original publication of any given data, observation, or theory) |
|  | Only acceptable sources cited (in most cases, these are journal articles, books, preprints) |
|  | **Formatting:** either Harvard or Vancouver style used consistently and correctly throughout |
|  | * Checked that the reference manager preserved correct formatting of any symbols, species names, gene names, chemical formulae, etc. |
| **x** | **Additional formatting guidelines provided by your supervisor, specific to your field or type of project** |
|  | G in Gram should be capitalized. Acronyms like BLAST should be capitalized where this is customary. |
|  | Check for correct grammar – avoid sentence fragments and run-on sentences. Watch out for correct comma use. |
|  | Avoid using jargon or unnecessary abbreviations |
|  | Be concise – eliminate all unnecessary words |
|  | Double check reference list to make sure species names are correctly formatted – ditto for gene and protein names (reference management software often get this wrong) |
|  | Make sure that your writing follows a logical flow.  The paragraph should be the basic unit – one major thought described per paragraph. Each paragraph should begin with a topic sentence that makes it clear to the reader what that paragraph will be about. The topic sentence is then followed by other sentences that elaborate upon that topic, explaining your thoughts in more detail. The paragraph should end with a sentence that either sums up the conclusions and/or transitions logically to the next paragraph. 🡨 this is an example of how a paragraph should be structured! |
|  | For each experiment that you have done, make sure that you explain:  1. your aim (the reason why you did the experiment)  2. the method (how you did the experiment)  3. the results (what you found)  4. the significance (what the results mean)  - always in that order |
|  | Make sure that your introduction lays out the groundwork and context for your aims and hypothesis (the reader should think that your first experiment is the only logical one to do when they start reading the results). In this case you should be outlining what has previously been done in the field of active learning and virtual escape rooms – and/or what has been published about effective educational practices on your topic of interest (pandemics or murder mysteries). This will allow you to compare/contrast your results with the previous literature when it comes time to write your discussion. |
|  | For your discussion, make sure you are considering your results in the light of the research that has already been done in the field (how do your results compare with what’s already been found? what do they mean in terms of mechanism/broader biology or ecology/future directions for research?) |