

Checklist Term Papers in English Literature

Tick (✓) the box on the right when you have completed the task.

PREPARATORY WORK	✓
Have the exact phrasing of your topic approved by course convenor	
Download and read official style sheet : https://www.angam.phil.fau.de/files/2019/03/Written-Assignments-18.03.19.pdf	
Format cover page according to style sheet (no links, no logos, no colours, all information accurate, up to date, complete)	
Find a suitable primary text to quote from (critical edition, annotated scholarly edition)	
Consult the MLA International Database to locate recent journal articles referring specifically to your primary text and/or topic	
Order any necessary literature that is not available online via interlibrary loan (Fernleihe)	
Document all sources (write bibliographic record on photocopies or in an electronic document the moment you download an article)	
If you do not know: Find out how to create a Table of Contents automatically (time saver!)	
!!! Routinely back up your work (every evening, after each big achievement etc.), number your versions	

CONTENT	✓
INTRODUCTION	
Think about your research aims first (what do you want to find out?), then formulate a clear thesis	
Choose and specify the theoretical approach or methodology you are going to use to substantiate the thesis, e.g. feminism/gender/queer studies, New Historicism, Cultural Materialism, Postcolonialism, Psychoanalysis, Ecocriticism, genre-based (e.g. dystopia, Gothic fiction), transfer between different media (adaptation studies).	
Give reasons for your choices – what additional value lies in your approach?	
BODY OF THEORY	
All relevant terms and buzz words from your topic are defined or explained	
Remove all redundant or irrelevant information (author's biography, plot summary of the text, your own feelings and subjective impressions)	
All theoretical positions you use are commented, contextualized, or evaluated	
All claims, quotes, paraphrases are substantiated (!!! page numbers, film: time index!!!)	
TEXT ANALYSIS	
You refer back to facts you established in your body of theory .	
You have not confused representations of people/things/situations with the people/things/situations themselves	
You have avoided anachronisms ("what Lewis Carroll can tell us about childhood today")	
You have avoided clichés, stereotypes ("all Victorians were very prudish")	
You have avoided intentionalism ("The author wanted to say...")	
You quote , all quotes are contextualized and analysed in terms of content, language or style, placed within the context of an overarching argument (= not just to fill pages)	

CONCLUSION	
Summarize your findings (hint: this is easier if you add mini-summaries at the end of each longer chapter)	
Refer back to your research aims and thesis, show you have solved the task	
Optional: opportunities your topic offers for further research ?	

FORM	√
TABLE OF CONTENTS	
Find meaningful headlines (not just one word, not just “Introduction” or “Conclusion”)	
Capitalisation rules are observed	
Works Cited is not numbered, Affidavit not listed	
MANUSCRIPT	
Text is neither too long nor too short (10-12 pages in MLA style, Times New Roman 12 pt or Arial 11 pt means 30,000 characters including spaces , +/- 3,000 characters)	
Text is not overstructured – no chapter should be less than a page , there should be no empty chapters (one headline directly following another without connecting text)	
Text includes citations and/or block quotes to substantiate your claims	
!!!! Entire manuscript distinguishes between italics (larger works such as novel, book of essays, journal, film, drama, website) and double quotation marks (smaller works such as short stories, essays, article on a website or in a journal)	
Check language : No contractions (don’t, won’t), no colloquial language (“he got killed” → “he was killed”), no sentences starting in “And” or “But”, no flowery language (“we delve into the intricate fabric of the Gothic novel”), no subjectivity (“in my opinion”)	
BIBLIOGRAPHY	
Includes at least five sources	
Is complete (including primary texts and, if used, films)	
Includes works from literary and cultural studies	
All sources are academic	
All secondary sources are up to date (no older than 15 years, exception: standard works, ‘non-mainstream’ topics)	
Capitalisation rules are observed (<i>The Birth of Tragedy</i> , not: <i>The birth of tragedy</i>)	
ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS	
Affidavit (AI version) read, signed, and attached?	
Form “Documentation of AI Use” read, signed, and attached?	
Reflective Statement (either as an additional page or a short audio/video file)	
Optional: Do you need an appendix (sequence protocols of films, film stills, real illustrations that are not just for decoration) and if so, have you documented all materials it contains?	

WHEN YOU HAVE FINISHED WRITING AND FORMATTING	✓
Read critically: remove or change any empty phrases or illogical passages	
Use a spelling checker , have another look at marked passages	
(Ideally: have someone else) Proof-read your manuscript for typos	
Check length (word count) and completeness of manuscript (signed affidavit!)	
Check paragraphs: justified , <i>i.e.</i> no ragged margins, new paragraphs indented by 1 cm (not on new page or after block quote), avoid widows, orphans	
Submit your paper (plus additional audio/video file with reflective statement?) to Stud On– no paper version needed	