A Guide to Preparing a Paper or Master’s Thesis

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2. **Introduction**

Writing skills are of eminent importance to a lawyer. That is why some courses require you to write a paper and the LL.M. programme requires you to write a thesis at the end of your studies. There are strict requirements regarding the contents and the procedure. The following guidelines will provide you with information for successful completion.

If you would like more guidance during the writing of your thesis, then you are advised to consult the following websites:

- WWW <http://www.learnerassociates.net/dissthes/> (structure and format)
- WWW <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/> (language)
- WWW <http://writingcenters.org/index.php> (overview writing centres)

The paper/thesis must be in English. This means for most of you, since English is not your native language, that you will encounter difficulties in the conversion of domestic law expressions in English. In order to assist you with translation of legal terms, refer to:

  
or:
- WWW <http://www.duhaime.org/dictionary/diction.htm>
- WWW <http://www.lectlaw.com/def/a226.htm>
- WWW <http://dictionary.law.com>
- WWW <http://www.contractcentral.com/>  
- WWW <http://www.lawdictionaries.com/tabone.htm>
- WWW <http://www.constitution.org/bouv/>

3. **Purpose of Writing a Paper or Thesis**

The purpose of writing a paper or your thesis is to demonstrate that you have been able to apply the knowledge, insights and skills that you have acquired in an independent manner. The purpose of researching, analysing and writing a paper/thesis includes the ability to:

a. formulate a scientific question in the field of legal studies and develop a research plan;
b. collect the relevant information and arrange, analyse, correlate and apply such information;
c. draw relevant conclusions and, whenever possible, formulate tenable solutions;
d. provide your results in a written form in a clear and orderly fashion.
The process of writing a paper/thesis is a test of your academic capabilities. Thus, it is not sufficient to simply summarize the opinions of authors and then present them as your own. A paper/thesis must always be written in your own words (see below Section 9).

4. Thesis Procedure

The following procedure should be followed for the completion of your thesis:

Coordinator
A first step will be to select a topic regarding which to write a thesis. Please note that it is your responsibility to come up with a topic and to consider possible ways of dealing with that topic and to develop your idea(s) further. When considering possible, specific topics, you may contact the thesis coordinator of your Programme to make an appointment for discussion.

The thesis coordinators of the LL.M. programmes are:

- **Criminal Law and Criminology**
  Dr. K.K. Lindenberg 3638065 or K.K.Lindenberg@rug.nl

- **European Law**
  Prof. Dr. L.W. Gormley 3635690 or L.W.Gormley@rug.nl

- **Specialization Energy and Climate Law (within European Law)**
  Prof. Dr. M.M. Roggenkamp 3633388 or M.M.Roggenkamp@rug.nl

- **International and Comparative Private Law**
  Prof. Dr. A.J. Verheij 3635767 or A.J.Verheij@rug.nl

- **International Economic and Business Law**
  Prof. Dr. M.L. Lennarts 3635609 or M.L.Lennarts@rug.nl

- **International Law and the Law of International Organizations**
  Dr. A.G. Hallo de Wolf 3637446 or A.G.Hallo.de.Wolf@rug.nl
Supervisor
A supervisor will be assigned to you on the basis of your discussion with the coordinator. You ought to have a thesis topic and an assigned supervisor before 1 March 2014. You are responsible for contacting your supervisor to discuss the topic more in depth. When the topic and supervisor have been determined, you need to register for the NESTOR site of your supervisor (see below, Annex).

Approval of topic
Once your topic has been approved by the thesis supervisor you will be responsible for developing a thesis outline. You are not allowed to change the topic of your thesis without specifically discussing this with your supervisor and notifying this to the thesis coordinator. The outline must include a definition of the problem, the legal question(s) involved and a breakdown of the chapters and sections (see below Section 6).

Approval of outline
Your supervisor must have approved your outline before you may begin the work on your thesis involving the research and writing of your paper. You must hand in your approved outline via the NESTOR Thesis site or the NESTOR site of your supervisor (see Annex). After handing in the outline, you will have the opportunity to gain periodic feedback from your supervisor. Substantial changes in your outline or choice of topics must be discussed in advance with your supervisor, and the amended outline must be placed on Nestor; otherwise this may lead to delays in completing your thesis.

Drafts
You may choose to hand in one or more chapters at a time for review or, in the alternative, you may decide to hand in a completed initial draft of your thesis. You must hand in your drafts in both written and electronic form. Also, please ensure that all drafts for review comply with the standards regarding spelling, grammar, layout, referencing, etc. Your supervisor is entitled to hand a draft copy of your thesis back to you for improvements in these areas before reading it for substantive comments.

Comments and suggested corrections
The supervisor will provide comments and suggest corrections and may also recommend further research and/or analysis. Please note that with each new revision you submit to your supervisor, you should also include the previous copy of the draft containing your supervisor’s comments or suggestions.
**Final version of thesis**

Once you have incorporated the comments, the corrections, and possible further analysis suggested by your supervisor, you should hand in a final and bound copy of your thesis for the purpose of grading it.

**Assignments**

Before a grade is finalised by your supervisor and the second marker, you need to accomplish three assignments:

1. to upload your thesis in NESTOR for plagiarism control (see below Section 9);
2. to upload a summary in NESTOR
   
   The summary should contain your description of the problem and the research question, brief descriptions of the topics and findings of your individual chapters, and an answer to your research question and a general conclusion).
3. to send your thesis by e-mail to scriptie.rechten@rug.nl, with cc. to your supervisor.

Moreover, before handing in the final version of your thesis, you will be asked to fill out a thesis survey in order to evaluate the process of writing a thesis. These assignments may be found in the NESTOR site of your thesis supervisor (see below, Annex).

**Grade**

Your supervisor and another lecturer will review your final thesis and assign a grade (see below Section 11). Before this grade becomes official the student must place a summary of at least one page on the NESTOR site of your thesis supervisor and hand in a copy of that summary to the supervisor. The supervisor will then write a thesis note establishing your grade, which will be submitted to the teaching administration.

5. **Selecting a Topic**

In selecting a topic for your paper/thesis, you should consider investigating a subject area that presents some kind of problem and one that allows you to formulate one or more legal questions. The research into this problem must be from a legal perspective. The best topics are those which contain some kind of controversy or a topic about which authors have different opinions, since substantial agreement may make it more difficult for you to formulate a well-balanced and distinct argument.

You should avoid a topic that covers a broad or general field of law.
For example: an investigation into the legal aspects of the use of military force in international relations would generally require you to consider the prohibition on the use of force and its scope, the right of individual and collective self-defence, humanitarian intervention, the protection of nationals abroad, and the competence of the Security Council under Chapter VII of the Charter. Clearly, each of these topics could form the basis for a separate thesis and any attempt to cover them all in a single thesis would result in a mere superficial examination of each of these areas.

Generally, you should ensure that your research focuses on a particular argument or specific aspect of your topic.

For example: if you choose to study self-defence you could narrow down the discussion in your paper to a specific situation, development or incident in international relations. Therefore, it would be more appropriate to examine the (il)legality of the strikes by the United States against Sudan and Afghanistan in the context of self-defence.

If you select a topic that requires the use of domestic law of a particular country, you should ensure that you have sufficient access to the necessary legislation, cases and legal literature in the libraries in the Netherlands or via the Internet. Be aware that it may be difficult to obtain such materials. Also, you may be required to provide translations of such materials if this is necessary for a proper understanding of your thesis.

6. An Outline

The writing of a thesis seems an enormous task before you begin. The first thing you have to do is write an outline, a research proposal: a formulation of the problem, the legal question(s) involved and a breakdown of the chapters and (sub)sections, as detailed as possible. This set of questions will guide your research. A good proposal has an appropriate title. The title is the first hint to help the reader begin to understand the nature of the work. Do not think of a title at the end of your writing. Instead, think about one early in the process of writing and revise it if necessary. If your title is long, you can use a title and a subtitle.

Example outline thesis:

Title
The Use of Armed Force by the United States against Afghanistan
Unlawful Armed Attack or Lawful Self-Defence?
Problem
On 11 September 2001 four airplanes were hijacked, three of which were flown into the twin towers of the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. The fourth crashed near Pittsburgh after some of the passengers had attempted to overcome the hijackers. Almost 3,000 people died in these attacks, and the material damage was huge. Even more damaging may have been the psychological blow: this was the first time since the American civil war that any serious attack took place on US soil on the American continent.

These obviously coordinated attacks on American targets were not claimed by any organization or State, though United States authorities soon after the event suggested, and they subsequently obtained evidence, that the Al Qaeda (terrorist) organization was responsible for the attacks. This organisation, led by Osama bin Laden, had its headquarters and training camps in Afghanistan at the time of the attacks, where they were shielded by the Taliban government that controlled over three quarters of Afghan territory.

The United States demanded, mostly in conformity with binding Security Council resolution 1267 (1999), that the Taliban hand over Osama bin Laden and other leading figures for purposes of prosecution, and that training camps for terrorists be closed down. When the Taliban government proved unwilling to give in to these demands, the United States launched massive air strikes against both Al Qaeda and Taliban positions, also supporting an offensive by the Northern Alliance, and eventually sent in troops. As a result the forces of the Taliban government and Al Qaeda were defeated, and many either fled or surrendered. A transitional government has taken over control of Afghanistan.

Principal legal question
Is the use of armed force by the United States against Afghanistan justified as an exercise of the right of self-defence?

Preliminary legal questions
- What acts or situations constitute an armed attack in the sense of article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations? Can the 9/11 attacks be considered an armed attack? Can an isolated incident be considered an armed attack? If so, are the scale and effects of the incident relevant to determining the existence of an armed attack?
- Must an armed attack in the sense of article 51 of the Charter originate from a State? If so, what is the appropriate standard? Must the acts be attributable to the State under the general rules of State responsibility? Or are there special rules pertaining the use of armed force that allow for a less stringent standard? What may be the relevance, in this respect, of the international responsibility of Afghanistan for the breach of its due diligence obligations?
- What is in this respect the relevance of statements of the Security Council, in the preambles of resolutions, recognizing the inherent right of individual and collective self-defence (resolution 1368; 12 September 2001), and reaffirming the inherent right of individual and collective self-defence (resolution 1373; 28 September 2001)? What is the relevance, if any, of the declaration by NATO member States that, should the 9/11 attacks have originated from an organization or state outside the US, these attacks constituted an armed attack against all NATO members?
Plan of action

Introduction

Chapter 1  The 11 September attacks and their aftermath
Section 1  The attacks
Section 2  Al Qaeda, the evidence against it, and links to the Taliban government
Section 3  A pattern of attacks?
Section 4  Responses of States, the United Nations and other actors
Section 5  US military action against Afghanistan

Completion: (planned date)

Chapter 2  The prohibition on the use of force and the set-up of the Charter
Section 1  The prohibition of the use of force
Section 2  Security Council powers under Chapter VII of the Charter
Section 3  The right of self-defence

Completion: (planned date)

Chapter 3  The right of self-defence in international law
Section 1  The interpretation of the phrase ‘armed attack’
Section 2  The question of the author of an armed attack
Section 3  The sending by or on behalf of a State of armed bands
Section 4  Attribution of conduct to a State
Section 5  Due diligence obligations

Completion: (planned date)

Chapter 4  US military action as an exercise of the right of self-defence?
Section 1  The 9/11 attacks as an armed attack
Section 2  Al Qaeda as the author of the attacks
Section 3  Implication of the Taliban government in the attacks
Section 4  Afghanistan’s responsibility for breaches of due diligence obligations

Completion: (planned date)

Conclusions

Completion: (planned date)
7. Research and Analysis of the Topic

Your research should reflect the various positions taken or deduced from the literature with regard to specific legal questions. When doing your research you should search for all relevant documents, cases, books and articles. The more specific a certain source is, the more useful it will be for your research.

Thus, if your topic is anticipatory self-defence, then a book or article about anticipatory self-defence will usually be better than a book or article about the use of force generally.

In your analysis you should critically assess the merits of each argument pro or contra a certain position and express your own views substantiated by arguments. Arguments may be derived from authors but may also be based on your own making. In formulating opinions you can draw upon a variety of sources but you should always consider the various methods, rules, and forms of interpretation (literal, contextual, systematic, and teleological), and assumptions used.

For example: the presumption that you should not interpret a provision in a way that would make another provision redundant. Also, you may consider the influence of general principles of law, e.g. pacta sunt servanda, ex iniurio ius non oritur, in your analysis.

Make sure that you sufficiently address all of the issues within the body of your paper/thesis in the context of your chosen topic.

For example: suppose that you want to address the interpretation of article 2, paragraph 4, of the Charter which states: “All members shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state, or in any manner inconsistent with the Purposes of the United Nations.”

A proper analysis of this provision requires you to argue the meaning of:

a. force (military, economic, political);

b. international relations (inter-State, between a State and a colonial territory, between states within a federation, within a State);

c. territorial integrity (in relation to territorial inviolability);

d. political independence (in relation to perhaps domestic jurisdiction);

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e. State (members, federal States, colonial territories, provinces);
f. purposes of the United Nations (article 1 Charter).

Of course, you may not need to address all of these issues in every detail and you should use your judgement in the context of the aspects of your topic that you intend to deal with.

8. Structure and Format

The basic structure of the thesis should be as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Heading</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Title page</td>
<td>Your title page should include:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a. title (reflecting the topic covered in the paper or thesis);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b. subtitle (if applicable);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>c. name of author;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>d. student number;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>e. date (month and year of conclusion);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>f. name of supervisor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preface</td>
<td>This brief, optional text includes a description of your motivation and/or inspiration for writing your thesis. You may further want to provide acknowledgements and express thanks to individuals who helped you in writing your thesis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table of contents</td>
<td>Provide headings that correspond literally to the titles used within your paper/thesis. It should also contain page numbers for each item included.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>This section should be a description of the problem that you analysed in your paper/thesis. You should include a brief description of historical developments, the problem, the legal question(s) that arose and which you intend to answer, an indication of the importance and relevance of your topic, the manner in which you have approached the topic, methods of research, and sources of research. It should also include a brief overview of each of the chapters, the exclusion of any area(s) of research, and any other relevant information for the reader.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Main text</td>
<td>Your thesis must be divided into chapters with their own introductions and conclusions, further subdivided into sections and subsections. The titles of chapters, sections, subsections, etc. do not generally end with a punctuation mark except perhaps a question mark. Often the biggest challenge in writing a paper/thesis is the development of a proper structure. The basic division of chapters, sections and subsections is the first step. However, you must also structure the text of your paper/thesis into paragraphs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>Summarise the research and present the conclusion(s) drawn. Be sure to answer the legal questions posed in the introduction and distinguish the generally accepted legal positions from your own opinions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bibliography</td>
<td>Provide a list of all literature and documentation that you consulted including textbooks, articles, treaties, legislation, reports, resolutions, cases, advisory opinions, decisions, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendices</td>
<td>If applicable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of abbreviations</td>
<td>This section may appear at the conclusion of your paper/thesis or immediately after the Table of Contents. It may include the names of institutions, magazines, States, etc., which are often used throughout the paper/thesis. The first instance of the term should be written in full with the abbreviation in [square brackets], and subsequent use of the term can be done by simply providing the shortened version.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The technical requirements for the format of your paper are as follows:

- a length of 15,000-17,000 words (excluding any tables, the bibliography, and appendices);
- single line spacing (do not use blank lines to separate paragraphs);
- printed on A4 size paper with margins of three (3) centimetres;
- Times New Roman font, 12 point text size;
- footnotes should be in Times New Roman 10 point text size;
- each chapter should start on a new page;
- page numbers on each page (preferably located on the lower right-hand side, or on alternate sides if you hand in your final version on double-sided pages: see text directly below).

You may submit the final version of your thesis on double-sided pages, in which case you should alternate the numbering of your pages with page numbers on the lower right-hand side for odd pages and on the lower left-hand side for even pages. However, all drafts (previous versions) that you hand in to your supervisor should be on single sided pages only.

9. **Quotations, Paraphrasing, Plagiarism and Fraud**

*Quoting text*

A quotation is a verbatim (literal) reproduction of sentences (or parts thereof). Quotations must be placed inside “quotation marks”.

| Conclusion | Summarise the research and present the conclusion(s) drawn. Be sure to answer the legal questions posed in the introduction and distinguish the generally accepted legal positions from your own opinions. |
| Bibliography | Provide a list of all literature and documentation that you consulted including textbooks, articles, treaties, legislation, reports, resolutions, cases, advisory opinions, decisions, etc. |
| Appendices | If applicable. |
| List of abbreviations | This section may appear at the conclusion of your paper/thesis or immediately after the Table of Contents. It may include the names of institutions, magazines, States, etc., which are often used throughout the paper/thesis. The first instance of the term should be written in full with the abbreviation in [square brackets], and subsequent use of the term can be done by simply providing the shortened version. |
For example: Malanczuk observes:2 “But today there is no doubt, in view of the evolution of the practice of the United Nations, that at least serious human rights abuses may be taken up by various organs of the United Nations as a matter of international concern.”

Quotations over two lines long belong in a quotation environment; a common style is:

Malanczuk observes:3

But today there is no doubt, in view of the evolution of the practice of the United Nations, that at least serious human rights abuses may be taken up by various organs of the United Nations as a matter of international concern.

To use this style, indent the left margin and apply a font size at least two points smaller than the rest of the text. Do not put blank lines before and after the quotation.

*Emphasis on (parts of) quoted text*

To lay emphasis on a certain part of the quoted text, because one considers these words important, one must place that emphasized part of the quote in *italics*.

For example:4 “But today there is no doubt, in view of the evolution of the practice of the United Nations, that *at least serious human rights abuses* may be taken up by various organs of the United Nations as a matter of international concern.”

Put the phrase ‘Italics provided.’ in the footnote immediately after your reference. Instead of ‘Italics provided.’ you may use ‘Emphasis added.’ Choose either one or the other.

*Leaving out text from a quotation*

A passage that is left out from a quote must be represented by … or by (...):

For example, Malanczuk observes that:5 “But today there is no doubt, (...), that at least serious human rights abuses may be taken up by various organs of the United Nations as a matter of international concern.”

In leaving out text one must not alter or change the original meaning of the cited text!

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3 *Ibid.* If the reference in a footnote is exactly the same as the very last reference, you may to use the word ‘*Ibid.*’ If you do not refer to the same page, you may say ‘*Id.,* p. 225.’


Summarizing and paraphrasing text

To summarize views of an author is to describe his/her position or opinion in your own words instead of using the (exact) wording of the author. Summarizing does not as such require quotation marks, but does necessitate putting a reference in a footnote.

For example: With respect to standing to complain about violations of human rights it has been shown that within the United Nations, and in the light of its practice, severe violations are considered a matter of international concern.6

Paraphrasing, which is sometimes also used in the same sense as summarizing, also does not require quotation marks. However, you must insert a footnote containing a reference to the paraphrased text.

For example, originally Ursula Le Guin wrote in The Farthest Shore: “Only one thing in the world can resist an evil-hearted man. And that is another man. In our shame is our glory. Only our spirit, which is capable of evil, is capable of overcoming it.”

It is therefore possible to paraphrase in the following manner: To paraphrase Ursula Le Guin,7 only one thing in the world can resist an evil-hearted State, and that is another State.

If you use ideas, theories, arguments or positions developed by a particular author without making reference to that author, you are guilty of plagiarism.

Plagiarism and fraud

Using an idea or copying a text from an author without providing a reference constitutes fraud and/or plagiarism (which, in the eyes of the academic community, is considered a mortal sin). A verbatim (literal) copy of text, even if only partially, must be placed inside quotation marks or into a quotation environment.

Simply changing one word, or a few words, in a sentence does not discharge you of the duty to provide quotation marks. For example, the original runs:8 “However, the Court considers that the erga omnes character of a norm and the rule of consent to jurisdiction are two different things.”

Suppose this is changed to: However, the Court concluded that the erga omnes character of a norm and the rule of consent to jurisdiction are two different things.

6 Ibid.
If one does not use quotation marks in these circumstances somebody writing a paper/thesis suggests that these are his or her words. However, this is untrue and you must write a thesis in your own words. By not using quotation marks you may open yourself up to an accusation of fraud or plagiarism.

The reference provided for ideas or text copied from another source must be provided in a footnote immediately following such ideas or text. Ordinarily a footnote belongs to the sentence, or part of sentence, to which it is attached. At a maximum a footnote may cover a paragraph, but only if context so indicates. A footnote placed in a particular paragraph does not apply backwards to previous paragraphs nor forward to sentences or paragraphs that follow.

Using ideas or copying text without providing references is fraud, which is defined in article 15 of the Examination Regulations as: “(...) an act or omission by the student designed to partly or wholly hinder the forming of a correct assessment of his or her knowledge, insights and skills (...)” The Board of Examiners may impose sanctions, the most severe being exclusion from the Faculty and its activities for a period of one year.

The rules and regulations on plagiarism and fraud are not part of your learning process; in other words, you are subject to these rules and regulations even when the paper or thesis (chapter) that you hand in is just a draft.

If you copy a text intentionally and fail to place that text either inside quotation marks or into a quotation environment and also neglect to provide a reference, you are liable to criminal sanctions under Dutch copyright law. These sanctions range from a substantial fine to imprisonment for a maximum period of six months.

10. Footnotes, References and the Bibliography

Footnotes
You must create a footnote after a full stop (period), comma, or any other punctuation mark. As the word already indicates, a footnote is positioned at the bottom of the page (your word processing programme will do this automatically).

Use footnotes to:
   a. provide references to books, articles, cases, and documents (treaties, legislation, etc.) from which quotations, ideas or data have been taken;
   b. define the employed terminology (however, if an explanation is crucial to your line of reasoning, it should be provided in the main text);
   c. provide additional information that would unnecessarily interrupt the line of reasoning in the main text.
As indicated above, a footnote applies to the sentence, or part of a sentence, at the end of which the footnote mark is located, or exceptionally to the entire text of the paragraph at the end of which a footnote mark is placed. Footnotes do not apply forward, and do not apply backwards to paragraphs other than the one in which it is situated. An article, book, case, opinion, treaty, law, act, resolution, or any other document that you use in a paper or thesis must have a reference containing its source. For cases, treaties, laws, acts, reports, resolutions, and all other documents, the source must be as official and authentic as possible.


The best source for judgments or advisory opinions of the International Court of Justice is the I.C.J. Reports. The next best source may be the International Law Reports [ILR]. The third best source could be ILM.

Any quotation, paraphrase, or reference to, or summarizing of, the views of an author or a case must be accompanied by the specific page number(s) that relate(s) to the specific subject, idea, argument or information being discussed.

For example: Malanczuk, Akehurst's Modern Introduction, p. 234.

If a work is intended to supply a general reference for a certain topic only, use words such as ‘See generally’.

The first time that you provide a reference to an author, document, case, or decision, a complete citation of the source(s) must be given. In subsequent footnotes you provide the author’s name (without initials) and a shortened title, or just the shortened title. Place the shortened title between [square brackets] directly after having provided the first complete reference.

For example, footnotes 46 and 62:

46. See art. 24-27 Charter for the Kingdom of the Netherlands of 1954 [Charter of the Kingdom of the Netherlands].

(...) 

62. See art. 5 Charter of the Kingdom of the Netherlands.
Books
A reference to a book includes:
   a. author(s) (including initials);
   b. full title (including subtitle; placed in *italics*);
   c. the edition (when applicable);
   d. publisher(s);
   e. place(s) of publication;
   f. year of publication.


Articles in journals
When you refer to an article you must provide:
   a. author(s) (including initials);
   b. full title (including subtitle);
   c. name of magazine (placed in *italics*);
   d. year the magazine was issued;
   e. the volume number of that year’s magazine;
   f. begin and end page of the article.


The volume number is put in between (brackets) before the year of the journal. The use of abbreviations for titles of well-known magazines is permitted (see above Section 8). However, you must include a list of the employed abbreviations.9

Contributions in edited books
The style of a reference to a contribution of an author in an edited book is:
   a. author(s) (including initials);
   b. full title;
   c. *in:*

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9 In the United States of America, legal references all conform to the Bluebook: User’s Guide to a Uniform System of Citations. Please note that in writing your paper/thesis you are required to follow the rules set out in this Guide.
d. name of the editor(s) (including initials; and accompanied by the singular ‘ed.’) or the plural ‘eds.’);

e. full title of the edited book (including subtitle; placed in italics);

f. publisher(s);

g. place(s) of publication;

h. year of publication;

i. begin and end page of the contribution (indicated by way of ‘pp. …-…’).


Cases

In citing cases, one provides the:

a. institution or authority from which the decision originated (include the name of the State concerned);

b. names of judges, arbitrators, or other persons (especially if a case is decided by a subdivision of an institution, or if there are only a few persons to be mentioned; in case of a large institution the names are omitted);

c. full title of the case (or opinion);

d. parties to the case (unless mentioned in the title);

e. type of decision (judgment, arbitration award, advisory opinion, views);

f. date of issuance of the case;

g. publication in which the case has been published (if a case is reported in a magazine, you have to follow the guidelines under: Articles);

h. begin and end page of the case in the publication.


If a case was found on the Internet, you must indicate the specific Internet address where the case was found. It is customary to indicate the date, or at least the month and year, the relevant website was visited; since you cannot always indicate begin and end page, try to be as specific as possible in referring to parts of the case or to separate or dissenting opinions (refer to paragraph numbers, if possible; use ‘para.’ for reference to one paragraph, and use ‘paras.’ for reference to multiple paragraphs).

For example: International Court of Justice, Jurisdictional Immunities of the State (Germany v. Italy; Greece intervening), Judgment, 3 February 2012, paras. 92-97, at WWW <http://www.icj-cij.org/docket/files/143/16883.pdf> (consulted 3 July 2013).

Treaties and documents
In citing treaties and documents, you must provide the:

a. official title;
b. parties (obviously not practicable in case of multilateral treaties);
c. institution adopting the text (whenever relevant);
d. date of adoption (often only the year is provided);
e. source (magazine, book, website).


You must examine original documents rather than rely on secondary sources based on original texts. In the end, authors may misinterpret texts, and they may misquote the original texts. You should look up all crucial documents yourself rather than rely on secondary sources.

For example: You have to include a reference even for a public source such as the Charter of the United Nations: The 1945 Charter of the United Nations, reprinted in American Journal of International Law (39) 1945, Supplement, pp. 190-215.

It may be interesting to provide the reader with the number of States that have become a party to a certain treaty, or the number of members that voted in favour of or against, or abstained in relation to, a particular resolution.

Bibliography

The bibliography must contain a list of all sources examined throughout the research and writing process.

Even if you read an article or book during the research process but did not –very exceptionally– quote or otherwise cite it in your paper/thesis, this source must nevertheless be included in your bibliography.

In the bibliography, books, chapters or contributions within books, and articles by authors are listed in alphabetical order based on last name(s) of the author(s). Cases, advisory opinions and documents are listed in chronological order.

You can search for books and articles in the catalogue of the library of the University of Groningen, at WWW <http://opc.ub.rug.nl/DB=1/LNG=EN/>; in the database PiCarta of Dutch (university) libraries, at: WWW <http://www.rug.nl/bibliotheek/> (click ‘Picarta’; please note that you may have to click on the icon of the British flag first to be able to see the text in English); and now also in worldwide collections, at <http://rug.worldcat.org/> (called ‘SmartCat’). Moreover, upcoming publications on all kinds of topics, and on current cases or events, may be accessed through the website of the Social Science Research Network (SSRN): www.ssrn.com.

Be sure to find out how to use your Inter-Library Account (IBL-account) to order books and copies of articles from other libraries and institutions within the Netherlands.

11. Minimum Requirements and Grading

Requirements

In order for your paper/thesis to be accepted for final grading it should comply with the following minimum requirements:

a. content – there must be a balance between your own arguments and those obtained from the sources used;

b. arguments – must include your own criticism and opinions rather than merely describing the cases, literature and other authors’ opinions;

c. structure and format – as set out above in Section 8;

d. manner of referencing – as set out above in Section 10;
e. comprehensible and correct use of language
f. form and layout – as set out above in Section 8.

Use the spelling and/or grammar check in your word processing programme. If English is not your native language you may consider having your paper reviewed by a native speaker to indicate corrections. In no way should somebody correcting your paper/thesis rewrite your text.

**Grading**
The grading of your paper will be based on the following criteria:

- a. content;
- b. reasoning;
- c. structure and composition;
- d. comprehensible and appealing use of language;
- e. correct use of language;
- f. degree of conducting research independently;
- g. originality of research;
- h. command of (specific) research skills.

A good thesis should present different opinions regarding the problem and answer(s) to the legal question(s) and in addition you should put forward your own points of view supported by arguments with reference to appropriate authorities for or against those arguments, and relying on sources of law relevant to the field of law being researched.
12. Annex

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