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جامعة أحمد زبانة - غليزان
Ahmed Zabana University - Relizane

Ahmed Zabana University of RELIZANE

Faculty of Science and Technology

Civil Engineering and Public Works Department

DOCUMENTARY RESEARCH AND THESIS DESIGN

✓ **Prepared by :** ***Dr. Khadidja BENSELAMA***

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PREFACE

This manuscript, entitled "***DOCUMENTARY RESEARCH AND THESIS DESIGN***", constitutes an integral pedagogical resource for students pursuing the Master's degree (Master 2) in *Structures, Roads, and Civil Engineering Works*, in strict conformity with the official ministerial curriculum framework.

The present teaching materials have been meticulously structured and articulated in a coherent and systematic manner, with the following pedagogical objectives:

- To provide students with the essential methodologies for identifying, analyzing, and effectively integrating relevant information within the framework of their capstone research projects.
- To accompany students throughout the successive stages of conceptualizing and composing scientific documents.
- To emphasize the fundamental role of communication by fostering the ability to disseminate research findings with both methodological rigor and pedagogical clarity.

This work is divided into two main parts, each addressing a fundamental aspect of the research and thesis preparation process.

The first part of this work is devoted to ***documentary research***, which focuses on developing the essential skills required for collecting and organizing academic information. It begins with a first Chapter; this one introduces the subject by providing a precise definition of the research topic and its scope. Second Chapter explains how to select relevant sources of information, ensuring the reliability and academic quality of materials used. Chapter 3 describes the process of locating documents, including the use of libraries, databases, and digital tools. Chapter 4 is dedicated to processing information, emphasizing methods for critical reading, data

extraction, and synthesis. Finally, Chapter 5 outlines the correct presentation of the bibliography, following recognized academic standards.

The second part focuses on the ***design and realization of the thesis***. Chapter one of this section details the planning and stages of the thesis, guiding students through topic selection, organization, and scheduling. Chapter 2 explores appropriate writing techniques and academic standards to ensure clarity, coherence, and formal consistency. The third Chapter presents a workshop devoted to the critical study of a manuscript, helping students develop analytical and evaluative skills. Chapter 4 discusses oral presentations and defenses, focusing on preparation, communication techniques, and self-confidence during examinations. Finally, Chapter 5 provides recommendations on how to avoid plagiarism, reinforcing the importance of academic integrity and ethical research conduct.

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PART I:

DOCUMENTARY RESEARCH

CHAPTER I-1:

DEFINITION OF THE TOPIC

1. INTRODUCTION

Upon completion of a university program, each student is required to undertake a piece of scientific research and to produce a final dissertation. Such a substantial work, grounded in a scientific approach, develops a specific question, namely the research topic, and constitutes a major component of academic training in both technical and other scientific disciplines. In these fields, the research work essentially consists in collecting and examining selected information and relevant documentation relating to the chosen subject. It represents the most comprehensive and advanced form of university work (master's dissertation, doctoral thesis).

This type of work is structured around a clearly defined process comprising specific stages. These extend from the formulation of a research question through to the conclusion, and include the development of a problem statement, the formulation of one or more hypotheses, the design and implementation of fieldwork, as well as the observation and analysis of the data collected.

2. DOCUMENTARY RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In a context characterized by an overabundance of information and by the diversity of its formats and dissemination channels, the processes of documentary research and information validation require the implementation of a rigorous and efficient methodology. Research methodology may be defined as the set of stages that enable the researcher to search for, identify, retrieve, and exploit documents related to a given topic, on the basis of a carefully planned search strategy. This documentary search must necessarily follow a series of essential steps; if it is not systematic and methodical, it cannot guarantee the exhaustiveness or reliability of the information collected.

❖ One or several methods for documentary research?

There exist various methods that may be used to construct an effective documentary search strategy. Nonetheless, these approaches are invariably based on a

limited number of key principles, which will be examined successively in the following sections.

❖ **Objectives of the methodology:**

The overarching aim of a sound research methodology is to support the production of an academic work that combines documentary richness with scientific rigour. More specifically, it seeks to:

- Define and delimit the research topic with precision.
- Select appropriate and reliable information sources.
- Search for, locate, and access relevant documents efficiently.
- Critically evaluate the quality, credibility, and relevance of the sources identified.
- Establish and maintain an ongoing system of documentary monitoring in the chosen field.

3. DEFINING THE RESEARCH TOPIC

- Identifying and formulating a research topic or problem will save a considerable amount of time during the next stage of information gathering. This step is essential to develop a clear understanding of the topic and to determine the directions one must take to address it properly.
- A good research topic should be both interesting and inspiring. It is fundamental to work on a subject that genuinely captures your interest; otherwise, you may lack the motivation and perseverance needed to carry your research through to completion.

When choosing a research topic, several factors should be taken into consideration:

a. Select an original research topic :

Find a new and engaging topic within your scientific field that has not yet been explored or that has not fully achieved the desired outcomes. The primary goal of research is to propose solutions to problems that remain unresolved. Choosing overly studied, saturated, or repetitive topics will considerably reduce the impact and significance of your research work.

b. Choose a topic that sparks your curiosity :

Select a subject you may not yet master but genuinely wish to learn more about—a topic that personally interests you. Without genuine interest, it will be difficult to give your best effort. To identify what truly intrigues you, ask yourself: during your studies, which aspects of your specialization did you find most engaging and would like to explore further? Reflect carefully and list all the themes that motivate you; this will help you narrow down and refine potential research ideas.

c. Opt for a manageable topic :

Try to select a subject that is clearly delimited and focuses on a specific question to be answered. Avoid overly broad themes with numerous details, as they may distract you from your main research objective. Remember that your project is time-bound, and careful time management is essential. It is generally better to narrow down your ideas and concentrate on one or two well-defined aspects of a topic.

d. A realistic topic with scientific contribution:

Identify the scientific value your research could add to the field and the real-world problem it aims to address. The most successful scientific studies are those that respond to a precise question and propose a concrete solution to a problem, even a modest one. Such topics are generally the most worthwhile to pursue.

e. A topic that suits you:

Some students choose to work on complex subjects that require a great deal of time, materials, and scientific resources. You must take into account the time available to you, as well as the resources you can access. Consider also your field of specialization, personal circumstances, and financial situation. Choose a topic that presents a worthwhile challenge but remains realistic and suitable for you.

f. Available resources:

Ensure that the topic you choose has a sufficient knowledge base and accessible prior data. There must be enough available sources to serve as theoretical support for your research. Choosing a topic without reliable or sufficient references may render your study incomplete in terms of information and data, or even lacking in credibility.

3. 1 Formulating the research title

- A title can be formulated in several ways. It may take the form of a question, use infinitive verbs, or follow other stylistic approaches. The essential goal is to find the right words that accurately describe the context, main issue, and, if applicable, the methodology.
- The topic should be expressed in a short sentence using meaningful terms. The research statement must be as precise as possible. Each word in the title matters, as it corresponds to key concepts or keywords that will later help formulate the search equations.

3. 2 Listing the keywords related to the topic

Once the research topic has been identified, the next step is to establish a set of relevant keywords to be entered into search engines to obtain accurate and useful results. Scientific keywords are important words or expressions that describe and represent the core content of the study.

- **The role of keywords:**

Keywords help target the different aspects of the topic. They enhance the visibility of your work, making it more accessible and easier to locate when someone searches for scientific content on a related subject.

- **The placement of keywords in a manuscript:**

The list of keywords always appears in the same place: it is positioned before the main body of the dissertation or thesis, usually following the abstract. This placement allows readers to quickly identify the main theme of the research without having to read through the entire document.

3. 3 Gathering Basic Information

Once you have clearly defined your research topic:

- Consult reference works that provide a synthesized overview of the current state of knowledge in the field under study. Reference materials mainly include dictionaries and encyclopedias. Dictionaries provide linguistic definitions and the meaning of terms, while encyclopedias offer a general overview of a subject.
- Complement this initial information search by consulting specialized dictionaries, treatises, and textbooks related to your research domain.

3. 4 The requested information

Scientific and Technical Information (STI) refers to the body of knowledge and data intended for the research, education, and industrial sectors. “Essential for the production of knowledge and a key factor in scientific and economic competition, it is characterized by its international scope, its validity within a community of specialists, and the use of mediation techniques and digital tools.”

3. 5 Reviewing Knowledge in the Field

- Reflect on what you already know about the research topic.
- Draw upon prior knowledge and previous experience related to this subject or research area.

CHAPTER I-2:

SELECTING INFORMATION SOURCES"

1. INTRODUCTION

After analyzing and defining the research topic, it is necessary to select the most appropriate information sources for conducting the literature review. This process involves two main dimensions:

- The type of required documents: monographs, journal articles, dissertations, theses, etc.
- The types of resources to be consulted: library catalogues, databases, web search engines, specialized portals, and others.

2. TYPES OF DOCUMENTS

The choice of documents depends on the level and nature of the information required:

- **Dictionaries and encyclopedias** are useful for understanding and clarifying the topic, particularly when dealing with new or unfamiliar concepts.
- **Books or monographs** are valuable for in-depth study. This category includes:
  - **Textbooks**, which provide comprehensive overviews of a topic.
  - **Handbooks (mementos)**, which offer concise summaries for a quick understanding.
  - **Treatises or concise studies (précis)**, which present a detailed analysis of a specific aspect.
  - **Conference proceedings**, which are the published records of congresses and symposia.
  - **General or specialized periodicals**, which provide access to the latest research findings or current discussions on societal issues.

- **Theses, dissertations, and research reports** (grey literature), which possess a high scientific value and are appropriate for addressing advanced, specialized topics.

- **Specific documents** (maps, patents, images, statistical data, etc.),whose use depends on the disciplinary field or methodological approach adopted.

- **Official publications**, which include all official documents issued by the State (laws, decrees, regulations, public contracts, institutional reports, etc.).

2.1. Reference Works

These constitute the starting point of any research, serving as tools to understand and delineate the subject.

In a library, reference works are grouped in a dedicated section, usually located near the entrance. This section includes not only encyclopedias and dictionaries but also more specialized reference books and bibliographic guides. Such documents are generally available for on-site consultation only, in order to ensure access for the widest possible number of users.

Reference works consist mainly of dictionaries and encyclopedias.

2.1.1. Dictionaries

Dictionaries help to define terms and find precise information. They can be consulted in print and/or electronic form.

In a printed dictionary, each word is treated in an entry, and entries are arranged in alphabetical order according to the words defined.

Dictionaries are also available online. For example, the *Oxford English Dictionary* is an electronic dictionary that provides definitions of words in the English language.

2.1.2. Thesaurus

A thesaurus is a controlled list of terms identifying a word family, its synonyms, and related terms. It helps to identify and select those that most accurately express the chosen concepts.

2.1.3. Encyclopedias

Encyclopedias help to understand the various aspects of a topic and to gain an overall view of the subject. They also help to generate ideas, identify expert authors, and locate bibliographic references.

Articles are usually very comprehensive, often structured into several sections, signed by specialists, and accompanied by illustrations, bibliographies, and cross-references.
Example:

- *Encyclopædia Britannica*, which covers all fields of knowledge.

2.1.4. Index

An index is an alphabetical list of terms (keywords, subjects, authors, etc.) used in a database, with references to bibliographic references.

In a book, an index helps locate specific information. It indicates the page, and sometimes the paragraph, where the information concerning the searched term appears. It is found at the end of the work and does not add to its content—it is purely a search tool.

A list of abbreviations or definitions that does not refer to specific pages in the book is called a *glossary* or *lexicon*.

2.1.5. Biographies

Biographies present the life and work of individuals who have achieved a certain reputation in a country, profession, or field of study.

2.1.6. Bibliographies

Bibliographies are lists of works written on a particular subject or by a specific author. They may constitute an entire publication or appear as a section within a book, at the end of an encyclopedia entry, or in a periodical article; in such cases, they list the works that were consulted.

2.1.7. Textbooks (manuals)

These are not reference works in the strict sense but books that cover an entire discipline and can serve as a starting point for research. They are generally designed for students.

2.1.8. Yearbooks (directories)

Year Books are sources of information devoted to facts or data, usually presented in a schematic, summarized, or synthesized manner. They are most often published annually and contain current and regularly updated information.

2.2. Books (Monographs)

A monograph is a single publication resulting from the work of one author (or a limited number of collaborating authors). Monographs often include a bibliography and/or an index — valuable tools for defining and understanding a research topic more precisely.

2.3. Periodicals

A periodical , whether a newspaper, magazine, or journal , is an ongoing publication issued at regular intervals, such as daily, weekly, monthly, or quarterly. It

brings together, under a single title, articles written by several authors around a specific discipline, field, or shared area of interest.

Periodicals are particularly useful when one needs to update or supplement basic documentation or to obtain specific information.

2.4. Electronic Documents

Electronic documents, also called digital documents, can be accessed via a computer. They can be available on CD-ROM, DVD, or the Internet.

- Websites, databases, and electronic journals are examples of electronic documents used in the same way as printed materials such as books or periodicals discussed above.

2.4.1. Websites

- Websites are available on the Internet and are often multimedia: they combine sound, images, and text.
- Websites are organized into web pages linked to one another by hypertext links. The homepage introduces the site and provides the first hypertext links.
- Official sites, personal pages, blogs, etc., are all websites. Their addresses (URLs) are easily identifiable and are often mentioned in newspapers, magazines, TV or radio programs, advertisements, etc. They are useful for directly accessing the desired site.

2.4.2. Databases

Databases allow simultaneous access not only to references but also to the full text of several journals.

2.4.3. Electronic Periodicals

Printed periodicals often exist in an "electronic version." Some electronic journals, however, exist only in this digital format and have never been published in print, such as *La Recherche.*

3. TYPES OF RESOURCES

3.1. The Internet

The Internet has become an increasingly preferred, even indispensable, research tool. The phenomenal volume of information now available gives the impression that communication is close to perfection: everything one wishes to know seems to be within reach, just a few clicks away. The growing presence of the World Wide Web in universities confirms its usefulness for academic research, and its importance will continue to grow in the coming years.

- University library catalogs (accessible online).
- Theses, statistics, official documents, and bibliographic databases (collections of organized references on a given subject) stored on specialized Internet sites.
- Resources retrieved from numerous Internet search engines.

Some examples of specialized search engines include:

- Google Scholar (https://scholar.google.com/)
- Google Books (https://www.google.com/)
- Scirus (http://www.scirus.com/)
- Wikipedia (https://en.wikipedia.org/)
- Theses Algeria (https://theses-algerie.com/)

3.2. Library

A university library's mission is to provide the academic community with the best possible documents to support the research efforts of students, researchers, and professors. Common works such as dictionaries, textbooks, or novels stand alongside advanced studies or specialized treatises that university libraries are often the only ones to acquire.

University libraries also subscribe to a large number of scientific periodicals and usually hold collections of rare books, audiovisual materials, and other special collections. Each university library also maintains a collection of official publications issued by governmental and international organizations.

At the library, the reference librarian proves to be a valuable help. They are familiar with the library's collections and resources, as well as with the main reference works. They can answer all kinds of questions, assist with research, suggest avenues of inquiry, and train users in the use of research tools.

Most often, universities organize their library collections according to the faculties, schools, and departments that make up the institution, and based on the layout of the campus. For example, it would not be surprising to find the art book collection located in a different building from that of business administration or medicine. The collections are arranged to meet the needs of students in various disciplines. However, any registered student generally has access to all of the university's libraries and may borrow materials regardless of their program of study. Nearly all library catalogs allow users to limit their search to the library of their choice.

4. EVALUATE THE QUALITY AND RELEVANCE OF INFORMATION SOURCES

4.1 Evaluate the quality of sources

To evaluate the quality of sources, the following questions should be asked:

WHO?	What is the origin of the document, and who is its author? This concerns the credibility of the source. This criterion is often easier to determine for printed materials than for information found on the internet.
WHAT (FOR)?	What is the author's objective in providing this information? Here, the focus is on the validity of the content, particularly on its objectivity.
HOW?	Are the documents based on research, or are they opinion pieces? This again evaluates the validity of the information, especially its accuracy.
WHEN?	When were the documents published or created? This relates to the timeliness of the information, another aspect of validity.
WHERE?	In which country or region were the documents published? This examines the geographical validity of the information.

4.2 Evaluate the relevance of sources

This consists of answering a number of questions that help determine which information is most useful for the task at hand.

To evaluate this relevance, one can again ask a few questions concerning both the content of the documents and the level of information (scientific, professional, general interest, popular, etc.) conveyed.

To evaluate the relevance of a document, it is not necessary to read the entire document. A quick scan is often enough to get an idea of its content. Attention should be paid to:

- The **title** of the document.

- The **abstract**: found in most bibliographic records from databases, at the beginning or end of journal articles, and often on the back cover of books.
- The **table of contents**: useful for understanding the structure, logic of argumentation, and identifying potentially relevant chapters.
- **Tables, graphs, and charts**: they can aid comprehension and be helpful for one's own work.

To evaluate the level of information, the following elements should be consider :

- **Nature of the document**: determine whether it is an educational, research, or popularization document. Remember that the goal is to produce work at a university level and to recognize the nature of the journals being consulted.
- **Quality of the information**: review, when necessary, the criteria used to evaluate the quality of information.
- **Introduction and conclusion**: a quick reading of these sections helps evaluate the level of the information, identify the initial research question, and understand the author's conclusions.
- **Specialization of vocabulary**: take note of the degree of technical or specialized language used.

NOTE:

It is essential to pay close attention to the issue of *plagiarism*. Consequently, it is important to retain all references in order to cite them appropriately in your academic work.

CHAPTER I-3:

LOCATING DOCUMENTS

1. INTRODUCTION

Locating documents is an essential step, as it is only after this stage that one can begin consulting the literature on a subject, analyzing it, and drawing conclusions. Whether the references selected are citations identified in other documents or records found in databases or catalogs, it is essential to note the pieces of information that will allow the documents to be located, namely:

- *The author ;*
- *The title ;*
- *The date of publication ;*
- *The publisher or source for articles;*

During this stage, one queries the various selected sources using search equations, records the relevant results from the queries, and obtains the primary documentation. To conduct a rigorous literature search, it is recommended to use a search record sheet, in which the research keywords and their possible synonyms are specified, and to keep a research logbook.

All reference details must then be noted, which will not only make it possible to locate the document again but also to cite it correctly in your work.

2. RESEARCH TECHNIQUES

A rigorous approach to documentary information research requires essential steps or techniques:

- Identifying the subject precisely ,
- Establishing the appropriate field of the study (Formulating the subject),
- Identifying information sources,

- Developing the search strategy,
- Evaluating search results.

2.1. Identifying the Subject

- Specify the study's objectives (one-off study, knowledge update, retrospective research, budget constraints).
- Define the study's boundaries (geographical, temporal, linguistic, document types).
- Identify available sources. In cases of controversy, consult the instructor who proposed the topic.

2.2. Formulating the Subject

- Describe the subject interms of concepts, keywords, synonyms, disciplines, and fields of application.
- Translate terms into English (essential for searches in international databases).

2.3. Identifying Information Sources

❖ **Library**

- Physical documents (books, print periodicals, encyclopedias, dictionaries).
- Digital documents (CD-ROMs, library catalogs, electronic periodicals, bibliographic databases, E-books).

❖ **Internet**

- Catalogues, electronic periodicals, search engines (Google, Google Scholar, etc.),
- Databases (Scopus, Web of Science, etc.), encyclopedias (Wikipedia).

2.4. Developing the Search Strategy

To combine search terms and formulate a "search equation," employ Boolean or proximity operators.

2.5. Evaluating Search Results

- Assess the reliability of consulted sources.
- Analyze search equation noise/silence (number of responses).
- Refine the search (additional step: thematic limits, discipline, journal, country, author, document type).

3. SEARCH OPERATORS

The primary challenge in documentary research often lies in the time users spend locating relevant information. Search tools provide extensive, yet frequently underutilized, capabilities that enable precise targeting of queries. A search operator constitutes a command used within queries on platforms like Google, refining searches to yield exact and efficient results aligned with user expectations.

Search tools offer varied functionalities across platforms, necessitating consultation of their user guides prior to querying to maximize potential. These advanced commands ensure focused retrieval of pertinent literature.

3.1 Boolean Operators

Derived from set theory developed by mathematician George Boole, these include ET (AND), OU (OR), SAUF (NOT),

- **AND**: Combines keywords requiring simultaneous presence in results. For instance, querying "management" **AND** "communication" retrieves documents containing both terms obligatorily.

- **OR**: Accommodates synonyms by including results with either term. Linking "management" **OR** "communication" yields texts featuring at least one.
- **NOT**: Excludes irrelevant terms to refine scope. "Communication" **NOT** "management" eliminates documents associating the two, focusing solely on standalone communication topics.

3.2 Proximity Operators (e.g., ADJ for Adjacency)

These mandate terms appear adjacent, separated by minimal words. For "communication" ADJ "management", results feature the terms in close proximity, often within the same sentence. Unlike the broader AND operator, this avoids unrelated occurrences, such as "communication" at a document's start and "management" at its end, ensuring conceptual linkage.

Truncation characters such as ? and * (sometimes !) indicate truncation, substituting for one or more characters. For example, entering "comm?" retrieves documents containing terms starting with "comm," including communication, communiqué, commercial, commune, and similar variants.

Quotation marks (" ") enable exact phrase searches, such as "environmental management," ensuring results match the precise expression.

3.3 Examples of Search Operators:

❖ *"Useful Everyday Google Search Operators"*

When querying Google with simple keywords, specialized commands known as search operators refine results for greater precision.

- **after:** Followed by a date in YYYY-MM-DD format, displays results published after that date. For instance, "after: 2020-09-18 Digimood" yields Digimood-related content post-September 18, 2020.

- **before:** Limits results to publications before the specified YYYY-MM-DD date. Example: "before:2015-01-25 Google Panda" shows Google Panda update content prior to January 25, 2015.
- **cache:** Preceded by a URL, retrieves the cached version. Example: "cache: https://www.digimood.com/formations/" accesses the site's cached page.
- **filetype:** Targets specific document types like pdf, doc, ppt, rtf. "filetype:pdf livre blanc" focuses on PDF documents containing "livre blanc."
- **Quotation marks:** Enclose phrases for identical, sequential matches. ""audit technique SEO"" returns results with that exact phrasing.
- **inanchor:** Displays pages with the keyword in link anchor text. "inanchor:seo" yields results featuring "seo" in at least one link anchor.

❖ *Additional Google Search Operators*

- **inurl:** Preceding a keyword with "inurl:" restricts results to pages where that keyword appears in the URL. For example, "inurl:blog marketing" displays only results for "marketing" with "blog" in the URL.
- **intitle:** Using "intitle:" followed by a keyword limits results to pages containing that term in the title tag.
- **Minus (-):** Placing a hyphen before a keyword excludes it from results. "Retaining wall -soil" returns retaining walls -related content without " soil."
- **related:** Prefixing a URL with "related:" retrieves similar sites.

  "related: https://www.maddyness.com/" shows other startup news platforms.
- **site:** "site:" followed by a domain displays results from that domain only.

❖ *Combining Operators for Precision*

Multiple operators can be combined to refine searches effectively.

- **after + before:** Targets a specific date range. "after:2011-01-15 before:2015-12-01 mises à jour Google" shows Google update content between January 15, 2011, and December 1, 2015.

- **after + site:** Verifies site activity. "after:2020-12-15 site:digimood.com" lists Digimood.com content post-December 15, 2020.

- **site + intitle:** Focuses on site-specific titles. "site:digimood.com intitle:netlinking" retrieves Digimood.com pages with "netlinking" in the TITLE tag.

CHAPTER I-4:

PROCESSING INFORMATION

1. ORGANIZATION OF WORK

An information or documentary search may sometimes be an isolated action, undertaken occasionally to obtain a specific piece of information or a document needed at that moment. However, it is most often a long-term process that must be planned, regularly updated, corrected, and occasionally even reconsidered. For this reason, it is crucial to be able to retrieve the keywords and search tools that have been used, as well as the documents retained , particularly when updating a previous search or deepening an investigation that, as one's work progresses, reveals its limitations.

It is therefore necessary to have a system capable of managing not only the searches themselves and the results they have yielded but also the documents consulted and acquired, along with all relevant information pertaining to each of them.

As with other tasks, two main approaches may be adopted. One may build your own system using standard office software tools such as word processors or spreadsheets. Alternatively, one may use software specifically designed for this purpose.

Several such programs exist, differing in the range of features offered, flexibility, ease of use, and of course, cost—some being free while others are quite expensive. It should be noted, however, that these tools generally cover only part of the needs described here, namely, those relating to the management of identified documents and associated information (particularly bibliographic data); they do not handle the actual search and identification of information. Such functionality is often included in bibliographic databases, though these are typically subscription-based.

2. MANUAL SYSTEMS FOR MANAGING INFORMATION RESOURCES

The tools used for operating a manual system to manage information and document searches are the computer applications that one already uses and is familiar with. A word processor is well suited to this task, particularly when using tables,

which allow documents to be retrieved and organized by treating each column separately.

Other tools may also be used, such as spreadsheets, which offer greater flexibility for managing structured tabular information but are less convenient for text entry, formatting, and searching. Those proficient in their use may also consider database software, which is far more powerful and flexible than the preceding tools for managing structured information. However, the effort required to develop an effective and satisfactory system can be considerable, which is only justified when managing a large number of documentary searches and a very high volume of documents.

For the activities and graded assignments of this course, I suggest using a manual system based on simple tables created in a word-processing program. However, for part of the tasks—specifically, the management of the selected documents—you may use a document management software. Regardless of the tool used, the system must include the following data:

a) Conducted searches, with for each search:

- The date;
- The name of the search engine or bibliographic database used;
- The search query;
- The options applied;
- The number of results returned by the search;
- The number of records (i.e., the short entries 2 or 3 lines displayed in the search results page about each document) that were examined, without necessarily consulting the abstract or the full text;
- The number of documents or resources selected following this examination;

- For each selected document or resource, a personal reference number and an identification, such as the URL address or, for printed documents, the reference as it appears.

The selected documents should also include those found indirectly, i.e., through references or hyperlinks appearing in the documents identified during the search (whether those documents were selected or not). You may consult the sample template (Word document), called *Research Logbook*, proposed for the first graded assignment of the course, which illustrates this part of the manual system.

b) Information on Retained Documents, including:

- A reference number;
- The most complete bibliographic details possible, including the URL address;
- The method by which the document was obtained and the format in which it is stored: interlibrary loan (with the date, if the request is pending); borrowing from Library X; photocopy; PDF file (with the file name); online document;
- The abstract (either provided with the document or written after reading it, if applicable);
- Specific elements drawn from the document (numerical values, formulas, short excerpts, etc.);
- Any relevant comments.

3. SYNTHESIS OF SELECTED DOCUMENTS

The bibliography is the organized list of sources you have used to carry out your research work. It is, above all, a scientific tool. The bibliography enables verification of the arguments presented in the body of the dissertation. Each reader must be able to refer to the sources listed in the bibliography in order to read and reconstruct for

themselves the reasoning followed by the author of the dissertation. This is why it is so essential that the bibliography include all the sources used in the dissertation.

It is therefore not merely a matter of citing the works, documents, or sources directly useful to the development of the thesis defended in the dissertation, but also of referencing the general works that inspired this thesis. Drawing inspiration from an author's ideas without citing them in the bibliography constitutes plagiarism. Concepts borrowed from an author must be cited in a footnote and then included as an entry in the bibliography. Thus, the bibliography is also one of the elements used to assess the quality of the research work. By reviewing the bibliography, readers of the dissertation can form an initial impression of the author's choices and the theoretical or problem-based orientations of the study. Once again, a complete bibliography demonstrates the scope and often the quality of the research undertaken.

What are the criteria for a well-constructed bibliography?

- **It must be thoughtful.** The goal is not to compile a disorganized list of every possible document on a topic, but to select those that are most representative and relevant to your research subject.
- **It must be representative.** At the Master's level, unlike the doctoral level, a bibliography does not aim for exhaustiveness. It is therefore acceptable not to include every available document on your research topic.
- **It must be organized.** The cited documents must be grouped in a coherent manner. Several methods of organization are possible: by theme, by type of source, chronologically, etc. You must determine which method of classification is most appropriate for your research topic.
- **It must be balanced.** A well-constructed bibliography should include a variety of source types. It is not acceptable to submit a bibliography composed solely of monographs (books on a single topic). Academic journal articles, conference

proceedings, dissertations (Master's theses or doctoral theses) should also be included. Web resources, encyclopedia articles, as well as references to DVDs or audiovisual documents, may likewise be included.

- **It must follow precise formatting standards.**

4. LINKS BETWEEN THE DIFFERENT PARTS

To understand the synthesis of research, it is not enough to simply identify what the elements consist of; one must also identify the relationships between the different elements, then group together those that share one or more common features into clear categories, and finally, place them within a broader context that gives them meaning.

Synthesis precisely brings together the various elements of the analysis into coherent sets. It allows these elements to be *qualified*, that is, to be interpreted and assigned meaning in order to deepen understanding. As sociologist Edgar Morin writes, "To know is, within an unbroken loop, to separate in order to analyze, then to link together in order to synthesize or to complexify."

5. FINAL PLAN FOR DOCUMENTARY RESEARCH

Step 1: The initial question

Formulate the initial research question while ensuring it meets the following criteria:

- Clarity;
- Feasibility;
- Relevance.

Step 2: Exploration

During the reading phase:

- Select appropriate texts;
- Read methodically;
- Summarize key points;
- Compare: texts with each other, and texts with interviews.

Step 3: The research problem

- Take stock of the readings and interviews;
- Establish a theoretical framework;
- Clarify the research problem adopted.

Step 4: Construction

- Build hypotheses and the research model by specifying: the relationships between concepts and the relationships between hypotheses;
- Develop the concepts by defining their dimensions and indicators.

Step 5: Observation

- Define the observation fields;
- Design the observation instrument;
- Test the observation instrument;
- Proceed with data collection.

Step 6: Data analysis

- Describe and prepare the data for analysis;
- Measure the relationships between variables;

- Compare the expected and observed results;
- Seek to interpret the significance of any discrepancies.

Step 7: Conclusion

- Summarize the research process.

CHAPTER I-5: PRESENTATION OF THE BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. INTRODUCTION

Bibliography is a method for organizing and presenting documents.

Academic documents (dissertations, theses, internship reports, scientific articles, etc.) and other literary works always include a bibliography. It is an essential and mandatory element that identifies the works used by the author. It plays a specific role, with a defined length and placement.

A bibliography is a list of references you have used in your work.

It allows you to cite the sources you have consulted and acknowledge the contribution of the authors whose work has inspired or informed your own. Your bibliography also enables readers to deepen their understanding of the topic by consulting the referenced materials.

What is its role?

The bibliography compiles all the sources and references used in a scientific paper. Readers (researchers, reviewers) can see which sources the author relied on.

Gérald Kembellec defines the purpose of a scientific bibliography as follows:

"The scientific bibliography of a researcher reflects their documentation phase, their positioning, and their argumentative choices. The search for scientific information is one of the foundations of the researcher's profession, as this continuous quest for information nourishes their reflection while influencing the very process of information creation."

The bibliography therefore has an informative purpose that reflects the author's thinking; it is also a space for argumentation and academic positioning.

Do not confuse bibliography, bibliographic reference, and biography.

- A **bibliographic reference** is the set of elements that describe a document and allow it to be identified and located.
- A **bibliography** is a collection of bibliographic references organized in a systematic way.

It includes all types of documentary materials (whether printed or electronic: books, articles, etc.).

The bibliographic reference acts as the *identity card* of a document. It therefore includes:

- Its intellectual description (author's name, title, etc.)
- Its physical description (e.g., number of pages)

Writing bibliographic references must be consistent, both:

- In terms of typographical style and formatting;
- In terms of the order of information (note that practices may vary by discipline).

What is the appropriate size for the bibliography of a scientific paper?

Its size depends on the number of sources used. It must be complete and include all references, whether explicitly cited or not.

Where should the bibliography be placed?

The bibliography appears at the end of the document. In academic works (theses, dissertations, internship reports), it is placed just before the appendices. It must list all the sources cited in the preceding text.

When should the scientific bibliography be written?

This section should be compiled progressively as sources are used. It often evolves throughout the research and reading process. This continual "updating" method can be very useful.

Once the paper is complete, these sources are consolidated and formatted according to a specific citation style.

Writing the bibliography for a scientific paper

To write a bibliography correctly, it is essential to organize its content, follow an appropriate citation style, and avoid common errors.

Content of a scientific bibliography

The bibliography must include all the references used in writing the article, such as:

- Another scientific article;
- A book;
- A book chapter;
- A newspaper article;
- Conference or seminar proceedings;
- A report;
- A video excerpt;
- And other less common materials (diplomas, laws, websites, theses, etc.).

2. ORGANIZATION OF THE BIBLIOGRAPHY AND CITATION SYSTEMS

To organize a bibliography, sources must be arranged systematically. Several classification methods are commonly used:

a. Alphabetical order: a basic requirement for organizing any bibliography. This system is used by APA style, developed by the American Psychological Association, provides standardized guidelines for writing and formatting academic papers, particularly in social sciences, education, and related fields like civil engineering research.

APA style ensures clear, precise scholarly communication through rules on organization, writing mechanics, and citations. It promotes inclusivity and consistency in presenting ideas, data, and references.

APA covers manuscript structure (title page, abstract, body, references), in-text citations using author-date format, and a reference list alphabetized by author surname. The current 7th edition, published in 2020, updates rules for digital sources, group authors, and student papers.

In-text citations include author last name and year, with page numbers for quotes: (Smith, 2020, p. 45). Reference entries follow: Author, A. A. (Year). *Title*. Publisher. DOI or URL, alphabetized and handling organizations as group authors.

Relevance to Engineering

For civil engineering theses or course materials on structural analysis, APA suits bibliographies on sustainable materials, with tools like Mendeley aiding management to avoid plagiarism.

- *Exemples of APA references*

1. Journal article – sustainable concrete

Garcia, L. M., & Kim, H. (2024). Performance of recycled aggregate concrete in flexural members: Experimental and numerical study. *Journal of Structural Engineering*, 150(3), 04023121. https://doi.org/10.1061/JSENDH.0000000

In-text: (Garcia & Kim, 2024)

2. Journal article – green / sustainable materials

Chen, Y., Liu, W., & Zhang, X. (2023). Use of industrial by-products as supplementary cementitious materials in eco-friendly concrete. *Construction and Building Materials*, 378, 130872. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.conbuildmat.2023.130872

In-text: (Chen, Liu, & Zhang, 2023)

3. Book (structural analysis)

Hibbeler, R. C. (2022). *Structural analysis* (11th ed.). Pearson Education.

In-text: (Hibbeler, 2022)

4. Book chapter (sustainable construction)

Smith, J. A. (2021). Sustainable materials in bridge design. In M. Brown & D. Lee (Eds.), *Sustainable infrastructure: Engineering and policy* (pp. 125–148). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-67890-2_6

In-text: (Smith, 2021)

5. Conference paper – structural frames

Wang, F., & Ali, M. (2023). Seismic response of steel-concrete composite frames with recycled aggregate infill panels. In *Proceedings of the 12th International*

Conference on Structural Dynamics (pp. 512–520). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/123456789012345

In-text: (Wang & Ali, 2023)

6. Thesis / dissertation (for your course bibliography)

Essa, R. S. (2020). *Behaviour of reinforced concrete beams strengthened with sustainable fibre-reinforced polymers* (Master's thesis, University of Toronto). ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global.

In-text: (Essa, 2020)

7. Standard / code (structural / sustainability)

American Society of Civil Engineers. (2017). *Minimum design loads and associated criteria for buildings and other structures* (ASCE/SEI 7-16). ASCE.

In-text: (American Society of Civil Engineers, 2017)

b. Chronological order of publication – also called the *Harvard system*,

Harvard uses an author-date approach for in-text citations, such as (Smith, 2023), with full details alphabetized in a reference list at the end.

The reference list includes all cited works, organized by author's surname;

For example, a book entry is: Smith, J. (2023) *Title of Book*. Publisher.

Harvard referencing requires a precise format for book citations in academic English reference lists. The standard structure follows author-date conventions with italicized titles and publisher details

Exact Book Format

Use this template for a single-author book: **Author's Surname, Initial(s). (Year) *Title of book*. Edition (if not first). Place of publication: Publisher.**

For multiple authors, list up to three as Surname1, Initials1, Surname2, Initials2 and Surname3, Initials3 (Year) *Title*. Place: Publisher; use "et al." for more than three in-text but full list in references.

Examples

- Single author: Smith, J. (2023) *Structural engineering principles*. 2nd edn. London: Academic Press.
- Two authors: Johnson, A. and Lee, B. (2021) *Sustainable concrete design*. New York: Wiley.
- Edited book: Editor, E. (ed.) (2024) *Advances in civil materials*. Oxford: Elsevier.

c. Order of appearance in the text – known as the *Vancouver system*, this style employs a numeric system, citing sources with numbers in order of appearance, like (1) or superscript[1], linked to a numbered reference list.

References follow the citation sequence, not alphabetical order; a journal example is:

1. Author A, Author B. Article title. *Journal Name*. 2023;10(2):123-5.

Repeated citations reuse the original number.

d. Order of importance – sources of primary importance are listed first, followed by secondary sources.

e. By theme – this structure includes sub-sections that categorize references by topic or type (books, websites, journal articles, etc.).

***Golden rule:** Regardless of the chosen system or journal, *homogeneity* must always be maintained. All references must follow the same style and format consistently.

3. EXAMPLES OF BIBLIOGRAPHIC REFERENCES

3. 1Printed format

Book

LAST NAME, First Name. *Title of the book.* Edition statement (except for the first edition). Place of publication: Publisher, year of publication. Number of pages. (Collection)

Edited volume

LAST NAME, First Name (ed.). *Title of the collective work.* Edition statement (except for the first). Place of publication: Publisher, year. Number of pages. (Collection)

Journal article

LAST NAME, First Name. *Title of the article. Title of the journal*, date, volume (if applicable), issue number, page range.

Thesis, dissertation, or internship report

LAST NAME, First Name. *Title of the thesis/dissertation/report.* Degree. Discipline. Place of defense: University, year, number of pages.

3. 2 Electronic format

Be sure to indicate the *date of consultation* since online content is often updated.

Book

LAST NAME, First Name. *Title of the book* [online]. Edition statement (except for

the first). Place of publication: Publisher, year. Number of pages. (Collection). Available at: <URL>. [Accessed day month year]
Note: If the book is a translation, include the original title and the translator's name.

Journal article

LAST NAME, First Name. *Title of the article. Title of the journal* [online]. Date, volume (if any), issue number, page range. Available at: <URL>. [Accessed day month year]

Thesis, dissertation, or internship report

LAST NAME, First Name. *Title* [online]. Type of work and academic level. Place of defense: University, year, number of pages. Available at: <URL>. [Accessed day month year]

Website

ORGANIZATION or LAST NAME, First Name (for personal websites). *Title of the homepage* [online]. Date of publication. Available at: <URL>. [Accessed day month year]

Web page

LAST NAME, First Name. *Title of the page.* In ORGANIZATION. *Title of the website homepage* [online]. Date of publication. Available at: <URL>. [Accessed day month year]

Online file

LAST NAME, First Name. *Title of the document* [online]. Date of publication. Available in file format at: <URL>. [Accessed day month year]

Other media (CD-ROM, video cassette, DVD, etc.)
LAST NAME, First Name. *Title* [medium]. Place of publication: Publisher, Year.

PART II:

THESIS DESIGN

CHAPTER II.1:

STRUCTURE AND STEPS OF THE THESIS

1. INTRODUCTION

The Master's thesis is a scientific and technical research project. It must be a complete and organized piece of work that:

- presents a proposal related to a specific topic (project);
- demonstrates that you have carried out and effectively utilized bibliographic research;
- provides a genuine argumentative development.

The thesis represents the culmination of a process through which you learn to work independently and to become a producer of knowledge. In consultation with your supervisor, you define your research topic; the writing and development of your thesis must demonstrate your ability to build coherent thinking around this topic, and to adopt appropriate research methodology and reasoning.

The Master 2 thesis constitutes real research, in which you report on and analyze a field of study through a soundly defined and mastered conceptual and theoretical framework. Your fieldwork and its analysis should not simply illustrate a concept or notion; they form the very core of your demonstration. Especially if you intend to pursue doctoral studies, the Master 2 thesis is the result of a process through which you have assumed the role of a researcher.

* *Thesis structure*: A thesis includes an introduction, multiple chapters, and a conclusion. It may also include appendices, which should be placed at the end of the document and listed in a specific table.

2. CHOOSING THE TOPIC

The student is free to choose the subject of the Master's thesis; however, guidance from academic staff on specific themes is not excluded. The topic may also be based on a need expressed by a company or any other organization.

The selected subject must be approved by the supervisor (after evaluation by the Department's Scientific Committee) before starting the preparation of the thesis.

The student must retain the chosen topic; changes are permitted only during the first month of registration (after evaluation by the Department's Scientific Committee), and only in cases of force majeure.

3. THESIS OUTLINE

3. 1 The Cover Page (Mandatory)

The cover page is the first page of your document and therefore bears the responsibility of capturing the reader's attention. Pagination begins from this page, but the page number should not be shown. Page numbering should appear only from the table of contents onwards.

The title page must include all elements that allow the identification of the document:

- The title of the content (for example: "Guide to Report Writing");
- The type of document and the context of the written work (for example: "Master's Project Report," "Final Internship Report");
- The name of the author or authors (in case of collective writing);
- The names of other individuals involved in the work as supervisors or academic advisers. For Master's theses or doctoral dissertations, specify the names of supervising professors and, if known before printing, members of the examination jury;
- The date of submission (if the report leads to an oral defense, indicate that date);
- The logo, name, and address of the institution to which the author (student) belongs;

- Optionally, a diagram, image, or scientific photograph that best represents the general content of the work;
- The names and logos of partner organizations (in the case of internships).

The page may also include notes on the document's dissemination status: "Provisional Version," "Confidential," "Non-contractual Document," "Do Not Distribute," or contextual notes such as "Published as part of Study X," "In accordance with Regulation Y," or "Certified by Z, reviewed by W."

3. 2 Dedication and Epigraph (Optional)

- The dedication pays tribute to one or more individuals.
- The epigraph is a short citation that illustrates or introduces the content to follow.

Each has its own page, usually written in italics, positioned in the upper half of the page, and right-aligned.

3. 3 Acknowledgements (Recommended)

Acknowledgements be dedicated to specific individuals, distinct groups, or expressed in a collective manner. You have the freedom to express yourself as you see fit. Do not hesitate to be original and relevant, but always remain courteous.

*Acknowledgements are *not mandatory*, but they are strongly *recommended*.

3. 4 The Summary (mandatory)

The summary provides a synthetic overview of the thesis structure; it is therefore shorter than a table of contents. It appears just before the introduction, and pagination begins on this page. It should include only the main sections so as to fit on one page: the introduction, Title 1 and Title 2, the conclusion, the bibliography, the lists of

appendices and illustrations (if any), and the table of contents. The summary can be generated automatically using a style sheet.

3. 5 List of abbreviations and/or acronyms (optional)

This list, arranged in alphabetical order, includes all abbreviations and/or acronyms used in the thesis, along with their full meanings. Avoid including such a list if only a few abbreviations appear; in that case, it is preferable to define them in footnotes.

3. 6 Glossary (optional)

The glossary provides definitions of complex terms used in the thesis. An alphabetical order is recommended, along with page references where each defined term appears.

3. 7 Index (optional)

The index is a list of significant terms (keywords) used in the thesis. The items are preferably arranged alphabetically, with page numbers indicating where each occurs.

3. 8 Introduction

This is an essential section. It requires careful balance and precision (its length should represent about 10% of the total thesis). Draft a detailed outline before writing, and revise it after completing the thesis, once you have a full overview of your content. The introduction’s primary purpose is to present the research question and the approach used to address it. You must justify your methodology (choice of methods, fieldwork, etc.). The examiner is aware of the constraints under which the thesis is produced (limited time, restricted means of investigation) and knows that it is impossible to cover every aspect of the subject. However, it is your responsibility to explain why you chose a particular angle or left certain aspects aside. Your task is to clearly announce, justify, and take responsibility for your choices. The introduction should also engage the reader’s interest. Upon reading it, the examiner should

understand exactly what the study is about, what hypotheses are being tested, and what logical path the demonstration will follow.

3. 9 Thesis structure

The thesis should be organized in a logical and continuous manner to allow the analysis to develop throughout the entire structure, not just the final section. Ideally, it should include three or four main parts (or chapters). The overall organization must be coherent (avoid exceeding four parts, as doing so may lose the reader's focus). The general structure should remain simple, and chapter titles should be concise, reflecting both content and key issues.

3. 10 Conclusion

The conclusion has a straightforward function: to bring your work to a close. In explicit terms, it involves two main steps.

1. Summarize your reasoning. In a single sentence, restate your research question; then review in a few lines the steps of your argument (one sentence per subsection) and synthesize your findings in a conclusive statement.

2. Optionally, end with an opening—either theoretical or empirical (for example, another field of application that would be worth exploring). The conclusion should also provide a bridge toward future research.

3. 11 Appendices and Table of Appendices (optional)

Appendices must follow the same pagination as the main body of the dissertation. Each appendix should have a title and number. This information will appear in a *Table of Appendices* (Appendix 1, Title, p.) that can be generated automatically using a word processing style sheet. A separate volume for appendices may be prepared with independent pagination.

3. 12 List of Illustrations (optional)

The list of illustrations includes all graphic elements (figures, diagrams, photos, etc.) presented in the dissertation, listed in their order of appearance along with the corresponding page numbers.

3. 13 Bibliography (mandatory)

To avoid any form of plagiarism (a serious academic offense), you must cite all authors and works that have contributed to your research.

It is advisable to divide the bibliography into sections—by type of source, theme, or relevance. Within each section, references should be arranged alphabetically by the author's last name. The references must comply with recognized academic citation standards.

3. 14 Table of Contents (mandatory)

The table of contents is more detailed than the summary. It is placed at the end of the dissertation, immediately before the abstract, if one is included.
Its main function is to provide the reader with an overall view of the contents and to enable quick location of specific sections. The table of contents can also be generated automatically using a document style sheet.

3. 15 Abstract (recommended)

The abstract is a concise summary, about half a page long, of your research work. It may appear right after the title page or sometimes directly on it. The abstract allows busy readers or those only partially concerned by the report to quickly grasp its content, and it also serves bibliographic purposes. For this reason, it is often accompanied by a few keywords related to the report's topic. In some cases, the abstract is translated into one or more languages to broaden readership.
The abstract must describe in a few words (often a word limit is imposed by the

university or publisher) the aim of the study, the research question addressed, the approach used, the results obtained, and the conclusions drawn.

Your abstract should answer the following four questions:

a. What is the research question?

b. What has already been done on the topic?

c. What findings have been made?

d. What do these findings mean?

CHAPTER II.2:

WRITING TECHNIQUES AND STANDARDS

1. INTRODUCTION

It is recommended to begin writing as early as possible, once the outline has been established. Allow at least two months for the writing process.

To ensure that your dissertation is coherent and pleasant to read, it is advisable to use:

- The same typography: one single font for the entire document (variations may be made using size, bold, or italics). An exception may be made for the cover page, where greater flexibility is permitted.
- The same layout: one consistent formatting principle for the entire document (margins, line spacing, notes, hierarchy, etc.).

Avoid writing in the first person (except in the acknowledgements). Prefer the use of "we" or the impersonal form "one."

The importance of proofreading: reread your work and have it read by others. During a first reading, check the meaning and coherence; during a second reading, focus solely on words to correct possible typographical or spelling errors (be aware that automatic spellcheckers do not catch everything).

Once your dissertation has been written, proofread, and corrected, you can automatically generate all tables (table of contents, list of appendices, list of figures, etc.) if you have properly used text styles. This will save considerable time.

2. TYPOGRAPHY

✓ A few typographical rules

➢ Abbreviations

- An abbreviation formed from the first letters of a word is always followed by a period.
  Example: *référence = réf.*

- An abbreviation formed from the first and last letters of a word does not take a period.
  Example: *Saint → St*

- Frequently used abbreviations should be listed either at the beginning or end of the thesis, followed by the full term written out.
  Example: *C. civ. = Code civil* (Civil Code)

➢ **Capital Letters**

- Use an initial capital letter at the beginning of a sentence, a verse, a quotation, or for proper nouns such as first names and surnames.

- Also use capitals for names of peoples and inhabitants when they function as nouns, but not when they are adjectives or refer to the language.
  Example: *This Italian actress loves the French but does not speak French.*

- Capital letters must include the proper accents.

  Example: *PALAIS DES CONGRÈS* and not *PALAIS DES CONGRES.*

➢ **Numbers**

- Numbers are generally written out in full.

  Example: *twenty, the sixties, grade six.*

- Dates are written in Arabic numerals.

  Example: *2012*

- Centuries and political regimes are written in Roman numerals. Example: *21st century (XXIe siècle)*
- Use *second* only when referring to two elements; use *third*, *fourth*, etc., if the enumeration continues beyond two.

➢ **Punctuation**

- In typography, the word *space* is feminine in French ("une espace").
- Simple punctuation marks (period, comma, and ellipsis) take one space after them. Rule: one simple sign → one space.
- Double punctuation marks (colon, semicolon, exclamation mark, and question mark) require a space before and after them. Rule: one double sign → double space.
- Do not include spaces inside brackets, quotation marks, braces, or parentheses.
- Do not use spaces before or after hyphens or apostrophes.
- Add a space after the dash when it introduces a list.
- Use either ellipsis (…) or "etc.", but never both together.

3. PAGE LAYOUT

Text

- Recommended font: *Times New Roman* or *Arial*.
- Font size: 11 or 12 pt.
- Line spacing: 1.5 cm.
- The text must be justified.

- Avoid the use of underlining and bold type, which are generally reserved for titles, as well as italics, which are primarily used for quotations.

Titles

- For titles, you may vary size, bold, italics, alignment, or colors, but keep the same font style throughout.
- *Level 1 titles* (sections or chapters) should preferably begin on a new page.

Footnotes

Footnotes are used to cite references or sources, as well as to add comments or remarks. They help avoid excessive use of parentheses within the text.

- Footnotes are indicated by Arabic numerals in superscript placed immediately after the word or phrase concerned and appear at the bottom of the same page, separated by a dividing line. Continuous numbering is preferable.
- They must be written in a smaller font size and with reduced line spacing compared to the main text.
- Some useful abbreviations, which help avoid repeating a reference already cited in a previous footnote:
    - *ibid.* (*ibidem*): in the same work cited previously, p.x of the thesis. Example: *ibid.*, p. 37
    - *id.* (*idem*): by the same author cited previously, p.x of the thesis. Example: *id.*, p. 85
    - *op. cit.* (*opere citato*): in the work already mentioned by the same author, p.x of the thesis.

      Example: *op. cit.*, p. 5

Pagination

- Page numbering should begin from the cover page, but the page numbers should only appear starting from the table of contents.

4. FORMATTING THE COVER PAGE

The title page must include all elements that allow for the identification of the document:

- Title of the content (for example: “Report Writing Guide”).
- Type of document and context of the written work (for example: “Master’s Project Report”, “Final Internship Report”).
- Name of the author or authors, if it is a collective work.
- Name of other individuals involved in the work as supervisors or academic advisors. In the case of Master’s dissertations or Doctoral theses, clearly state the names of the supervising professors and members of the jury, if known prior to printing the final version of the thesis.
- Date of publication (if the report is associated with an oral defense, indicate that date).
- Logo, name, and address of the institution or organization to which the author belongs.
- Optionally, include a diagram, image, or scientific illustration that represents the general content of the document.
- Names and logos of partner organizations (in the case of internships).

The title page may also include distribution-related statements such as “Provisional version”, “Confidential”, “Non-contractual document”, “Do not distribute”, or

contextual notes such as “Published as part of Study X”, “Compliant with Regulation Y”, “Certified by Z, reviewed by W”, etc.

CHAPTER II.3: CRITICAL STUDY OF MANUSCRIPT

- WORKSHOP -

❖ CRITICAL STUDY OF A MASTER'S THESIS

1. **Before the workshop: first reading**
    - Read the thesis once to get a global idea (title, abstract, introduction, conclusion).
    - Note the research question, objective, and main argument.
2. **Identify basic information**
    - Who is the student? Is there a supervisor's name?
    - What is the topic and the main research question?
    - What kind of thesis is it (empirical, theoretical…)?
3. **Analyze the structure**
    - Identify the main chapters: Introduction, Literature review, Methodology, Results/Analysis, Discussion, Conclusion.
    - Check if the structure is logical and if each chapter has a clear purpose.
4. **Evaluate the introduction and research question**
    - Is the research question clear, focused, and well-motivated?
    - Does the introduction explain why this topic is important?
5. **Check the literature review**
    - Does the student summarize previous work clearly?
    - Are the sources relevant, recent, and well-integrated?
    - Are there missing key references or gaps in the literature?
6. **Assess the methodology**
    - Is the method (qualitative, quantitative, theoretical) clearly described?
    - Are the data collection and analysis procedures appropriate and explained in detail?

- Are there limitations that the student should declare?

7. **Analyze results, discussion, and conclusion**
   - Are the results presented clearly (tables, figures, explanations)?
   - Does the discussion connect the results back to the research question?
   - Does the conclusion answer the initial question and suggest future work?
8. **Comment on language and academic style**
   - Is the language clear, formal, and well-organized?
   - Are there grammar, spelling, or coherence problems?
   - Are sections well-linked (use of signposting and transitions)?
9. **Formulate constructive feedback**
   - For each main section, write 1–2 positive points and 1–2 suggestions for improvement.
   - Avoid only negative comments; focus on how the thesis can be stronger.
10. **During the workshop: group work and discussion**
    - Work in pairs or small groups and each group focuses on one chapter.
    - Present your evaluation to the whole class and discuss the main strengths and weaknesses.
    - The teacher moderates and ensures the criticism stays constructive.
11. **Write a short critical review (individual task)**
    - Each student writes a 1-page critical review answering:
      - What is the main strength of this thesis?
      - What are the main weaknesses?
      - What concrete improvements would you suggest?
12. **After the workshop: revision and reflection**

- The author (or selected students) receive the feedback and revise their draft.
- Students reflect on how peer feedback helps them improve their own thesis.

CHAPTER II.4:

ORAL PRESENTATIONS

AND MASTER'S THESIS DEFENSE

1. HOW TO PRESENT A POSTER COMMUNICATION

Poster communication, also known as *poster presentation*, is an increasingly common form of presentation at scientific conferences. Poster presentation serves as an alternative to oral communication and carries equal value. In fact, it may sometimes be preferable, and there is no reason to hesitate in selecting this format.

A poster must be designed according to precise guidelines, which conference organizers typically specify: format specifications, title placement, typeface requirements, and the layout of six dedicated zones for presenting your research methodology.

Poster printing has been greatly facilitated by modern technology, including photographic reproduction and color printing on large-format printers (A0 standard). Successful poster display requires advance planning and careful consideration of the mounting surface and support materials. Overall, the poster represents an effective communication tool that particularly encourages meaningful exchanges with conference attendees.

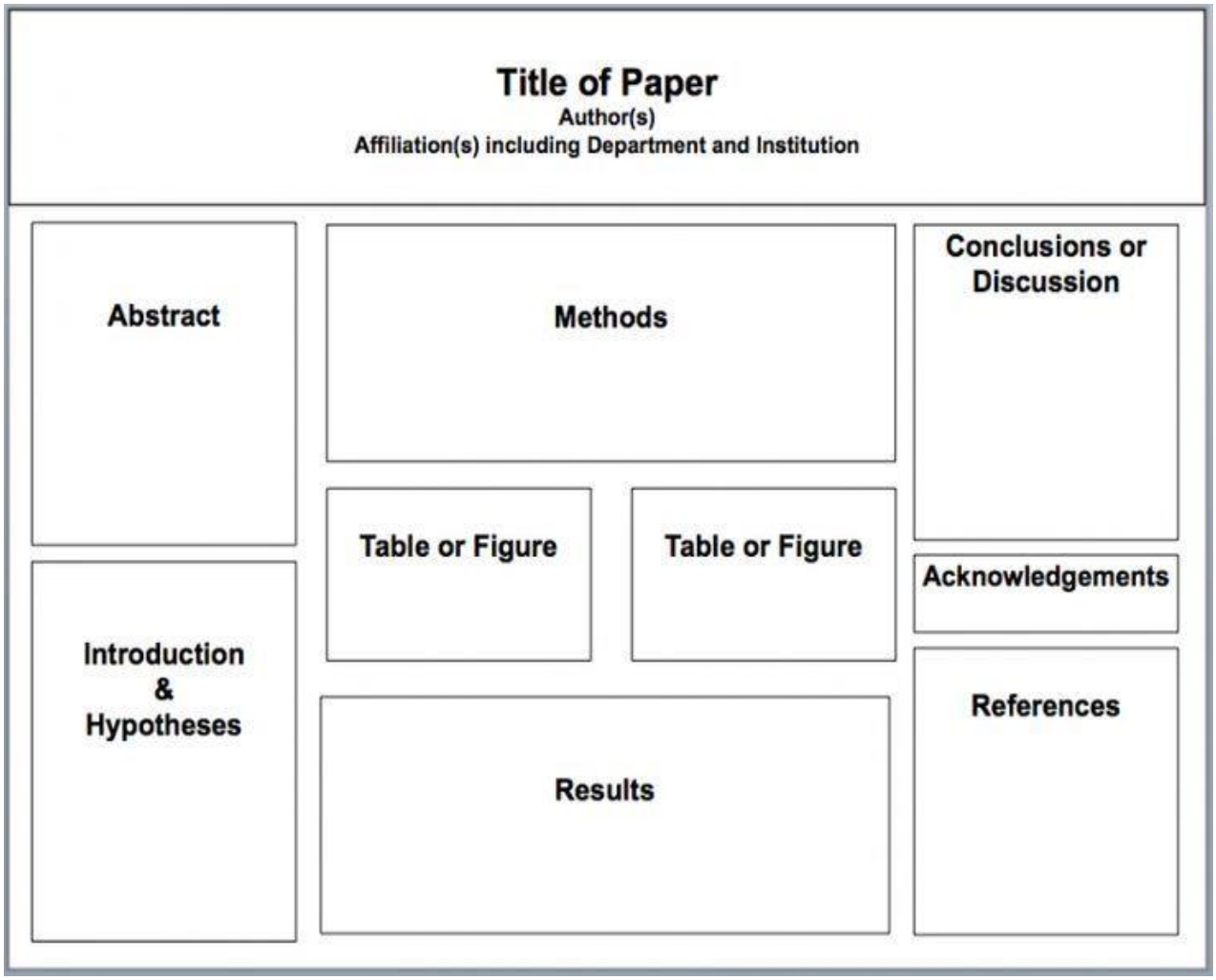

Fig 1. General presentation of a poster

A poster should be:

- **Attractive** – to capture the viewer's attention.
- **Well-structured** – to facilitate reading and comprehension.
- **Concise** – to ensure that communication remains focused on the core message.

1.1Capturing Attention

The poster should attract the viewer's gaze from a distance and motivate them to examine it more closely.

- Stimulate scientific curiosity.

- Present a well-balanced and coherent composition.
- Exhibit an aesthetically pleasing design.
- Ensure readability and visual clarity.
- Encourage dialogue and scholarly exchange.

1.2Facilitating Reading

- Structure the poster in a logical, coherent manner so that the reader can easily follow the intended sequence.
- Clearly distinguish the various sections through the use of headings, section numbering, or color schemes.
- Adopt a natural or explicitly defined reading path to guide the viewer's attention effectively.

1.3Focusing Communication on the Message

- Eliminate superfluous details, as excessive text tends to obscure the essential points.
- Give preference to graphical elements (figures) rather than extensive numerical tables.
- Make use of bullet points for readability.
- Employ short, direct sentences and avoid dense textual blocks.
- Use the active voice to enhance clarity and engagement.

2. HOW TO PRESENT AN ORAL PRESENTATION?

2.1 Before the presentation

- **Define the Constraints**

- **Material Constraints:** availability of video projector, overhead projector, lecture hall location, water bottle, laser pointer, markers/chalk, etc.

- **Audience/Target Public:** Know in advance the level of the audience that will listen to you.
- **Time:** You must imperatively respect time constraints while maintaining high-quality presentation standards. To achieve this, you will often need to omit a large portion of the work related to the project you are presenting. Conversely, fill your speaking time (without exceeding allocated duration) for questions.

- **Formulate the Objectives**

- Objectives summarize the **main idea or essential message** you want to convey
- Objectives form the **backbone of your presentation**; they help organize it
- We often speak of the "**take-home message**": your audience will retain 2-3 ideas from your presentation. You must know what to emphasize!

- **Delimit the Content**

- General context and "background" necessary to understand your presentation
- Results to be presented
- Do not aim to be historical or exhaustive; be logical
- Prioritize: highlighting a personal viewpoint, a relevant result, a strong conviction, an original contribution

- **Choose the Title**

- Choose a **concise title**
- Choose a **compelling title** that arouses interest and curiosity
- Use **interrogative form** or a **provocative formula**
- Title choice (often made well in advance) depends on your intended objectives

- **Choose the Structure**

Introduction: To present the context:

- Introduction must be brief but is necessary. It should delimit the subject.
- Greet the audience to establish contact
- State the objectives of the presentation: results (be careful not to create unnecessary suspense)
- Announce the presentation outline
- Enumerate key ideas that will be developed, as well as potential future perspectives

Results: Everything you have accomplished

Conclusion

- **Organization of Slides**

Participants:

- **Hear faster than they read**
- **See faster than they hear**
- **Grasp a simplified image better than written text**
- **Read from left to right, top to bottom, and in clockwise direction**

- **choose the theme**

The choice of recurring elements in your presentation depends on the occasion:

- **Your name, your laboratory:** Useful if the audience doesn't know you

- **Navigation indicators:** Useful during a long presentation, unnecessary otherwise
- **Slide number:** Useful for the speaker, but can be distracting for the audience
- **Colors:** Choose sober colors or colors in harmony with your subject!

  - **Some rules to respect: text**

- **1 slide / 2 minutes average** — 1 message per slide (title)
- **Each slide must remain displayed at least 30 seconds**
- **Use space well:** occupy maximum 50% of the space
- **Limit text:** 10 lines maximum (approximately 30 words) per slide
- **Facilitate reading:** 1 font only, minimum 24 points. Plan time to explain complex concepts and terms

  - **Some rules to respect: graphics**

- **Exploit color:** 3-4 colors maximum, including black
- **Pay attention to:** contrasts, colorblind individuals, differences between screen and projector display
- **Essential results must be conveyed through graphics**
- **Highlight graphics:** eliminate all unnecessary information, thicken lines, make legends readable
- **Explain everything** on the graphics presented

  - **Some rules to respect: animations and videos**

- **Consider compatibility issues:** Where and on which machine will you present?
- **Dose animations:** Too many animations harm audience attention
- **Avoid sound effects**
- **Your main results should not rely on a video** (because the risk of it not playing is high...)
- **Prioritize substance over form**

  - **Things to avoid (unnecessary elements)**

- Bibliography
- Written summary at the beginning of the document
- Slides without titles
- Footnotes
- Complex mathematical formulas
- Table of contents for presentations under 15-20 minutes
- **Spelling errors**

2.2 During the presentation

- **Voice**

- Never read your text: speak *to* people, and *toward* them.
- Speak loudly enough, not too fast, with varied intonation and rhythm.
- Don’t fear a few seconds of silence; use them to take a sip of water.

- Avoid filler words such as: *Um! So! Well! You know?*

▪ **Eye Contact**

- Establish visual contact with the audience.
- Try to look at each person, alternating randomly if possible.
- Avoid staring at the ceiling or floor.
- Do not (over)rely on your notes or documents.

▪ **Gestures**

- Illustrate what you are saying with appropriate gestures.
- Use a pointer or stick to indicate what you are talking about (e.g., a figure).
- Avoid repetitive gestures, like constantly adjusting your hair.

▪ **Body Language**

- Maintain a stable, confident, and calm posture.
- Face the audience at all times.
- Avoid pacing back and forth; stay close to your presentation area.
- Never turn your back to the audience.
- Do not fidget with a pen or pointer repeatedly.

▪ **Managing Stress**

- Arrive at least 20 minutes early.
- Do breathing and vocal exercises beforehand.
- Eat well and sleep well the night before.

- Stick to what you rehearsed.
- Establish rapport with your audience.
- Handle questions calmly. Don't invent answers when unsure — your goal is to show mastery of *your* subject, not those of your listeners.

3. DEFENSE OF A MASTER'S THESIS

3. 1 Procedure for the defense of a master's thesis

A. Content of the Thesis:

- A cover page
- A table of contents
- A general introduction
- The body of the study (background, experimental procedure, results, analyses, interpretation, etc.)
- A general conclusion
- The list of references used
- Appendices, if applicable
- "Second cover page": abstract in two different languages

B. Appointment and Composition of the Jury:

- The jury must include the supervisor(s), a chairperson, and examiners. It consists of four members if there is one supervisor, and five members if there are two supervisors.

- The jury must be proposed by the training team through the option/specialization coordinator and validated by the department's scientific committee.
- The jury may include one invited member.
- A copy of the Master's thesis must be submitted to each jury member at least one week before the defense date.
- On the two final copies to be submitted after the defense, the names of the jury members must be indicated.

C. Submission of the Thesis:

The submission of the Master's thesis is subject to the signing of a defense authorization by the supervisor(s).

- The candidate must submit five copies of the thesis before the deadline set by the administration. These copies are intended for the members of the defense jury.
- The submission must be accompanied by an abstract and a list of keywords on a separate sheet.
- A student who has not submitted the thesis in June may not defend in September, except by exemption (granted only in exceptional cases) for the following reasons:
    - Prolonged hospitalization or hospitalization during the defense period.
    - Death of a close family member during the defense period.
- A justification letter from the supervisor explaining any delay in the completion of the research work by the student.An exceptional defense held in

September must take place no later than two weeks after the start of the academic year.

- Any student who fails to submit their dissertation within the given deadlines is considered *absent or failing*.
- After the defense, the candidate must submit two corrected copies of the thesis, incorporating the remarks made by the jury members (as recorded in the defense report), if applicable. The jury president validates the corrections made. *(The number of printed copies required may vary depending on the university's regulations.)*
- An electronic version (a single PDF file) must also be submitted after the defense.

D. The Defense

- The defense is chaired by the president of the jury.
- It proceeds according to the following steps: student's presentation (20 minutes), discussion and questions, then deliberation.
- The deliberation takes place in the absence of the candidate and any person not part of the jury.
- During deliberations, the candidate's work is assessed by consensus or by vote.
- The results of the deliberation are recorded in a report signed by all jury members.
- The results (grade and distinction) are publicly announced to the candidate.

3. 2 Evaluation criteria for the dissertation and the defense

1. Criteria for assessing the scientific quality of the dissertation (content)

- The dissertation should not be too short, to avoid oversimplifying the work, nor too long, to avoid diluting the essential aspects of the study.
- Definition of the research problem and hypotheses.
- Quality and relevance of the literature review and its integration into the study.
- Appropriateness between the stated problem and the methods used to address it.
- Research methodology (originality, robustness, critical thinking, relevance).
- Quality of discussion, analysis, and interpretation of results.
- Reflections on the broader implications of the findings.
- Relevance of the abstract, introduction, and conclusions.
- Reasoning ability, clarity, and synthesis skills.
- Reliability and quality of results.
- Scientific rigor.

  Note:
  In some cases, the difficulty of the topic may be taken into account if it has caused technical, methodological, or conceptual issues that have affected the overall quality of the work.

- Any plagiarism, even partial, will be sanctioned.

2. Criteria to be considered when evaluating the writing quality of the dissertation (form)

- Overall structure of the dissertation (parts, chapters, etc.);
- Balance between the different sections and components of the dissertation;
- Syntax, grammar, and spelling;
- Title, introduction, structured development, conclusion, bibliography, and appendices;
- Positioning of the work in relation to the existing literature (bibliography);
- Work built around a clear and relevant research problem;
- Writing rigor, consistency, and logical progression between chapters;
- Clarity and quality of figures, diagrams, and tables;
- Number, time span, and use of bibliographic references;
- Coherence of the methods and presentation of results;
- Presentation of methodology and use of data, references, measurements, etc.;
- Quality of analysis and argumentation.

3. Evaluation of the oral presentation

The oral defense aims to assess the candidate's communication and reasoning skills. The criteria to be considered for evaluation include, in varying proportions:

- Ability to present and explain the approach developed in the dissertation;
- Quality of the presentation (language, pronunciation, etc.);
- Quality of the visual support (slides: illustrations, graphs);

- Respect of the allotted time;
- Clarity and synthesis skills;
- Ability to answer questions and defend the work before the jury;
- Accuracy of answers to questions.

Important : The final grade takes into account three elements:

- The quality of the dissertation (form and content);
- The quality of the oral presentation (form and content);
- The answers given to the questions.

"General Guidelines for Evaluating a Master's Degree Thesis/Dissertation."

THESIS		
Part of the Thesis	**Criteria**	**Assessment (Grade)**
Introduction:	In the general introduction, the candidate will present their subject and the various parts of the thesis of they have written. It allows the reader to properly understand the subject and thus arouse their interest in the rest of the thesis.	**Graded on 07 points**
Bibliographic Review	The bibliographic study makes it possible to situate the subject in relation to other works. The student must cite well-chosen references that have clearly been read and understood. Critical thinking, synthesis, and writing quality are important	

Objectives:	The objectives are clearly stated. They must have scientific relevance. Similarly, they must correspond to work that is feasible for the student within the required timeframe.	
Results and Discussion	This section describes the results obtained in a logical order; each result is preceded by a few lines explaining the purpose of the experiment and how it was conducted. Under no circumstances should there be confusion between the results section and the discussion section. The discussion section revisits the various results from the perspective of their significance, both in relation to each other and with respect to the bibliography. The interpretation must be well-founded and critical, particularly regarding the methodologies used and their limitations.	
Conclusions and Perspectives	The conclusions and perspectives section places the completed work in context, particularly with respect to the initial research objectives. It repositions the findings within the wider scientific framework of the research topic. Typically, students may propose novel experimental methodologies.	
Illustrations	High clarity is mandatory for figures and schematics. They must remain uncluttered and be correctly captioned. Each caption is required to contain a title and sufficient detail to render the figure self-explanatory, independent of the main text.	
References	The references must be fully consistent with the content of the dissertation and cited appropriately	

	throughout the text. They should be numbered in the order in which they are cited and listed at the end of the dissertation. It is advisable that the references be drawn from recent and specialised scholarly journals.	
Form and Presentation	Attention must be paid to the structure of the thesis and the quality of writing, including correct spelling, grammar, and syntax.	**Graded on 03 points**
Defense Presentation		
Oral Presentation	The student must present the essential elements of their work within the allocated time. They should emphasize the most important results they have achieved. The quality of the presentation depends on: the supporting materials, the methodology adopted, the logical sequence, etc.	**Graded on 05 points**
Responses to Questions	The candidate must demonstrate their ability to defend their work before the jury. Their responses to questions must be clear, precise, and concise. This section concerns students who have addressed an applied topic. When the student's work has resulted in a practical achievement (device, software, etc.), its valorization is required. Similarly, if the subject studied is of an industrial nature or in collaboration with a socioeconomic enterprise, recognition of this is recommended.	**Graded on 05 points**
Overall assessment of the candidate (thesis + defense), overall grade.		

3. 3 How to prepare for your defense?

You must prepare your defense thoroughly. It is equally important in evaluating the candidate as the thesis itself. The following practical advice will be of great use to you:

- ✓ **Presentation Planning and Delivery**

It is strongly recommended to draft your presentation outline in advance, paying particular attention to how you will begin and conclude your remarks.

Pay attention to your speaking pace (there is no point in speaking too quickly, as it becomes incomprehensible and monotonous; moreover, jury members typically take notes and/or attempt to follow along in the text as you speak). Also be mindful of your language choice (avoid colloquial expressions and abbreviations: e.g., "lit." for literature, "prof." for professor, etc.).

You may use note cards and consult them in case of forgetfulness or hesitation. However, under no circumstances should your presentation be based on reading from these cards. You must maintain visual contact with the jury!

- ✓ **Managing Stress and Time**

Before beginning your presentation, take a deep breath. This helps calm your nerves.

Pay attention to the time limit! Your presentation should last between 15 and 20 minutes maximum.

- ✓ **Practice and Preparation**

Practice your presentation in front of a "mock" jury consisting of fellow students, etc. This is excellent preparation and may bring up questions you had not previously considered.

- ✓ **Handling Errors**

If you discover errors in your thesis between submitting it and defending it, announce this modestly at the beginning of your presentation by providing each jury member with an errata sheet. This prevents them from pointing out errors during the discussion.

- ✓ **Anticipating Questions**

Try to anticipate in advance a list of questions that the jury might reasonably ask you.

3. 4 Advice for your thesis defense

- ✓ **Focus on Synthesis, Not Comprehensive Coverage**

Do not attempt to cover everything: your presentation should be a synthesis, not an oral reproduction of your entire thesis or dissertation.

- ✓ **Honesty and Intellectual Integrity**

Be honest: if you do not know the answer to certain questions, say so.

- ✓ **Time Management**

Control your timing: it is important that you know approximately how much time you will spend on each subsection. Practice beforehand!

- ✓ **Engaging Presentation Style**

Make your presentation materials engaging and do not simply read from them: maintain eye contact with the jury and breathe calmly. This will convey a sense of control and mastery.

- ✓ **Critical Self-Reflection**

Be critical of your own work: time has elapsed between writing your thesis and defending it, and perhaps you have identified inconsistencies or reached new conclusions. Do not hesitate to discuss these with the jury.

- ✓ **Institutional Requirements**

Inform yourself about the rules and procedures surrounding thesis defense at your institution in order to avoid unpleasant surprises.

- ✓ **Presentation Quality**

Have the text of your PowerPoint reviewed and corrected, as you must absolutely avoid errors.

CHAPTER II.5:

HOW TO AVOID PLAGIARISM

1. PLAGIARISM

To *plagiarize* means to take someone else's work and present it as your own.

Plagiarism can be **intentional** (for example, copying a whole paragraph from the internet) or **unintentional** (for example, forgetting to put quotation marks or to add a citation). In universities, plagiarism is treated as a serious academic offense and can lead to failing the assignment, a warning, or more severe consequences.

The concept of plagiarism is multifaceted; to plagiarize means to:

- Copy verbatim a passage from a book, journal, or web page without quotation marks and/or without citing the source.
- Include in a paper images, graphs, data, or other materials from external sources without indicating their origin.
- Summarize an author's original idea in one's own words but omit to mention the source.
- Partly or entirely translate a text without acknowledging its source.
- Use another person's work and present it as one's own, even if that person has given their consent.

In other words, plagiarism is making the reader believe that you are the author of what they are reading.

☞ *"Plagiarism, or copying, constitutes an act of infringement."*

☞ *"While a quotation is a legitimate borrowing and a paraphrase a reformulation or summary, plagiarism is theft."*

To avoid plagiarism, one must:

- Clearly cite all sources used (ideas, concepts, sentences, illustrations, etc.).

- Use quotation marks for all borrowed text (non-paraphrased quotations).
- Provide accurate and complete bibliographic references.

Plagiarism has always existed. With the emergence of the Internet, it has become easier to commit ("copy / paste") but also easier to detect, with specialized software tools.

1.1 Why should you avoid plagiarism?

- **Respect for academic integrity**: Every author has the right to be recognized for their work.
- **Your credibility as a student**: Original work shows your understanding, effort, and critical thinking.
- **Risk of detection**: Many universities use plagiarism-detection software (such as Turnitin or Compilatio), which easily identifies copied or poorly paraphrased text.

1.2How can you avoid plagiarism?

a) Manage your sources carefully

From the beginning of your work, keep a clear record for every source you use:

- Author(s)
- Title of the book, article, or website
- Year of publication
- Publisher or journal name
- Page numbers (for printed sources)
- URL and date of access (for online sources)

You can keep this information in a notebook, a document, or a reference manager (for example, Mendeley, Zotero, or EndNote).

b) Know when to quote and when to paraphrase

- **Direct quotation**:
    - Copy the text **word-for-word** and place it between **quotation marks**.
    - Immediately add an **in-text citation** (for example: author, year) and include the full reference in the bibliography.
- **Paraphrasing**:
    - Read the original passage carefully, understand it, and then **rewrite the idea in your own words**, with a different sentence structure.
    - Even when you paraphrase, you must still **cite the author**, because the idea is not yours.

c) Do not copy-paste without control

- Avoid writing while keeping the original text open in front of you; this increases the risk of copying by mistake.
- If you copy a sentence as a quotation, **add quotation marks immediately** and write the citation at the same time.

d) Do not only change a few words

- Simply replacing some words with synonyms while keeping the same sentence structure is still plagiarism.
- A better method is:
    1. Read the passage and understand it.

2. Move away from the original text.

3. Write the idea using your own words and structure.

4. Check that your sentence is not too close to the original.

e) Use a plagiarism checker

- Many universities provide plagiarism-detection tools (such as Turnitin or Compilatio).
- Before submitting your work, if possible, check your text with such a tool to find missing citations or passages that are too close to the original source.

1.3Common mistakes students make

- Not citing an important idea or definition, even if it comes from lecture notes or your own class notes.
- Putting references only in the bibliography but not showing, in the text, which sentence or idea comes from which source.
- Believing that "you understood it" means you do not have to cite the author: the **idea still belongs to the original author**, even if you explain it in simple words.

1.4Quick checklist for every assignment

before submitting any written work you must read and follow this short checklist (**5 rules)**:

1. **Record all sources**: author, title, year, pages, URL / date of access.
2. **Quote correctly**: use quotation marks and in-text citation + reference list.
3. **Paraphrase properly**: rewrite in your own words, but still cite the author.

4. **Never copy without marks**: copied text without quotation marks is plagiarism.

5. **Check with a tool**: use a plagiarism-detection software if your university provides one.

2. QUOTATION

A quotation is a passage taken from another text (book, periodical, website, etc.) that is reproduced word for word and inserted into one's own writing. It serves to support, reinforce, or challenge an idea or viewpoint developed in the work. Quotations are subject to specific formatting rules.

- You may include quotations in your dissertation or thesis, but they must be clearly identified as such. Quotation marks are therefore mandatory. The use of italics is recommended, as well as a smaller font size. You may also choose to frame quotations, use a shaded background, or apply another distinguishing format. Whatever option you choose, it is important to apply it consistently throughout your work.

A quotation serves to substantiate your argument. It must be faithful to the original text; while it is acceptable to omit a few words or sentences, such omissions must be indicated by (…) or […].

- You must always provide the bibliographic reference for each quotation:
  - The author's name must appear either before or after the quotation.
  - A footnote must include the reference along with the page number from which the quotation was taken.
  - In the bibliography, provide the complete standardized reference, but without indicating the page of the source.

GENERAL RULES

- Verbatim reproduction

A quotation must be reproduced exactly as it appears in the original text. This means that punctuation, capitalization, spelling errors, typographical mistakes, and formatting (*bold, italics, underlining*) must all be faithfully transcribed.

- Quotation marks (« ») or block format

Quotations are presented either within quotation marks (**« »**) or as block quotations when they exceed three lines.

- **Quotation of fewer than three lines**:

  It should be integrated directly into the text and enclosed in quotation marks (**« »**).

- **Quotation of more than three lines**:

  - It must be set apart from the main text with a double line spacing before and after.
  - It should be typed in single spacing, without quotation marks.
  - It must be indented from the left margin by several spaces (approximately the width of six characters).
  - If the original text contains paragraphs, they should be separated by a single line spacing and indented by approximately four characters.
  - In the case of poetry, the original formatting must be strictly preserved.

❖ ***How to introduce a quotation***

A quotation can be introduced in two ways:

- **Using an Introductory Phrase Followed by a Colon (:);**

Example

Civil engineering textbooks emphasize sustainable materials: "Sustainable construction requires the integration of recycled aggregates to reduce environmental impact while maintaining structural integrity" (Neville, 2011, p. 456).

- **Integrating the Quotation Seamlessly into the Sentence ;**

Example

Neville (2011) states that sustainable construction requires "the integration of recycled aggregates to reduce environmental impact while maintaining structural integrity" (p. 456).

3. PARAPHRASING

In contrast to a direct quotation, paraphrasing involves *expressing the content of a passage* from a book, journal, website, or other source entirely in *one's own words*. It is not simply a matter of substituting a few words with synonyms. The text must be thoroughly rewritten, with both the vocabulary and the sentence structure reformulated.

❖ ***How to Produce an Effective Paraphrase***

To produce an effective paraphrase, a thorough understanding of the original text is essential. Restating a passage in one's own words becomes considerably more straightforward once its meaning has been fully comprehended.

❖ ***Six-Step Method for Effective Paraphrasing***

1. Replace certain words (nouns, adjectives, verbs, adverbs, etc.) with synonyms

When paraphrasing , the original meaning of the author's statements must be preserved. Words with nearly identical meanings to those chosen by the author should be selected, and only those with which one is familiar. If the meaning of a word is uncertain, it should be verified in a dictionary. Importantly, not every word in the original passage needs to be replaced- only the most significant ones.

2. Modify sentence structures

The word order must be altered, which entails rewriting sentences in a new form. This can be achieved, among other techniques, by changing logical connectors such as coordinating and subordinating conjunctions. A table of equivalent logical connectors may serve as a useful reference.

3. Change parts of speech

Parts of speech refer to the grammatical categories into which words are classified: nouns, adjectives, verbs, adverbs, and so forth. This step involves substituting a noun with a verb, an adjective with a noun, a verb with a noun, and similar transformations. Such changes will inevitably affect the word order within the sentence.

Example

Original text:

-The durability of concrete structures depends on proper mix design and curing conditions.

Paraphrased text:

-Proper mix design and curing conditions determine the durability that concrete structures achieve.

4. Implement any other pertinent changes

Any modification that enables the author's ideas to be expressed differently may be applied to the original excerpt.

5. Compare the paraphrase with the original excerpt

This ensures not only that the same words or sentence structures have not been inadvertently reproduced from the author, but also that the paraphrase accurately captures the author's ideas.

6. Cite the source

Although the author's exact words are not reproduced, their ideas are nonetheless appropriated. It is therefore imperative to reference the paraphrased text, including the specific page number from which the information was drawn.

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