

# **SECTION 7**

**Writing techniques and standards**

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## **7. WRITING TECHNIQUES AND STANDARDS Introduction**

Writing the dissertation is also an important stage of the final project, and must respect certain rules of formatting and typography, to ensure that the dissertation is presentable, harmonious and, consequently, well evaluated.

### **7.2. Formatting**

All diploma theses are approximately 75 pages long, excluding appendices. It should be printed in black on white paper, size 21 cm x 29.7 cm (A4).

- Heading: Chapter number and chapter title
- Footer: page number
- The standard left, right, top and bottom margins are 2.5cm (+0.5cm for binding).

### **7.3. Numbering and pagination**

#### **7.3.1. Chapter numbering**

It's important to use a perfectly consistent and precise numbering system, to facilitate reading and understanding of the dissertation The following numbers should be used:

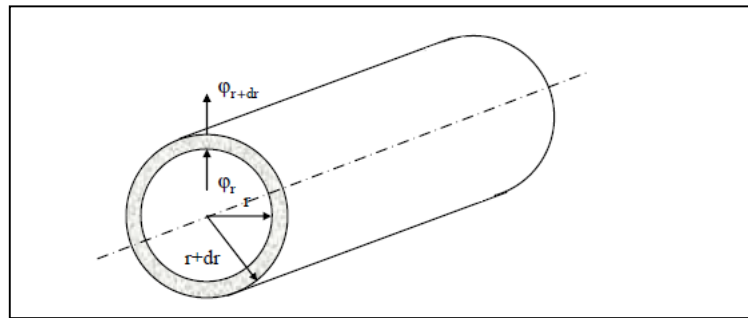
- Chapter I, Title I.1., Title I.2. ... Chapter II, Title II.1., Title II.2., ...etc.
- The styles of the different title levels are :
  - I.1. Title 1
  - I.1.1. Title 2
  - I.1.1.1 Title 3

Appendices are numbered in capital letters (A, B, C, etc.).

The same numbering and styles are used in the table of contents.

#### **7.3.2. Figure and table numbering**

Figures and tables should be centered, with numbered and centered titles and captions. Of course, if the table or figure is taken from a source, this source must be mentioned just after the title (see example below).



**Figure VII.1:** Figure title VII chapter number and 1 figure number

**Table VII.1:** Thermal conductivity of certain materials [1]

Matériau	$\lambda$ (W.m <sup>-1</sup> . °C <sup>-1</sup> )	Matériau	$\lambda$ (W.m <sup>-1</sup> . °C <sup>-1</sup> )
Argent	419	Plâtre	0,48
Cuivre	386	Amiante	0,16
Aluminium	204	Bois (feuillu-résineux)	0,12-0,23
Acier doux	45	Liège	0,044-0,049
Acier inox	15	Laine de roche	0,038-0,041
Glace	1,88	Laine de verre	0,035-0,051
Béton	1,4	Polystyrène expansé	0,036-0,047
Brique terre cuite	1,1	Polyuréthane (mousse)	0,030-0,045
Verre	1,0	Polystyrène extrudé	0,028
Eau	0,60	Air	0,026

Equations are centered on the line and designated by a number in brackets to the right:

$$\text{div}(\lambda \overrightarrow{\text{grad}} T) + P = \rho C \frac{\partial T}{\partial t} \quad (\text{VII.1})$$

### 7.3.3. Pagination

Pagination starts from the first page of the introduction. Preliminary pages should be paginated in lower-case Roman numbers:

- Page numbers before the introduction: i, ii, iii, iv, etc.
- From introduction to appendices: 1, 2, 3, 4, etc.
- Pages separating chapters: without pagination.

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## 7.4. Typography and punctuation

### 7.4.1. Typography

Typography is the choice of font, typeface and layout.

- Type size: 12 pts.
- Typeface:
- Font for titles and subtitles: Times New Roman 12 pts bold.
- Line spacing: 1.5cm.
- Table and figure titles: Times New Roman italic 12pts.
- Symbols in equations: italics.
- Abstract (French and English): 10pts, single-spaced.
- Arabic abstract: 12pts, line spacing:1.
- Numbers: in letters (twenty, sixty, sixth...)
- Dates: in Arabic numbers (2019, 21/01/2020...)
- Centuries: in Roman numbers: XXI<sup>st</sup> century.

### 7.4.2. Punctuation

Punctuation helps to clarify the meaning of sentences and avoid confusion or ambiguity. It shows the reader the rigor of the author's reasoning and his concern for clarity and precision.

- Point [.]: Marks the end of a sentence or paragraph.
- Semicolon [;]: Replaces the period when the two sentences it separates are closely related.
- Colon [:]: Indicates a pause to introduce an example, explanation, enumeration, etc.
- Suspension marks [...]: Three in number, indicate a pause, a break in the sentence or that the sentence is unfinished.
- Question mark [?]: At the end of a question.
- The exclamation mark [!]: Always expresses emotion.
- Comma [,]: Used to clarify the meaning of a sentence.
- Parentheses [( )]: Used to isolate a thought or clarification.
- Quotation marks [" "]: are used for foreign words, quotations, and the titles of newspaper or magazine articles.

- Dashes [-]: Same function as parentheses.
- Brackets: Isolate information within text enclosed in brackets.

### **7.5. Editing**

Master's dissertation writing must comply with grammatical and spelling rules, to achieve a precise style. It must be clear and simple. Sentences should be short. Avoid complex sentences that are difficult to understand.

What's more, the dissertation should be as impersonal as possible. In other words, avoid the use of "I" or "we". The use of the impersonal "we" is possible, but it is preferable to use the indirect style.

### **7.6. Spelling**

Spelling and syntax must be checked, including in the appendices. You'll also need to check that the tenses of conjugated verbs are consistent.

If the dissertation has been written in Microsoft Word, it is possible to use the built-in spell checker, but this is not sufficient, as it does not detect errors of agreement or homonyms.

### **7.7. Backing up, securing and archiving data**

Data loss can be caused by a virus, intentional deletion by another user, accidental overwriting or deletion by the user, or hardware failure. To avoid loss of information and data, we recommend that you:

- Protect your PC from other users by using a password.
- Protect against viruses with a firewall.
- Prevent data loss by ensuring regular backups.
- Use backup methods: removable media, CDs, DVDs.
- Compress/decompress data.

