

HISTORY COURSEWORK GUIDE

1. CLASSES AND ASSESSMENT

History Classes

Students studying History learn by reading, listening, thinking, discussing and writing. Undergraduate courses normally consist of two hours of lectures per week (these may be held consecutively in a two-hour block or on separate days) and a one-hour tutorial. **Lectures** are where you learn about the scope of the course, issues of importance, and the way historians approach certain topics. **Tutorials** provide an opportunity for you to discuss course material with your instructors and fellow students in a smaller group. History considers that attendance at lectures and tutorials is essential to effective learning and the successful completion of the course. Some classes may schedule **Lectorials** instead of tutorials – these will involve larger groups of students in a lecture theatre setting, but will encourage discussion of set readings and interactive learning in the same way as tutorials. Upper-level courses (especially for Honours) are based on a two-hour **Seminar** format centred on student-led discussion and analysis of assigned sources.

Coursework and Assessment

Assessment arrangements vary between History courses. All courses require some work to be completed during the semester, and all courses require the completion of at least one essay. Many courses have an end-of-semester examination, but some comprise 100% coursework. Be sure you are familiar with the requirements for your course. At stage one, coursework and the examination each account for 50% of the final grade. In courses where an examination comprises at least 50% of the final grade students may be eligible to receive **exam benefit** (also known as ‘plussage’). With exam benefit a student may be eligible to receive whichever is the better of two possible marks: that derived from the weighted average of the coursework mark and the exam mark; or the exam mark recalculated as a mark out of 100. To qualify for exam benefit, students must actively participate in tutorials and must complete all coursework to an acceptable standard by the date each piece is due.

Workload and Submission Expectations

The University of Auckland expects students enrolled in 15 point courses to spend 150 hours on the course (approximately 10 hours per week). This includes attendance in class, preparation for tutorials, time spent on coursework and studying for the final exam. History expects all students to submit work by the due date and time. If this is not possible, you must contact your tutor before the work is due and apply for an extension. If the extension is sought on medical grounds you may be required to provide a supporting medical certificate. If you have not secured an extension and you hand in your work after the due date and time, or if you hand in your work after the due date and time of your extension, your mark may be reduced. Excessively late coursework may not be marked. If a paper version of your work is required in your course, a copy should be placed in the correct box for History Essays at the Arts Assignment Centre (level 4, Social Sciences Building, by the Arts Students’ Centre) by the specified time on the day the assignment is due, and an electronic copy must be submitted to Canvas within 72 hours of the deadline for the submission of the hard copy. For those courses which require electronic-only submission, submit to Canvas by the due time and date. Paper copies of essays will normally be returned in tutorials, within three weeks of the submission date. Essays not collected in tutorial will be made available at the Arts Assignment Centre.

Provision for Illness, Accident or Disability

If temporary illness or injury, or exceptional circumstances beyond your control, prevent you from sitting an examination or seriously impair your examination performance, you may be eligible to

apply for aegrotat or compassionate consideration. Students who have disabilities which affect their undertaking examinations under the usual conditions may also apply to have these conditions varied. In all cases, contact the University Examinations Office for further details.

2. GRADES/MARKS SCHEDULE

Passing Grades				Failing Grades			
A+	90-100	B+	75-79	C+	60-64	D+	45-49
A	85-89	B	70-74	C	55-59	D	40-44
A-	80-84	B-	65-69	C-	50-54	D-	0-39

A: Excellent (80–100). Work based on wide reading (properly acknowledged through footnotes and bibliography, if required for the task) that shows excellent knowledge and understanding of the subject matter. Work offers a well-constructed argument and clear grasp of the major issues. It observes the conventions of prose style appropriate to the writing of academic history. Outstanding pieces of work also exhibit independent and creative thinking and individual flair in expressing complex ideas.

B: Good/Competent (65–79). Work which is clearly structured and where the well-supported argument leads to a logical conclusion. The work is based on adequate reading (properly acknowledged through footnotes and bibliography, if required for the task) and a good to strong grasp of the major issues raised in the readings. Its meaning is generally expressed through clear prose.

C: Satisfactory (50–64). Work which shows a reasonable knowledge of the subject matter and attempts to answer the question but displays one or more of the following faults: inadequate reading, misunderstanding of the sources, confused argument and/or structure, weakness of expression, inadequate attention to footnotes and bibliography (if required for the task).

D: Fail (0–49). Work displays serious failings in one or more of the following: inadequate reading, misunderstanding of the sources, confused argument and/or structure, weakness of expression, inadequate attention to footnotes and bibliography (if required for the task).

3. ESSAYS AND ASSIGNMENTS

Essay writing is a complex task that tests a range of abilities. Make sure you allow enough time for research, planning and writing. This guide will help you by breaking the process into a series of manageable steps. Parts of the tutorial programme may often be devoted to practical exercises that will help you with successful essay writing. You can also discuss your essays with History lecturers, tutors and mentors. There are many types of history essays, which all have a different purpose, but are structured similarly, as discussed below under **Writing**.

In History we assign essays, primary source essays, article and book review essays, historiographical essays, and research essays. Your Canvas page and/or courseguide will have detailed instructions for your essay, but a general description of each type of essay follows.

Essays usually involve using secondary works (writings by scholars) to answer some type of historical question, which may or may not be defined explicitly for you. You may encounter ‘essays’ that ask questions about change or continuity over time; or the causes and consequences of past events or processes; or ask you to carry out some type of comparison and contrast between different things.

Primary source essays focus on one or a group of primary sources and ask you to analyse and interpret the primary source(s) to answer some type of historical question. You may be asked to draw general conclusions about the time, place, or context in which the sources belong. You may be asked to

explain the meaning of the sources in terms of language, style, and symbolism. Or you may be asked to explain what the sources reveal about individual beliefs or collective behaviours.

Article review essays or book review essays focus on a specific secondary source—either a journal article or a book—and may ask you to explain the aim and argument of the author(s) and assess the article's or book's strengths, weaknesses, and contribution to historical literature. Please note that such essays may require you to consider the key arguments of the work as well as the methods and approaches used by the author(s).

Historiographical essays are based on secondary sources and ask you to summarise and analyse how scholars have written about and interpreted a given topic, historical period, or event.

Historiographical essays may involve considering how a field changes over time; or how it has been influenced by different theories and methods; or how different arguments might reflect the social, political, or cultural objectives of different scholars.

Research essays can be defined as drawing on either secondary or primary sources (or both together). Anything defined as a 'research essay' is usually meant to be a challenging assignment, which may require you to carry out independent reading and research. You may be asked to select your own research topic and formulate your own historical question about it.

Many history courses also set writing assignments that do not take the standard form of an essay, including 'document analyses' (which require 'close reading' of a primary source) and library-related assignments (which may involve database and catalogue use). Your courseguides, lecturers, tutors, and mentors can provide detailed instructions for these assignments.

Research, Note Taking and Planning

You should choose your question at least three weeks before the due date so that you can give the subject adequate attention. Courseguides and/or Canvas pages will contain reading lists for each assignment and question. Most items will be available electronically or in hard copy at the Library Short Loan Collection. Ensure that you understand the reading requirements for the specific assignment. These will vary depending on the course and the nature of the essay. As you conduct your research, keep in mind the task at hand. What, exactly, is the essay question asking for? Take notes that will help you to answer the question, rather than providing a lot of general information about the topic that may not be useful for this assignment. Once you have completed your research, construct an essay plan. What will be the major points that your essay makes? In what order should they be placed to put forward the most effective argument? How much detail will be necessary to support each point, considering the word limit for the assignment?

Writing

Essays may require several drafts before you are satisfied that you have completed the assignment to the best of your ability. Keep the following points in mind as you are writing:

1. **Answer the question.** Essay questions contain a specific task. You may be asked to 'explain' or 'discuss' certain events or phenomena, to evaluate 'why' something happened, or to consider 'to what extent' a statement may be accurate. Make sure that your essay fulfils the requirements of the task.
2. All History essays require an **argument**, or a point of view. It is not enough simply to say what happened. You should express an opinion in response to the question.
3. Provide **evidence** to substantiate your argument. Use examples that you have found during your reading and research as evidence in your essay.
4. **Structure** your essay effectively. All essays should contain a brief introduction and conclusion which summarise your argument and your response to the question. Each paragraph within the body of the essay should make a coherent point or discuss a distinct aspect of the topic. Try to achieve a

logical flow of ideas that allows the reader to follow the development of your argument throughout the essay. Make sure that individual paragraphs are linked together in a meaningful sequence.

5. **Style and expression.** Use accurate language and correct expression. Proof read your work to eliminate obvious errors. It is a good idea to ask someone else to read over your essay before you hand it in. A fresh pair of eyes will often spot mistakes that you may have missed.

6. All essays have a **word limit**. You should aim to keep as close to this as possible (a margin of +/- 10% is usually acceptable). Word limits encourage you to express your argument in a concise and thoughtful manner. Word counts in undergraduate essays exclude footnotes and bibliography, but material in footnotes should be restricted to referencing your sources. Do not add extra discursive material to your footnotes in an attempt to circumvent the word limit. It is not unusual for students to find that a first draft of their essay exceeds the limit. If this is the case, you will need to consider what is essential, what is less important but still useful, and what will have to be excluded.

Referencing

Essays will normally require you to acknowledge your sources by providing footnotes and a bibliography. Learning how to provide correct and accurate references to arguments, opinions, or facts that are not originally your own is part of learning how to become a historian and an important aspect of academic integrity. Plagiarism, defined as passing off someone else's work or ideas as your own, is a serious academic offence and possible cause for disciplinary procedures by the University.

Your written work must cite the source not only of word-for-word quotations (always placed within single quote marks and transcribed accurately from the original), but also paraphrased information or opinions by scholars that you have found in your research. Place the note number after the closing punctuation of your sentence. Except in rare circumstances, notes should be restricted to citation information: do not routinely use notes to offer qualifications, make additional argument, or discuss peripheral issues. If in doubt, discuss your references with your tutor.

Footnote Format

Footnotes should provide the following information in this order: author; title of item; book or journal in which item appears (if it is a chapter or article); place of publication (for books) or volume number (for journals); date of publication; page or pages to which you are referring. Follow the exact format in the examples below (including punctuation; use of italics or quotation marks; capitalisation). Note that italics are used only for book titles and journal titles; one of the most common errors is to italicise the titles of articles or book chapters (these are always indicated by quotation marks instead).

For books. Linda Bryder, *A Voice for Mothers: The Plunket Society and Infant Welfare, 1907-2000*, Auckland, 2003, p.27. [Use 'p.' for a single page; 'pp.' for multiple pages.]

For journal articles. Jonathan Scott, 'What were Commonwealth Principles?', *Historical Journal*, 47, 3, 2004, pp.21-2. [The article appears in volume 47, issue 3, of the journal.]

For chapters in an edited collection. Caroline Daley, 'A Gendered Domain: Leisure in Auckland, 1890-1940', in Caroline Daley and Deborah Montgomerie, eds, *The Gendered Kiwi*, Auckland, 1999, p.89. [Use 'ed.' for a single editor; 'eds' for multiple editors; 'trans.' for translator/s.]

For electronic resources. Cite the web address (url) and the date that you accessed the item. Note that it is not necessary to provide the url for journal articles or book chapters that you have accessed through course materials or databases (such as JSTOR) on the library website. Such items should be treated the same as print publications, and you should follow the formats outlined above.

For films and visual resources. Cite the name of the director, film title in italics, and year of release, eg: Niki Caro, *Whale Rider*, 2002.

You should give the full details the first time you refer to an item in your essay. In subsequent notes, use 'ibid.' (from the Latin word *ibidem*, meaning 'in the same place') if the note follows on consecutively from the previous reference to the same work; or use the author's name (and a short

version of the title, if clarification is needed) for later references. Please note that page references are required when using 'ibid.', unless referring to the exact same location as the immediately preceding note. See the examples below.

¹ Barry Reay, *Microhistories: Demography, Society and Culture in Rural England, 1800-1930*, Cambridge, 2002, pp.75-7.

² Malcolm Campbell, *Ireland's New Worlds: Immigrants, Politics and Society in the United States and Australia, 1815-1922*, Madison, Wisc., 2008, p.34.

³ *ibid.* [You are referring to the same page, ie: p.34 of Campbell.]

⁴ *ibid.*, p.36. [You are referring to the same book, but a different page.]

⁵ Reay, p.82. [Or: Reay, *Microhistories*, p.82.]

⁶ Campbell, pp.39-41. [Or: Campbell, *Ireland's New Worlds*, pp.39-41.]

These are by far the most common types of citation you will encounter in undergraduate History courses. Some courses may ask you to cite other materials (such as unpublished primary sources) for which you may require further information. Ask your course instructors or your tutors for guidance.

Bibliography

Provide a bibliography at the end of your essay. Place all the works you have consulted in alphabetical order according to author's surname. You do not need to number or use bullet points for your references. The format for a bibliography differs in two ways from the format for a footnote.

The author's surname should precede the first name or initial since the bibliography is an alphabetical list. For example: Bryder, Linda, *A Voice for Mothers: The Plunket Society and Infant Welfare, 1907-2000*, Auckland, 2003. If a work has more than one author or editor, only the first author's last name needs to be inverted in a bibliography. For example: Daley, Caroline, and Deborah Montgomerie, eds, *The Gendered Kiwi*, Auckland, 1999.

The full range of pages must be referenced for chapters in an edited collection and articles. For example: Scott, Jonathan, 'What were Commonwealth Principles?', *Historical Journal*, 47, 3, 2004, pp.1-23.

Te Reo Māori

University of Auckland policy stipulates that written work may be submitted in Māori in certain circumstances. Māori words or phrases in an English language essay do not need to be italicised. Māori terms commonly used in English do not require translations. Note that the correct plural term is 'Māori', not 'Māoris'. Consult your lecturer for further guidance about the use of te reo Māori.

Presentation

Essays should be prepared in a commonly accepted word processing programme and printed out for submission. If you have difficulties using a computer, please discuss this with your tutor so that appropriate arrangements can be made.

- Double-space your work (1½ spacing is also acceptable) and leave a generous margin to one side of the page so that markers have enough room to write comments and corrections.
- Choose a font and size that make your work easily legible (Times New Roman 12 point is a standard example).
- Footnotes should be single spaced and may be typed in a smaller font than the main text.
- Bibliography should be on a separate page.
- Please paginate your essay beginning from the first page of text (in other words, a separate title page without text does not count towards page numbering).
- For paper copies, staple your essay together and attach a 'cover sheet' generated from Canvas before submission to the Arts Assignment Centre. For essays where submission is online only through Canvas, no cover sheet is necessary.