

## STYLE GUIDELINES FOR THE DRAFTING OF GRADUATION CITATIONS AND LAUDATIONS

### General: Graduation citations

- Graduation citations should not exceed 150 words in length.
- The citation is a brief narrative description of the research that was conducted for a doctoral degree and the original contribution the research makes to the broad academic discipline.
- The citation should not include aspects other than those referred to above, save that mention may be made of international recognition accorded to the candidate on the basis of the doctoral research and publication of articles resulting from the research in **recognised international accredited journals**.

### General: *Laudatio*

- A *laudatio* that is included in a graduation programme in respect of a recipient of an honorary doctorate should not exceed 200 words.
- The *laudatio* celebrates the accomplishments of the degree recipient and is compiled from the *curriculum vitae* of the recipient.
- The *laudatio* of an honorary doctoral recipient may cover a wide spectrum of outstanding achievements.

### Writing style

(In compiling the writing conventions that appear below, I have made extensive use of the University of Oxford Style Guide (Amended in 2016), the full citation of which appears below.)

- English spelling conventions apply. US spelling is not accepted.
- Write in short, clear and simple declarative sentences.
- Remember that, although words and concepts in your writing may be clear to you, the reader may not share your understanding.
- Use the writing style with which you are comfortable but remember this is academic writing.
- If English is not your first language, make use of a language editor or an English-speaking colleague to help correct any errors in concord.
- Ensure that you correctly use words as you do not have the benefit of gestures, facial expressions, or tone of voice to elucidate the meaning.
- Use correct verb tenses.
- Use the active voice and write in the first person.
- Avoid the use of double negatives.
- Ensure that you place words in the correct order as the word placement has the potential to change the meaning of the sentence.

- Ensure that you preface the words “this” and “that” with the correct antecedents, otherwise your meaning may be obscured. If in doubt, use a noun for purposes of clarification.
- Use subordinating conjunctions correctly. Do not use “while” or “since” if you mean “although”. “because” or “whereas”.
- Use “respectively” to relate two or more sequences in the same sentence.
- Use “greater than” or “more than” rather than “over” or “in excess of”.
- Use “fewer” to refer to number use and “less” to refer to quantity. For example, “fewer than 50 animals” but “less than 2 litres of water”.
- Use “between” with two named objects but “among” with three or more named or implied objects.
- Ensure correct usage of words like “assure”, “ensure” and “insure” and “affect”, “effect”, and “impact” to reflect your meaning accurately.
- Although generally frowned upon, the use of the split infinitive is permissible where it is used to avoid awkwardness or ambiguity.
- Use “whether” and “whether or not” correctly.
- “To comprise” means “to contain” or “to consist of” and is not synonymous with “to compose”. Thus, “the book comprises 6 chapters” or “is composed of 6 chapters” but, is not “comprised of 6 chapters”.
- Choose the articles “a” and “an” according to the pronunciation of the words or abbreviations they precede.
- When comparing, the subject of the sentence should be included in the introductory phrase and should be followed by a comma. For example, “Unlike previous years, 2018 has proven to be ...”.
- “Compared to” should be used where drawing similarities from a comparison, and “compared with” when differences are identified.
- Ensure that you use all words necessary to complete your comparison and do so in the correct word order to avoid any confusion.
- Use coordinating conjunctions (“and”, “but”, “or”, “nor”, “yet”, “for”, and sometimes “so”) correlative conjunctions (“either, or”; “neither, nor”; “both, and”; “not only, but also”; “not, but”) and correlative constructions (“as well as”; e.g., “as well as”) to connect words or groups of words of equal grammatical rank.
- Avoid slang and jargon.
- Be brief. Ensure you convey your message succinctly and without unnecessary verbiage.
- Avoid phrases like: “As already stated”; “it has been found that”; “it is interesting to note that”, and etcetera.
- Use single words rather than resorting to phrases. For example, “the dress was red” not “the dress was the colour red”.
- Use the prepositional phrases introduced by “with” correctly. For example, Incorrect: “Two weeks later, six more animals died, with the total rising to 25”. Correct: “Two weeks later, six more animals died, and the total was then 25”.
- Do not use a forward slash to mean “and” or “or” and replace “and/or” with one or the other. That is, either use “and” or use “or”.
- Use gender-neutral language in your abstracts. Laudations may of course differ as gender specific language is appropriate when speaking of a particular individual.
- Choose gender neutral words carefully and avoid reinforcing outdated sex roles.

If you need further guidance or examples of the conventions mentioned above, please refer to the University of Oxford Style Guide (Updated Hilary Term 2016) which can be located at:

[www.ox.ac.uk/sites/files/oxford/University%20of%20Oxford%20Style%20Guide%20%28updated%20Hilary%20term%202016%29pdf](http://www.ox.ac.uk/sites/files/oxford/University%20of%20Oxford%20Style%20Guide%20%28updated%20Hilary%20term%202016%29pdf)