Script: formatting your text - page layout and breaks
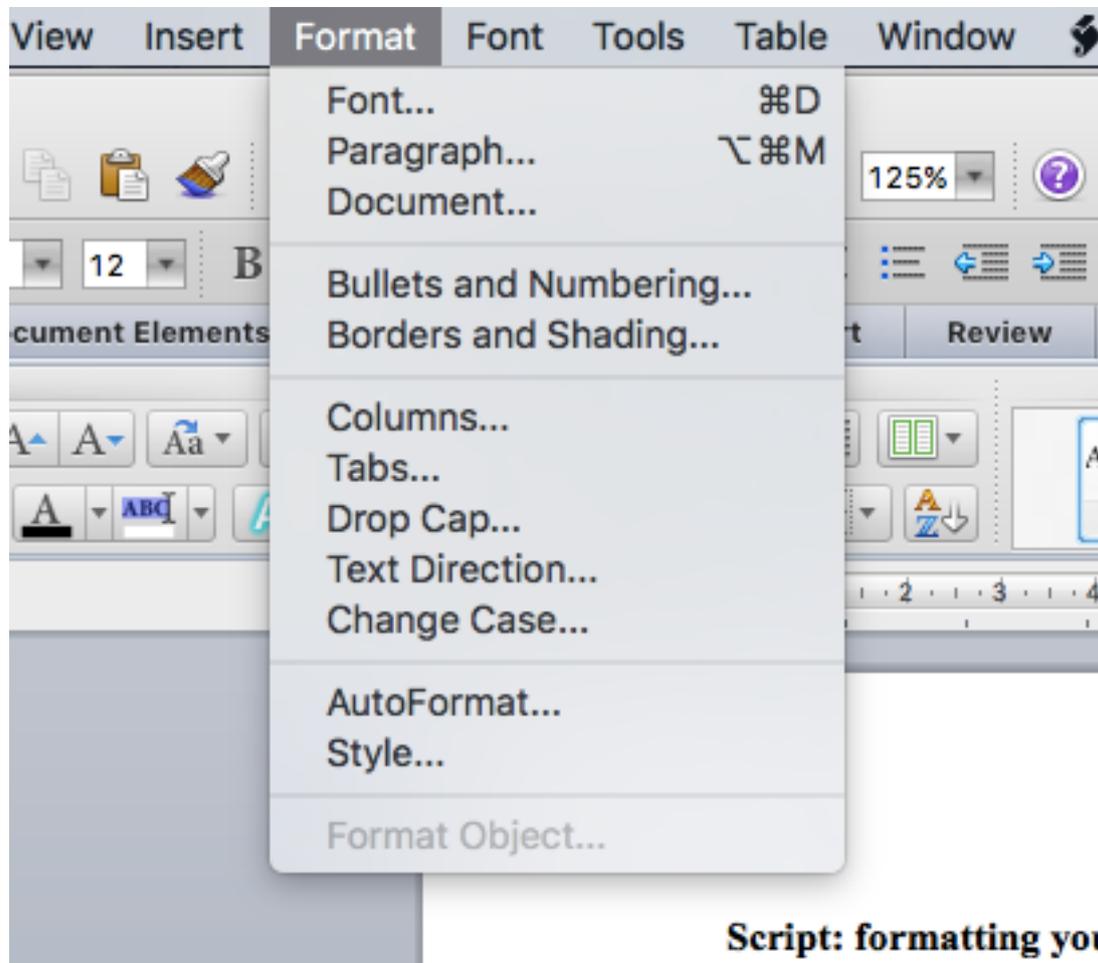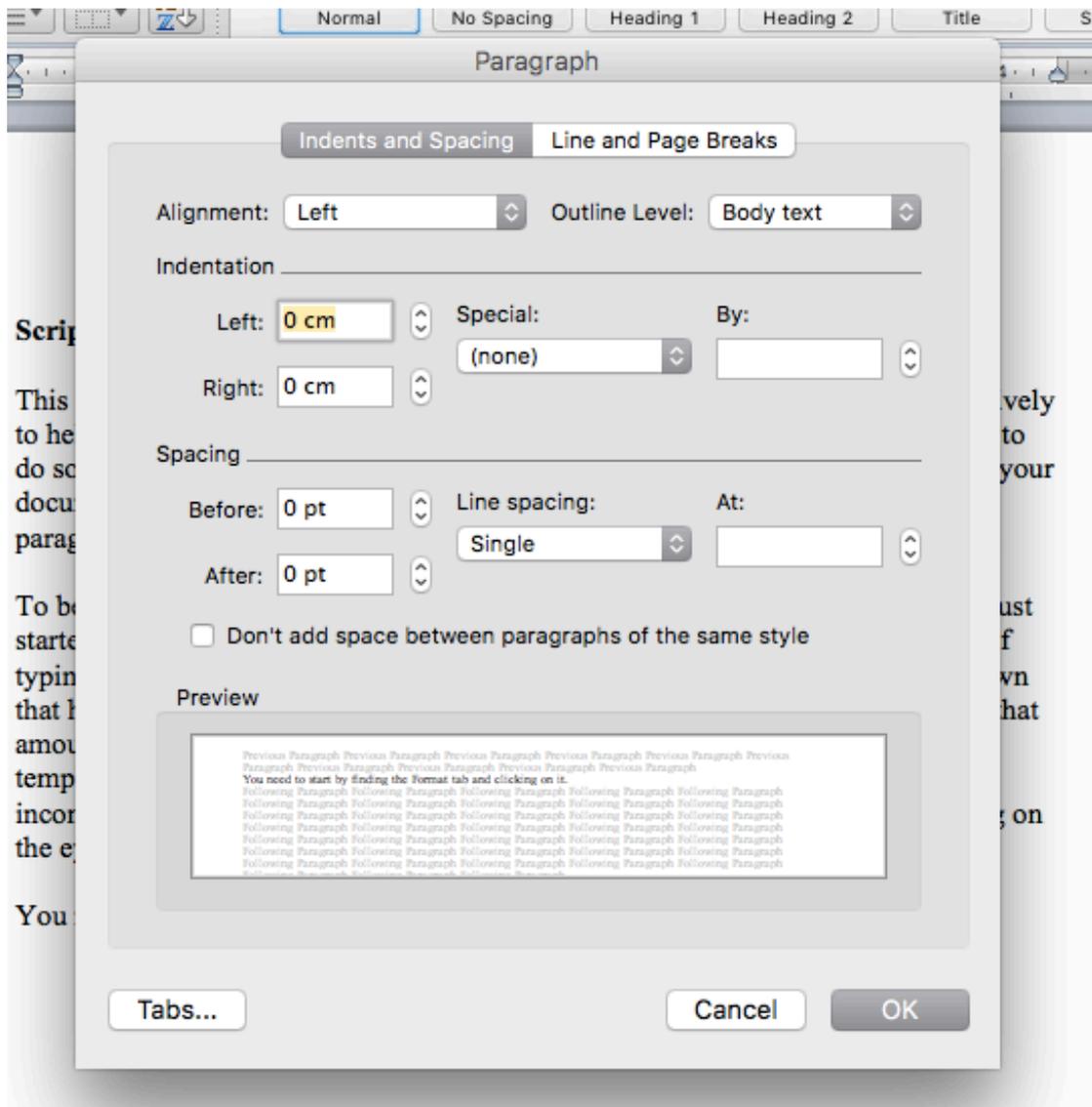
This is the second of two videos that shows you how to use MSWord tools effectively to help you format and lay out your thesis professionally, and why it is necessary to do so. In this video, we will look at setting up a page layout that can work across your document to help you avoid having several different kinds of spacing between paragraphs and headings, and how (and where) to assign page and section breaks.

To begin, think about your thesis as a whole for a minute, even if you have only just started. When it is finished it will be around 250 to 300 pages long. This is a lot of typing and a lot of reading for your examiners and supervisors. Research has shown that having more white space around headings, and spaces between lines, makes that amount of reading much easier. Thus, we are going to suggest a way to set up a template for your thesis that will save you a lot of time, minimize spacing inconsistency and create more 'white space' so that your text is less overwhelming on the eyes of your readers.
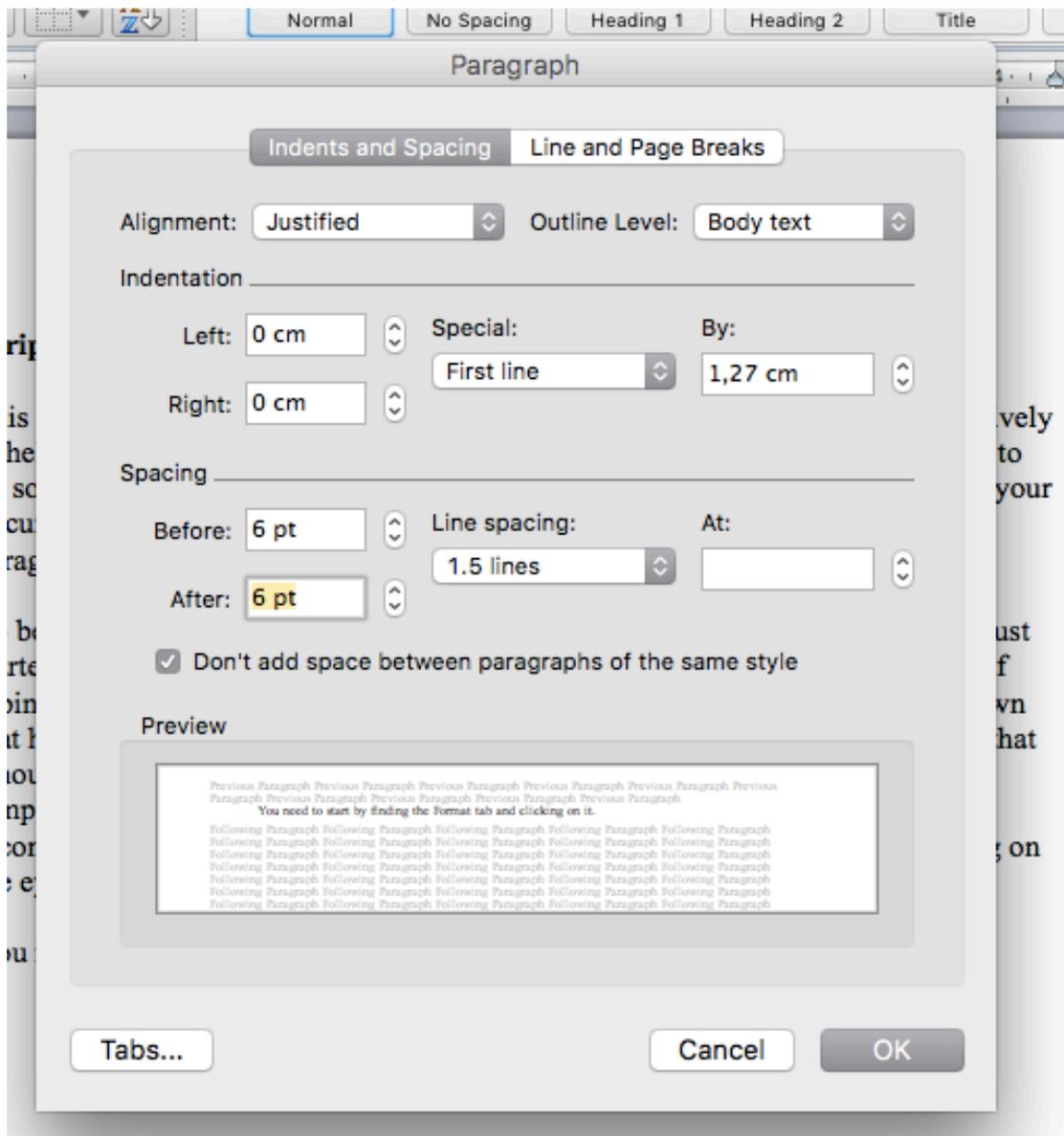
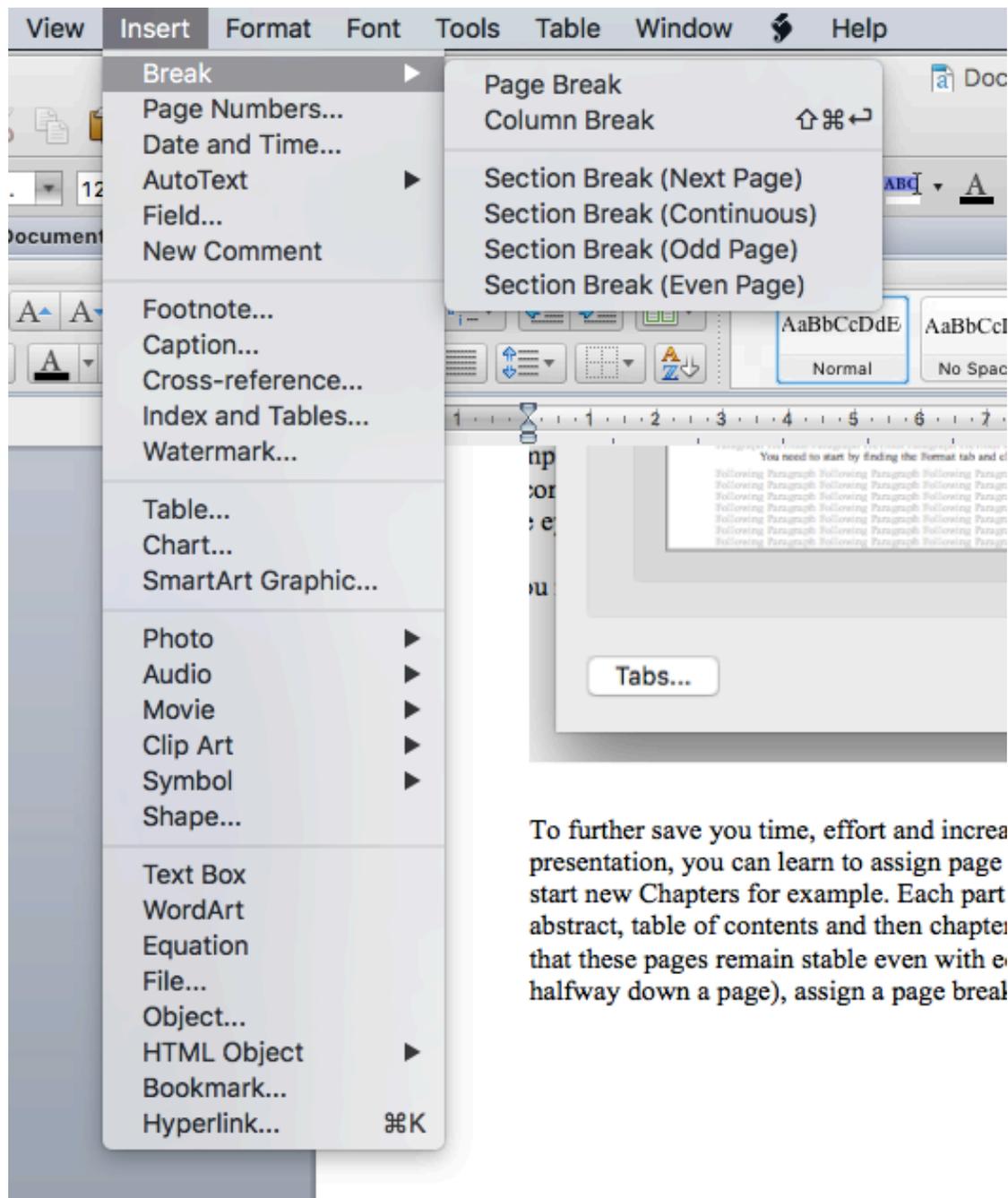You need to start by finding the Format tab and clicking on it.

Then click on Paragraph and this box should appear.

Normal | No Spacing | Heading 1 | Heading 2 | Title | S

Paragraph

Indents and Spacing | Line and Page Breaks

Alignment: Left Outline Level: Body text

Indentation

Left: 0 cm Special: (none) By:

Right: 0 cm

Spacing

Before: 0 pt Line spacing: Single At:

After: 0 pt

☐ Don't add space between paragraphs of the same style

Preview

Previous Paragraph Previous Paragraph Previous Paragraph Previous Paragraph Previous Paragraph Previous Paragraph Previous Paragraph Previous Paragraph Previous Paragraph Previous Paragraph
You need to start by finding the Format tab and clicking on it.
Following Paragraph Following Paragraph

Tabs... Cancel OK

You start by changing the alignment to 'Justified'. This will align your text with both the left and right hard margins. Keep the outline level at Body text, which is the normal text you type in. If you would like the first line of each paragraph to be indented, click 'First line' under Special, and make sure the 'By:' is set at 1.27cm. This is standard. If you are going to be using 1.5 line spacing, a recommendation to is to have 6pt before and after each paragraph. If you want to double space, increase this to 12pt. Finally, click the box underneath spacing and click OK. Do this before you start typing your new documents that will become your chapters, and all of the spacing will be uniform. Combined with learning from the video on headings, you should have a much neater document, with less time spent trying to do all of this fiddly work manually.

Normal | No Spacing | Heading 1 | Heading 2 | Title

Paragraph

Indents and Spacing | Line and Page Breaks

Alignment: Justified   Outline Level: Body text

Indentation

Left: 0 cm   Special: First line   By: 1,27 cm

Right: 0 cm

Spacing

Before: 6 pt   Line spacing: 1.5 lines   At:

After: 6 pt

☑ Don't add space between paragraphs of the same style

Preview

Previous Paragraph Previous Paragraph Previous Paragraph Previous Paragraph Previous Paragraph Previous Paragraph Previous Paragraph Previous Paragraph Previous Paragraph
You need to start by finding the Format tab and clicking on it.
Following Paragraph Following Paragraph

Tabs...   Cancel   OK

To further save you time, effort and increase the professionalism of your thesis presentation, you can learn to assign page and section breaks. Page breaks are used to start new Chapters for example. Each part of your thesis, from the title page, to abstract, table of contents and then chapters, should start on a fresh page. To ensure that these pages remain stable even with editing (and you don't have a chapter starting halfway down a page), assign a page break. You do this by going to Insert, and then to 'Break' and then to 'Page Break, like this:

| View | Insert | Format | Font | Tools | Table | Window | ⚡ | Help |

Break	▶	Page Break	
Page Numbers...		Column Break	⇧⌘↵
Date and Time...			
AutoText	▶	Section Break (Next Page)	
Field...		Section Break (Continuous)	
New Comment		Section Break (Odd Page)	
		Section Break (Even Page)	

Footnote...
Caption...
Cross-reference...
Index and Tables...
Watermark...

Table...
Chart...
SmartArt Graphic...

Photo ▶
Audio ▶
Movie ▶
Clip Art ▶
Symbol ▶
Shape...

Text Box
WordArt
Equation
File...
Object...
HTML Object ▶
Bookmark...
Hyperlink... ⌘K

Tabs...

To further save you time, effort and increa
presentation, you can learn to assign page
start new Chapters for example. Each part
abstract, table of contents and then chapter
that these pages remain stable even with e
halfway down a page), assign a page break

When you click on Page Break, the cursor will move to a new page. This will then always be the start of this page, even if you edit and extend the section preceding it.

Section breaks should be used sparingly. Usually, you only would need one in the average thesis, between the preliminary sections, and the chapters. This would enable you to assign roman numerals (i, ii, iii and so on) to the acknowledgements, abstract, glossary etc, and Arabic numerals (1, 2, 3 and so on) to the chapters or main body of your thesis. Thus, after the final page in your preliminary section, you go back to Breaks, as above, but this time click on Section Break (Next Page). The cursor will move to the next page, and this should allow you to insert page numbers in the sections before and after the break that are different in format. If you are ever concerned that the break you have inserted is in the wrong place or you want to delete

it, click on this key ¶ . This will reveal where the breaks are and enable you to delete them.

Again, these are just tools to save you time, effort and frustration as you create a document as significant in scope and size as a postgraduate thesis. They cannot do more than help you out, but if you learn to use them well, they can assist you in presenting your thesis in the best possible way. A document that is well-laid out, and shows that care and attention have been paid to making it neat, professional and readable, makes a strong impression on an examiner, and indicates the seriousness and care with which you approach your work. Taking the time to learn how to use these tools, and applying them to setting out and creating