

Guidelines for bachelor theses

Registration

Students in Health Economics interested in writing their bachelor thesis are asked to register via KLIPS. Students of Business Administration or Economics who are interested in the topic of Behavioral Management Science, are asked to register via KLIPS by indicating the sub field “Interdisciplinary Business Administration”. Further information you can find here: [Abschlussarbeiten - WiSo-Fakultät \(uni-koeln.de\)](https://www.uni-koeln.de/abschlussarbeiten-wiso-fakultaet)

During an **introductory meeting** (in person or via Zoom), students–enrolled via KLIPS at the Department of Business Administration and Health Care Management for a bachelor thesis–will be familiarized with the basic hints on writing a bachelor thesis and get to know their supervisors.

Typically, these meetings take place in September and April before the beginning of the winter and summer terms, respectively. The exact date (and location if held in-person) of the introductory meeting will be announced some weeks before the meeting. We highly recommend to participate in the introductory meeting, as it equips students with the necessary information to work on their thesis self-reliantly.

Formatting

For formatting a bachelor thesis students are advised to follow the simple rules below:

- Margins: above / below 2.5 cm, right / left each 2.5 cm.
- Main Text Font: Times New Roman 12 points (footnotes 10 points).
- Line spacing: 1.5 times the main text (footnotes easy); justified (*Blocksatz*).
- Figures: numbered with Arabic numbers. Always title your figures precisely.
- Tables: numbered with Arabic numbers.
- Page numbers: Arabic numerals, starting with 1 from the main body onwards.
- Footnote: in each page, only for additional information, not to be used for purposes of citation.
- Length: unless something different is specified in the particular course (or individually agreed with a supervisor) maximum of 35 to 40 pages for a bachelor thesis. This does not include cover page, table of content, abbreviation list, lists of tables and figures, references and appendix. A deviation from these guidelines (if not otherwise agreed with your supervisor) will negatively affect the evaluation of term paper or thesis, respectively.

Further formal aspects

- Cover page: Author's name, title of the thesis, marking as a bachelor thesis, supervising chair, supervisor, course of study, faculty and university, place and date of submission. Further Information you can find here: [Ab-schlussarbeiten - WiSo-Fakultät \(uni-koeln.de\)](https://www.uni-koeln.de/ab-schlussarbeiten-wiso-fakultaet)
- Table of contents: Index of chapters, sections and subsections of the work numbered with Arabic numerals (1, 1.1, 1.1.1, etc.).
- Abbreviations list: (optional) List only abbreviations used in text, e.g. "DRG – Diagnosis Related Groups"; commonly used abbreviations (such as "etc." "et al.") should not be listed.
- Tables and figures: List figures and tables with page numbers.

Main structure of the text

1. **Introduction (Aim)**
 2. **Conceptual background/Theoretical considerations (Development Aim)**
 3. **Method (How to answer Research Question)**
 4. **Empirical / Literature part & Results**
 5. **Discussion (literature-based reflection of results, incl. Implication & Limitation...)**
 6. **Conclusion (Shortcut – all over Summary)**
 7. **Appendix (optional)**
 8. **Bibliography**
 9. **Affidavit**
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1. Introduction

- Motivation (Why do I intend to write about this topic? Why is the topic relevant?)
- Subject (What is my subject? If necessary: definition with literature reference)
- Intention, task, research question (What is the particular aspect of the subject I will deal with? What is the question that I want to answer?)

2. Conceptual background/Theoretical considerations

Define all important terms that you will use in the text, e.g. transformation, multinational enterprise, innovation, institutions, etc. based on scientific literature (= initial journal articles on the topic, fundamental books).

Optional: Write what previous research tells us about your topic, or (if available) what we already know about it from theory, based on a literature review.

In the end: your developed Research Question/Aim

3. Method

„Method“ (How do you approach the research question?): A brief description– e.g. that you will start with short literature review about the topic XXX, proceed analyzing reports published by XXX, governmental documents of country XXX, analyze data for XXX for years XXX drawn from the database XXX etc.

→ Short and clear description of why, what and how!

4. Empirical / Literature part & Results

A) DATA BASED: Present a short introductory description about the data, setting you intend to analyze, present the empirical strategy and describe the results

- Analyze your research question based on the theoretical introduction you provided
- Analyze your research question based on the available data

B) LITERATURE BASED: Present a short description about the procedure of your literature search (search strategy, databases, keywords...)

- Analyze your research question based on the theoretical introduction you provided
- Analyze your research question based on the available literature

→ Everything that you write (data which you present) ought to bring you and your reader closer to answering your research question

5. Discussion

Literature based reflection of results, incl. Implication & Limitation...

6. Conclusion

- Very short summary of the text above (What did we learn in the paper?)
- Clear answer to your research question
- Reflection on strengths and weaknesses; limitations etc.
- Outlook for further research (derived from the previous point)

7. Appendix

If required, it will contain additional material.

8. Bibliography

In the bibliography, list all sources alphabetically which have been used in the main text. Works of the same author should be arranged chronologically. Several titles by the same author in one year ought to be distinguished with small letters.

→ See the information listed below for dealing with sources

9. Affidavit

On the last page of your thesis, you are to include the following statement:

[eidesstattliche erklärung.pdf \(uni-koeln.de\)](#) (do not staple in but only put in/nicht einheften, nur einlegen)

Sources

Our Chair employs the Harvard Citation method, a name and date reference system which is very common in Social Sciences. You can use American or German Style.

It's important that you remain consistent in the application!

Below, you can find examples for the most widely encountered types of sources in term papers. For others (e.g. ebooks, chapter in an edited book, conference papers, interviews, newspapers, legal documents etc.), you can find a lot of Harvard referencing guides on the internet. Here are three of them:

- <https://guides.library.lincoln.ac.uk/learn/referencing>
- <https://www.citethisforme.com/harvard-referencing>
- German style ([Harvard-Zitierweise – Richtig Zitieren im Harvard-Style | ACAD WRITE \(acad-write.com\)](#))

Examples

1. Journal Article:

High-quality journal articles are a qualitative yardstick according to which the term paper is judged. Avoid low-quality journals!

It is safer to use journals from on-line library catalogues such as

- <http://www.jstor.org/>
- <http://www.sciencedirect.com/>
- <http://apps.webofknowledge.com/>

In-text citation: (Temple, 1999) and Temple (1999, 116-120) when referring to a range of pages

Bibliography: Temple, J. (1999). The New Growth Evidence. Journal of Economic Literature, 37, pp. 112- 156.

2. Books:

In-text citation: (Greene, 2000) and Greene (2000, p. 50) in case of a direct citation

Bibliography: Greene, W.H. (2000) *Econometric Analysis*. 4th Edition, New Jersey: Prentice Hall.

3. Internet sources

Online databases can be very helpful for your empirical part. These include among others:

- <http://data.worldbank.org/>
- <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/data/database>
- <http://stats.oecd.org/>

Use internet sources sparingly! And list separately at the end of the bibliography. Don't use Wikipedia!

In-text citation: (OECD, 2017)

Bibliography: OECD, (2017). *OECD Reviews of Innovation Policy: Norway 2017*. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264277960-en> [Access 13.09.2021].

4. Identical literature sources

(Müller 2020a, Müller 2020b, Müller 2020c etc.)

Publication: A publication of your work (e.g. via www.hausarbeiten.de, etc.) is not allowed by the chair!

Submission

Theses must be submitted in accordance with the requirements of the “WiSo-Prüfungsamt der Universität zu Köln ([Abschlussarbeiten - WiSo-Fakultät \(uni-koeln.de\)](https://www.uni-koeln.de/abschlussarbeiten)).

Plagiarism: Generally, there is nothing wrong with substantiating your argument through references to other people’s work. If you are quoting the words of someone else, be sure to make this clear by citing whom you are quoting. Using the words or ideas of someone else without acknowledging is plagiarism. Plagiarism is a serious offence! It is a form of cheating and will be punished heavily. Remember that whoever marks your paper will have excellent knowledge of work published in their area of specialization. Stylistically, too, it is easy to detect elements in a student’s piece of work which originally belong to someone else’s work. The simple rule is to always acknowledge your sources by quoting them! → Our faculty uses a software to detect plagiarism in every submitted paper!

Checklist

Before submitting your work, consult the following checklist, which is not exhaustive, to see whether you have met the basic requirements of a well-crafted seminar paper, bachelor thesis or master thesis.

- Does the text still contain spelling or punctuation errors?
- Do you use a fluent and understandable manner of expression?
- Are words, passages or entire pages missing?
- Does the table of contents (and other directories) match the structure of the text and page numbers?
- Is the bibliography complete? (Delete bibliography entries that you do not cite!)
- Are all references to literature, figures and appendix correct? Did you forget any references?
- Is the layout (headings, text formatting, etc.) clear and consistent?
- Did you include all necessary components of a scientific paper?
- Did you correctly number figures, tables, footnotes, equations?

Further Information

https://www.wpunj.edu/library/pdf/citationguides/turabian_9th_2021.pdf

https://library.westernsydney.edu.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0008/1943486/cite_Harvard.pdf