

## **Guidelines for writing a project work or Bachelor / Master thesis**

### **Contents**

1	Introduction.....	2
2	Composition and content of thesis.....	2
2.1	Title page.....	2
2.2	Structure .....	2
2.3	Introduction.....	3
2.4	Main part.....	5
2.5	Final part .....	5
2.6	Reference list .....	6
2.7	Annex.....	7
3	Layout etc.....	8
3.1	Page numbers .....	8
3.2	Abbreviations.....	8
3.3	Citing .....	8
3.4	Figures and tables.....	10
3.5	General formatting of the thesis.....	12
4	Further literature for the preparation of a scientific paper.... <b>Fehler! Textmarke nicht definiert.</b>	
5	Colloquium, oral presentation .....	13
6	Annex: Template for title page .....	14

# **1 Introduction**

This paper offers guidelines for the composition of a Bachelor/Master thesis, whereby especially the form is dealt with. The contents of the thesis should be discussed with the supervisor.

## **2 Composition and content of thesis**

### **2.1 Title page**

The title page of the thesis should be designed according to the example given (see annex).

### **2.2 Structure**

The structure of the thesis depicts, on the one hand, the overview of the contents of the topic in question; on the other hand, it gives reference to the author's main focus points. Regarding contents, the thesis is structured to give an identifiable, logical flow of thought. The structure should show a continuous thread. Chapters should have headings from which an uninformed reader will get an impression of the chapter's content. Title and contents should make sense to the uninformed reader.

After the table of contents follow the lists of abbreviations, tables, and illustrations. If there are only very few tables and illustrations, they can be listed in one combined list. The lists are provided with Roman numerals (e.g. I Table of abbreviations, II Table of illustrations, III List of tables). The rest of the paper is structured as in the numerical classification shown below.

The individual structural points should be organised in an equal, superior and subordinated classification so that the respective represented points are situated on the same objective level. Each step must contain at least two subordinated points, if there is a further subclassification. If the subclassification is too detailed, the structure becomes too complex and consequently the logical flow of the text and the reader's comprehension of the text can be hindered. More than three structural steps should therefore be avoided; there should be a maximum of four structural levels. The number of structural levels should be balanced subject to the size of the paper.

### Example of the numerical classification:

1	Introduction	1
1.1	Problem Statement	1
1.2	Aim	
2	State of the Research	1
3	Methods	
3.1	Methods used	2
3.2	Data Collection	2
3.2.1	Sampling	2
3.2.2	Interviews	3
3.2.2.1	Expert Interviews	3
3.2.2.2	Group Interviews	4
3.3	Data Analysis	4
4	Results and Discussion	5
4.1	Results	5
4.2	Discussion	7
5	Conclusion	9
6	Summary	11
	References	13
	Annex	20

## 2.3 Introduction

The aim of the introduction is to let the reader know about the relevance of the topic and to raise interest on maximal one or two pages. It contains

- the description and relevance of the topic, also in relation to the greater context
- the problem setting
- the aim of the thesis or analysis
- the limitations of the topic, problem, research
- on overview of the structure of the thesis

It is recommended to begin writing the thesis with the introduction (especially the problem at hand) with clearly defined objectives and the methodological approach. These elements are also

part of the exposé (please find a separate guideline for writing the exposé at our homepage). The exposé will be discussed with the thesis' supervisor. Modifications can take place as work on the thesis progresses.

## 2.4 Main part

The main part contains most of the text of your topic. Usually, the main part is structured in a **theoretical background**, the **methodology**, the **results** and the **discussion**.

The main part be convincing which means that you will need to follow a common thread. Your structure should be formally and logically convincing. The contents and structure correspond to the chosen line of argumentation. Suitable titles for the chapters refer to the contents, connect passages and aid to the flow of reading.

The text part is characterised by the following criteria: facts, logic, conciseness and objectivity. The presentation of results needs to be free from personal valuations; the avoidance of the first person (“I” or “we”) as well as the “one”-form is preferable.

The presentation of the results only refers to the own results. Within the discussion your results are related to the existent literature. Are the findings similar, different and so on. What are the new insights? In the discussion section the research questions should be answered. In order to avoid repetitions, it might be helpful to merge presentation of results and discussion in one chapter. Please take care to clearly indicate what are your own results and what is cited from the literature.

A breakdown of the text in several relevant paragraphs increases readability. Passive forms of verbs should be avoided, since active forms of verbs increase liveliness of your writing. Don't use abbreviations like *it's*, *don't*, *aren't* etc. The respective words should be written out in full (*it is*, *do not*, *are not* etc.).

## 2.5 Final part

The final part is to close your thesis. It includes the conclusions which can be drawn from the results. In a separate chapter there should be a summary of one to two pages of the whole thesis.

The **conclusions** are portrayed by a critical reflection of the thesis' contents and results as well as the own proceeding. The facts should be discussed and a review or perspective can be taken. The inherent question to all research 'so what' should be answered. So, what are the new insights of your work?

In the **summary**, the objectives, approach, contents, results and conclusions of the thesis are illustrated in short form in order to give the hurried reader an overview over the whole thesis. Neither in the conclusion nor in the summary should new facts or data be given. This takes place in the main part.

## **2.6 Reference list**

The bibliography comprises all sources mentioned in the thesis in **one** list in alphabetical order. (The differentiation between monographs, articles, internet sources etc. is made here only to explain the different ways of citation.) Each title is given with the essential bibliographic data (e.g. for a monograph: name of the author(s), year of publication, title of the publication, edition, place and publisher). This applies in equal measure to sources of illustrations and tables that are displayed in the paper. First names of authors are not written out in full.

### **Monographs**

Aaker, D.A. (1991): *Managing brand equity. Capitalizing on the value of a brand name.* New York: The Press.

Burns, A.C. and Bush, R.F. (2003): *Marketing Research. Online Research Applications*, 4. ed., international ed., Upper Saddle River, HJ. J.: Prentice Hall.

### **Articles in collected editions**

Foxall, G. (1987): *Consumer Behaviour.* In: Baker, M.J. (ed.): *The Marketing Book.* London: Heinemann, p. 115-201.

Wier, M.; Mørch Andersen, L.; Millock, K. (2005): *Information provision, consumer perceptions and values - the case of organic foods.* In: Krarup, S.; Russell, C.S. (eds.): *Environment, information and consumer behaviour.* Cheltenham, UK: Elgar (New horizons in environmental economics), p. 161-178.

### **Journal articles**

Anderson, E.T. and Simester, D.I. (1998): *The Role of Sales Signs.* In: *Marketing Science.* Vol. 17, No. 2, p. 139-155.

Hanf, J.H. and Kühl, R. (2005): *Branding and its consequences for German agribusiness.* In: *Agribusiness,* Vol. 21, No. 2, p. 177-189.

If there is a quotation from a journal article without the author's name given, the author can be named as "Anonymous".

Anonymous (1989): *Brands – How much in Dollar?* In: *Absatzwirtschaft,* No. 8, p. 50-54.

### **Internet sources of information**

Internet sources of information are also included in the reference list. It is important to quote the date of the last access of the source. The following example was seen on August, 20<sup>th</sup> 2020.

Feucht, Y. und K. Zander (2017): Consumers' attitudes on carbon footprint labelling. Results of the SUSDIET project. Thünen Working Paper 78, Braunschweig. Online at: [https://www.thuenen.de/media/publikationen/thuenen-workingpaper/ThuenenWorkingPaper\\_78.pdf](https://www.thuenen.de/media/publikationen/thuenen-workingpaper/ThuenenWorkingPaper_78.pdf). Accessed: Aug, 20th, 2020.

Note: For sources from [www.orgprints.org](http://www.orgprints.org) the date of access does not have to be included because this is a permanent archive.

When quoting emails in the reference list, please note that a personal email is private. Whenever an email is made public, the permission of the person concerned must be granted.

Privateperson, E.: RE: Your enquiry. 03.06.2022. Online in Internet. Ellen Privateperson's email [ellen@private.life.de](mailto:ellen@private.life.de) to Edward Example [eddie.ex@ex-ample.com](mailto:eddie.ex@ex-ample.com).

### **Literature sources which are not available**

If a source of literature which has been quoted in another book is cited, the original source must be referenced. Only if original source cannot be accessed despite thorough research, it must be quoted as follows (example):

Kennedy, P. (1992): A Guide to Econometrics. 3. ed. The MIT Press: Cambridge, Mass. Cited in: Gujarati, D.N. (2003): Basic Econometrics. 4. ed. New York: McGraw-Hill Companies, p. 349.

The source of the book that was cited (here: Gujarati (2003)) has to be listed in the reference list.

## **2.7 Annex**

The annex should follow directly after the reference list. The annex only contains information which is not absolutely necessary for the understanding of the text. It might be appropriate when there is additional information which might be interested for some readers. The annex is structured in line with the text. An informative heading of the tables, texts etc. in the annex is also necessary. Examples for typical contents of the annex are the author's own calculations of the figures shown in the text, overviews and tables or questionnaires for empirical analyses.

### **3 Layout etc.**

Basis for orthography and abbreviations in the English language is the latest edition of the Oxford English Dictionary. If you are working with software, e.g. Microsoft Word, please use the presetting tool “language → English (UK)”.

#### **3.1 Page numbers**

Each page should contain a page number. The numbering of the pages starts with the introduction. The pages of the table of contents as well as the lists of abbreviations, tables etc. that are listed before the introduction are numbered with Roman numerals (I, II, III) and are thus listed in the table of contents.

#### **3.2 Abbreviations**

Every abbreviation in the text has to be explained on first appearance. This is done by writing out the term in full, followed by the abbreviation in brackets. In the remainder of the text, the abbreviation may be used.

Example: The World Trade Organization (WTO) has just published a new study. ... The WTO also confirmed that...

The explanation of abbreviations is not necessary for commonly used terms like “e.g.”, “i.e.” “etc.”. Correspondingly, these abbreviations also do not have to be listed in the list of abbreviations.

#### **3.3 Citing**

The use of external thoughts and presentations has to be indicated by an exact quotation source. Be careful not to take quotations from their context. All sources, published in whatever way, are quotable, although scientific literature is always preferable. General knowledge which can be taken from any general thesaurus does not have to be quoted in a scientific paper. The same applies for relevant technical and general terms. Any other transfer of external ideas must be identified by its source (this applies to an equal degree to written citations, internet sources, illustrations, tables, pictures etc.)!

A reference has to be directly related to the citation so that every external idea can be identified and allocated to its owner. If there is only one sentence from one source, the reference is given



at the end of the sentence (or embedded into the sentence as shown in Example 2 below). If several succeeding sentences originate from one source, there has to be only one mention of the reference at the end of the last sentence, at the latest, however, at the end of a paragraph. This applies equally to direct and indirect citations.

Every reference begins with the author's name followed by year and page number. For sources with two authors both are named. For sources with more than two authors, only the first author is named followed by "et al." (Latin: et alii = and others). In the reference list, however, all authors are listed. If the name of the author cannot be identified despite thorough research, the term "anonymous" can be used instead of the author's name (this may sometimes be the case with internet sources or newspaper articles).

An **indirect quotation** is the case if external ideas have been used in the author's own words.

Example 1: Marketing is a social and managerial process (Kotler and Armstrong 2003, p. 5).

Example 2: According to Kotler and Armstrong (2003, p. 5), marketing is a social and managerial process.

A word for word quotation from a source in the text is indicated as a **direct quotation** by inverted commas. These texts must not be modified but written character for character. Small omissions within the direct quotation are indicated by ellipses "...". Direct quotations should be used as few as possible.

Example 1: "We define marketing as a social and managerial process whereby individuals and groups obtain what they need and want through creating and exchanging products and value with others" (Kotler and Armstrong 2003, p. 5).

Example 2: Kotler and Armstrong (2003, p.5) "define marketing as a social and managerial process whereby individuals and groups obtain what they need and want through creating and exchanging products and value with others".

Sources can be cited in the text ("Harvard-System"). All sources in the text must be in accordance with the reference list, i.e. all sources mentioned in the text must be listed in the reference list and all sources in the literature list must be mentioned at least once in the text.

Source indications should always contain the page number of the citation. If the text is referring to two or more pages, this is indicated by e.g. 15f (page 15 and 16) or 15ff (page 15 and more than one following page). In the same case, alternatively 15p, respectively 15pp can be written.

Scientific writing means to read, comprehend and process scientific literature. The author is supposed to show that he/she has read and understood the literature relevant for the specific topic, contemplated and reflected different sources and composed his/her own text according to the considered information. Therefore, it is **not** enough to take whole passages from literary sources without alteration (as a direct citation) or slightly altered (as an indirect citation) into the author's own text. This also **includes sources in a foreign language that are translated into German or English.**

**If in the paper three passages can be identified, in which the direct citing or a whole passage which content is not cited according to these guidelines, the paper is failed!!!**

### **3.4 Figures and tables**

Figures and tables should present facts clearly. The presentation must be comprehensible, i.e. all necessary information for full comprehension must be supplied. There should always be an explanation in the text, as well as a reference to the illustration, e.g.: "As can be seen in Figure 13" or "(cp. Figure 13)".

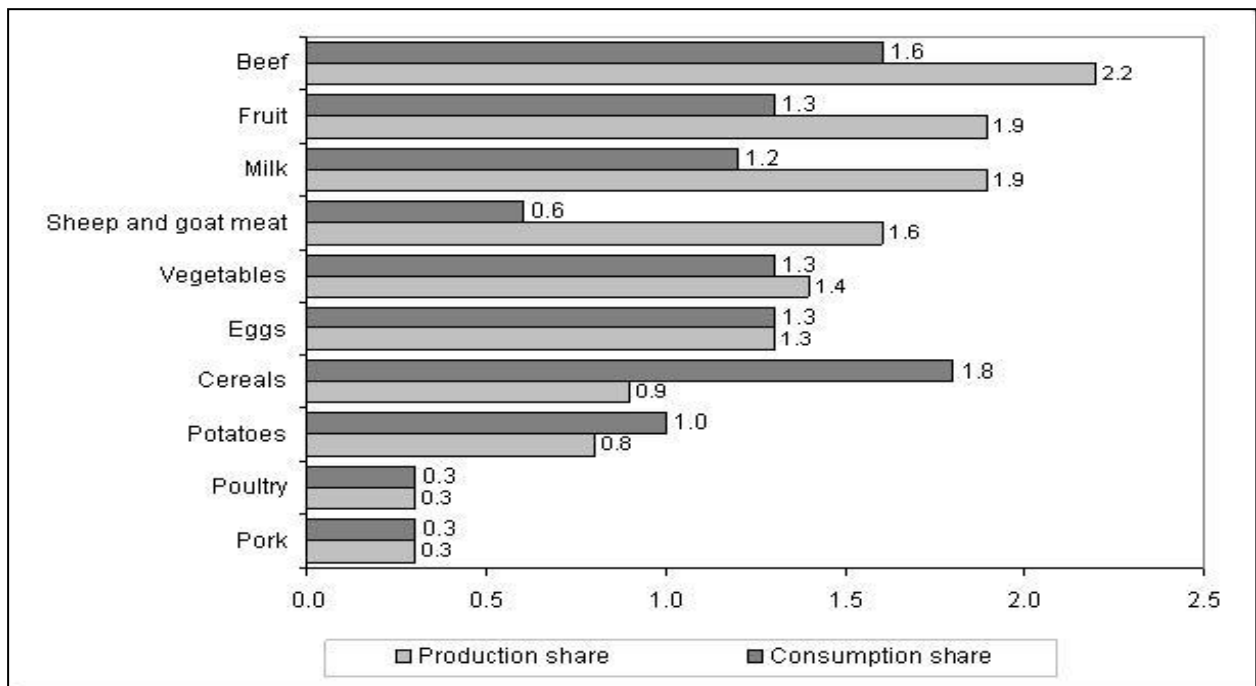
Figures and tables are inserted into the page left aligned. The text flows above and below the table or figure.

Figures and tables must always have a significant title. Reference to a source is a must. Has the author done the figures and tables himself, the source is quoted as "author's own calculations" or "author's own illustration". The title of the figure or table is shown above, the source below, as shown in the examples.

All figures, tables and other illustrations are numbered and are listed in the respective table (e.g. table of figures). Their sources are listed in the reference list among all the other sources.

**Example: Figure**

**Figure 1: Organic production and consumption shares in the EU in 2001**



Source: Schmid et al. 2004, p. 24.

**Example: Table**

**Table 6: Assessment of course of study in agriculture by students (in percentage of those interviewed)**

	applies completely	applies more or less	partly	applies more or less	applies completely	
boring (n=380)	7.2	27.3	42.4	19.7	3.4	interesting
one-sided (n=379)	3.4	14.5	28.2	43.3	10.6	many sided
high expectations (n=375)	8.8	32.3	42.4	15.2	1.3	low expectations
theoretical (n=377)	2.2	9.5	32.6	36.9	18.8	practical
large learning effort (n=378)	7.4	32.8	46.6	11.4	1.8	small learning effort
unimaginable for me (n=380)	43.4	25.3	16.6	11.3	3.4	imaginable for me

Question: I shall now give you several word pairs to the course of study of agriculture. You must decide according to this table how you would assess.

Source: Hamm et al. 1999, p. 55 (translation from German).

### 3.5 General formatting of the thesis

- Single paged print. Margin: left ca. 3 cm, right ca. 2 cm. Full justification.
- Font for text, structure, references: e.g. Arial 11 or Times New Roman 12,
- Font size for footnotes: 10.
- Spacing for text and structure; 1.5 line spacing; Spacing for list of references and footnotes: 1 line spacing.

The space after a paragraph should be larger than that between lines. A larger paragraph is also inserted before a new chapter begins.

The volume of the written work depends on the focus (literature or empiricism) and on the degree that is aimed at (cp. Table 1). The various lists (contents, abbreviations, references, etc.), as well as the annex do not count towards the number of pages. Similarly, large pictures and illustrations are not counted either. Tables on the other hand do count.

**Table 1: Page number and working time for degree theses (approximate data)**

Intended degree	Page number from ... to ...	Working time in months
Bachelor of Science	30-50	2
Master of Science	60-80	5-6
Project work	on agreement	

### 3.6 Affirmation

At the end of every assignment needs to be an affirmation, which includes the date and signature.

“I, herewith assure that I have completed the present thesis independently and without unauthorised help other than those cited in the thesis. No part of this work has been used in another thesis qualification procedure before. I have marked all places in the thesis, which are taken verbatim or analogously from published or unpublished writings. I agree that this thesis could be examined for plagiarism with anti-plagiarism software. For this reason, I provide the thesis in electronic and anonymous format.”

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## 4 Colloquium, oral presentation

Theses must be presented as oral presentation followed by a discussion in a colloquium (see general examination regulations of your course). Date and room reservation must be arranged by you.

The presentation is usually held with the help of PowerPoint slides. The font size on the slides should be at least 16 pt (the choice of font size also depends on the room size). As a guideline, a maximum of five key points per slide should be listed in order to maintain clarity. The slides can be made more descriptive by showing not only text but also illustrations. Possibilities of colour design can and should be used, but they also can be too much.

The first slide should give the title of the paper, the name, the matriculation number, the supervisors, the date of the lecture and possibly the logo of the university. Structurally, the lecture should be based on the progress of the work. In addition, the slides should be numbered, this makes it easier to ask questions during the discussion.

There is a strict time frame for your talk and deviations are rated negatively (especially excess length). The presentation should be tested in advance, including time measurement.

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## 5 Annex: Template for title page

University of Kassel

Faculty of Organic Agricultural Sciences

International Food Business and Consumer Studies

**Bachelor/ Master thesis /Project work**  
**about**

**Title of the thesis**

1. Examiner: Prof. Dr. Katrin Zander  
Department of Agricultural and Food Marketing
2. Examiner: Dr. Edward Example  
Department of Organic Examples

presented by

Sam Samplestudent  
Matriculation number: 12345678

Witzenhausen, June 2022