



Formal guidelines for scientific writing

The following guidelines are mandatory when writing papers (Bachelor and Master theses as well as Master seminar papers) at the Department of Human Resource Management & Organisation. Adhering to the formal guidelines is part of the assessment criteria when written work is evaluated.

1. Basic formal guidelines

- **font:** Times New Roman, 12 pt.
- **margins:** top: 3 cm, bottom: 2 cm, right: 4 cm; left: 2.5 cm; block format
- **spacing:** 1.5
- **headings:** bold
- **inscription:** one-sided
- **page numbers:** top right
- **length** (excluding cover page, directories, references and a potential appendix):
 - Master seminar papers/Bachelor theses: 15 pages
 - Master theses: 50 pages
- **hand in format:**
 - Master seminar papers/Bachelor theses: upload of pdf-file in ILIAS
 - Master: bound at examination office + pdf via e-mail to examination office & chair
- **language:**
in English, **either** British or American English may be used

2. Structure

2.1 Cover page

The cover page for **seminar papers and Bachelor theses** must contain the following information: Topic, topic number, course title, course teacher, semester, university, faculty, school, supervisor, information regarding the author (name, student number, address, telephone, email, degree subject, semester) and the date when the work was handed in.

For **Master theses** the formal guidelines and template of the examination office apply.

2.2 Table of Contents

The table of content with page numbers indicating where chapters are in the text needs to be included at the beginning of the work (following the title page). The table of contents should be self-explanatory, and a logical build-up with the main thread of argumentation should be clearly observable.

Please also bear in mind that if there is a chapter 2.1., there must also be a chapter 2.2. These chapters need to be of the same level, i.e., include two equally important aspects of chapter 2. One should endeavour to use content-specific, actively formulated headings. The table of contents is a central part of the work and its clarity and self-explanatory structure constitute a central evaluation criterion.

2.3 Figure, table and symbol directories

In the figure directory, the figures displayed in the text are listed, with the corresponding page number on which they appear. The same applies for the table directory. If using mathematical models in the text, the symbols used must be listed in the symbol directory.

Please provide a page for every directory and number these pages with Roman numerals.

2.4 Text

The main text shall start on page number 1 (beforehand, i.e., for directories, there is Roman pagination) and contain an introduction, a mandatory theoretical chapter, from which one or more hypotheses are derived, and an empirical chapter, in which the theoretical hypotheses are confronted with empirical evidence. The main text should end with a conclusion.

Further helpful information on the structure and contents of the individual chapters of a bachelor thesis (in German), a Master seminar paper or a Master thesis can be found in the documents:

- „Tipps zur Erstellung einer Bachelorarbeit inklusive Checkliste“
- „Tips for Writing a Master-Seminar Paper including checklist“
- „Tips for Writing a Master Thesis including checklist“

In the text, abbreviations are to be avoided as much as possible. It is admissible to use common abbreviations such as “e.g.” or “etc.” Not allowed are abbreviations out of comfort, such as “P” for “principal”.

If figures and tables are used, a heading (on top of the object) and the source they originated from (below of the object) are required. Every item should be created by oneself (copy & paste from the original source is not allowed).

A table in the running text could look like the following:

Table 1: The effect of variable x on variable y

Source: Own creation based on MÜLLER (2020: 10).

2.5 Appendix (if required)

Anything that is required for the understanding of the main text must be in the text and not in the appendix. The text needs to be comprehensible without reading the appendix. Anything that is not closely linked to the main text should neither be in the text nor in an appendix. Careful deliberation is advised as to decide if an appendix is required. If there is an appendix that includes figures, these all need to be mentioned in the main text.

2.6 Reference list

The reference list contains all work cited in the text, not more and not less.

All sources are listed in alphabetical order, per the author's last name, irrespective of whether a book or journal article is being cited. If more than one source is cited by the same author, these are to be listed in chronologically ascending order. Citations are to be listed as follows:

- **Books:**
Müller, Klaus; Rudi Ärger; Uwe Neu (2018): Citing correctly. 2nd edition. Munich: Beck.
- **Chapters in edited books:**
Meier, Jörg et al. (2018): Citations in Germany. In: Kopp, Peter; Rudi Lauf (Eds.): Citations from all over the world. Munich: Beck: 45-78.
- **Essays in journals:**
Müller, Achim; Uwe Neu (2017): Citing correctly. *Journal of Business* 4(2017)3: 20-40.
The number in front of the bracket indicates the volume of the journal, the one after the bracket the issue.
- **Newspaper articles:**
 - **known author:**
Müller, Alf (2019): Citing correctly. *Southern Times* (29.09.2019): 19.
 - **unknown author:**
u.A. (1992):
- **Discussion papers:**
Müller, Ulf (2018): Citing correctly. Berlin: Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin, WZB-Discussion Paper Nr. 1.
- **Internet-documents:**
Müller, Axel (2018): Citing correctly. [www.info-about-address.com, found on 11.11.2019].

3. Use and citation of sources

3.1 Literature search

At the beginning of each scientific work there is the literature search. If introductory literature is provided (in case of seminar papers/Bachelor theses), reading and citing this literature is not enough for passing the seminar paper/Bachelor thesis but must be added to literature found on the basis of individual literature searches.

Tip: Instead of focusing the literature search on books, articles from (international) scholarly journals should be used.

3.2 How to cite

Each citation, direct or indirect, is to be accounted for. It is cited in the main text (so-called American citation). Footnotes are reserved for remarks relating to content.¹

¹ In the footnotes, there are also only complete sentences to be found.
Seite 3/5

To **cite directly**, indicate it as follows: "The morning is the beginning of all vice" (GOETHE 2018: 12). The first number behind the author's name indicates the year of publication, the second the page number. The quotation marks at the beginning and at the end of the sentence are important. The format to be used for the author's name (GOETHE) is called "small capitals". Direct citations are to be listed as in their original form. A direct citation should also not be longer than two or three sentences. Direct citations originating from texts in German can be translated to English or be displayed in its original form, i.e., in German (and vice versa).

Instead of long citations, one can **indirectly cite** by explaining the relevant paragraph in one's own words. At the end of the sentence or paragraph, corresponding to if the indirect citation applies to only one sentence or the whole paragraph, the citation needs to be listed in the following way:

- At the **end of a sentence**:
The tragedy begins with a bet between the Erlking and the fisher (see GOETHE 1782: 10).

At the **end of the sentence** (the **source refers** to the **one cited in the previous sentence**): The tragedy begins with a bet between the Erlking and the fisherman (see GOETHE 1782: 10). This bet constitutes the central thematic motif of the plot (ibid.).
- At the **end of a paragraph**:
Faustus takes an Easter walk with Götz von Berlichingen and for a short while enjoys nature and people moving about close to the city walls. Afterwards they sit together with a glass of wine and talk about the suffering of the young Werther. (See GOETHE 1782: 20.)

Alternatively, one can refer to the author in the main text as follows: GOETHE (1782: 12) writes that In this case, citing the source at the end of the sentence/paragraph is not required. Please keep in mind that when mentioning the author's name in the running text, it also needs to be set in small capitals.

Specific issues to be aware of:

- **Several pages:**
Concerning two consecutive pages, the following applies: (see GOETHE 1782:12f.); concerning several consecutive pages: (see GOETHE 1782: 12ff.) or (see GOETHE 1782: 12-15); and concerning several non-consecutive pages: (see GOETHE 1782: 20, 39).
- **Several authors:**
Two or more authors of one work one refers to as follows: (see GOETHE/SCHILLER 1782: 13). For four or more authors, the following applies: (see GOETHE et al. 1782: 13). Note that the abbreviation "et al." must not be in small capitals.
- **Several texts of one author:**
If referring to two texts of the same author published in the same year, they are labelled as follows: (see GOETHE 1782a: 14; GOETHE 1782b: 1). The labels "a", "b" etc. are also to be included in the reference list.

This applies analogously for direct citations (without using the term "see") and for indirect citations that refer to more than one sentence and that are placed at the end of a paragraph.

The cited work should have been read. In rare cases, when not able to obtain the original work, one cites as follows: (see GOETHE 1988: 12, cited as per MAYER 2001: 348); or correspondingly in case of a direct quote: (GOETHE 1988: 12, cited as per MAYER 2001: 348). The reference for GOETHE (1988) is then not included in the reference list.

4. Plagiarism and Statutory declaration

4.1 Plagiarism

There are different kinds of plagiarism:

- Submission of work that was written by a third person, under his/her own name
- Submission of an old paper or thesis that has been graded
- Not marking direct quotes
- Rewording of text (indirect quote) from a source without stating the source
- Taking over ideas, concepts, models etc. from somebody else without stating this

All kinds of plagiarism lead to the corresponding paper/thesis being graded 5.0!

Further information and helpful examples on what plagiarism is and how it can be avoided can be found in the document

- „Plagiarism Guidelines (English)“

4.2 Use of AI and statutory declaration

It is allowed to use generative AI, but you should be aware that the use of content generated by generative AI does not guarantee its quality and that you will be held responsible if the use of such tools results in inaccurate contents, violations of privacy, copyright, or scientific misconduct (e.g. plagiarism, see above).

Further you have to confirm in your **statutory declaration** that you have used generative AI only as learning aid and that your own creative work in your paper/thesis is clearly predominant. The statutory declaration has to be signed.

Lastly, you have to **document** your use of AI by specifying which AI tools you have used, for what purpose, and to what extent.

The statutory declaration and helpful examples on how to document your AI use can be found in the document

- “Statutory Declaration (English)”