



**LEUPHANA**  
UNIVERSITÄT LÜNEBURG

## **Writing *your* Thesis – A Guided Start**

**Professorship Business & Society  
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Dear students

Within this Kick-off Package, you find many very helpful readings on the topic of writing a thesis. Please, do not get threatened by the number of references at first sight. Start with the readings that are marked with an “\*” in each section. These references will be the most useful one’s for you to start reading and thinking about the specific topic. Then, when you want to deepen your understanding of the topic, you can dive the other readings. Of course, not every topic may be of equal importance to you. On some topics you may already be an expert, while in other areas you have still greater potential for improvement. In any event, these readings provide insightful advice on how you can write a great thesis.

On page 10, you will find a sample “Kick-off Page.” This page is intended to help you structuring your thesis project. Before getting officially started, this document will be the guideline for further discussing your thesis with me (if we have not agreed on another procedure).

If you know of other helpful readings on the topics listed below or you think that topics are missing, please write us an email:

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(We thank and hereby give credit to Benjamin Bader and Christoph Seckler, who developed this guideline in the first place and graciously allowed us to adopt their template for our own needs.)

## 1. Introduction

The primary purpose of any thesis (Seminar paper, bachelor thesis, and master thesis) is to train the student in the process of scholarly research and writing under the direction and supervision of an experienced faculty member. Still, it is the student's responsibility to work on the subject independently, creating own ideas and arguments in a certain subject. A major goal is for the student to prove that they are able to successfully work on an academic problem, choosing and applying appropriate methods, and to present the results in a way that they are qualified to contribute to the generation of new knowledge. Writing an academic paper is both challenging and beneficial at the same time. Of course, it demands a lot of time, effort, sometimes struggling, but the final result should be a manuscript, one is satisfied with and proud of. It expresses one's very own thoughts and the solution to an academic problem, and sometimes is the start of a promising academic career.

A motivated and ambitious student and an equally engaged supervisor are the basis of a successful, interesting thesis. In this guide you find guidelines on how to find a topic, write your thesis, how to point out your contribution and many more things. While there are also certain formal requirements, which can be looked at the end of this document and are presented in the seminar or your individual thesis Kick-off, the first part is intended to help you ensuring an orderly, uniform presentation of vital information – your research! These requirements apply to all kinds of theses. Overall, your work should be written in clear, grammatically correct English or German (depending on the agreement with your supervisor). Words need to be spelled and divided correctly. Your sentence structure must be clear and appropriate to the standards of academic writing.

Please note that while this guide focuses on issues of actually “creating” the thesis, for the process of submitting the thesis, the rules of the examination authority (Prüfungsamt) apply. It is your responsibility to make sure that you obey to the General Examination Rules as well as the discipline-related appendices. In case of doubt, bring any issues up ahead of time by asking your supervisor and/or the staff of the examination authority (Prüfungsamt).

The team of the Professorship Business & Society is supervising bachelor- and master-thesis that are grounded in conceptual or empirical, qualitative approaches. This means, theses can rely on systematic literature reviews, conceptual work, or qualitative research methods. Preferably empirical theses will be supervised. Thesis topics must relate to the research conducted by the supervising people and will be developed in close collaboration between students and supervisors.

## **2. Types of Academic Papers**

During your study time, depending on what major and minor you chose and whether you are obtaining a master's degree on top of your bachelor degree, you will be required to write and turn in a certain number of academic papers. From the very first paper in your phase to the final graduation project, your thesis (or maybe a PhD later on), the standards will vary. The next part of this guide is intended to outline the specific demands and formal requirements of these types of academic papers.

### **2.1. Seminar Paper**

Broadly speaking, a paper is the most common form of an academic paper and you will write quite some of them during your studies. Typically, the thesis will be based on the topic worked on in the seminar and you will develop your ideas over the time of the course. This can either be as a group work or you will be solely responsible, depending on the respective setting. In any event, several students will write a thesis in a common research area and often also present their work (milestones as well as final results) in the seminar.

Before starting the actual paper, you will develop your research question(s) and craft an outline, all supervised by your academic advisor. At that point you are already familiar with the respective literature and choose and apply appropriate methods to solve your problems. Typically, a seminar paper contains approximately 3 pages (1,400 words) per ECTS credit rewarded for the seminar (but please review class specific instructions). In each seminar Kick-off, the exact requirements in terms of word-count will be outlined again, to also account for possible other parts (e.g. presentation) and group work, that affect grading and the amount of pages required in a seminar paper.

### **2.2. Bachelor Thesis**

The bachelor thesis is the final piece of academic work that, assuming you meet all other requirements in your examination regulations and do not fail, rewards you with your first academic title. This is a great achievement and should be documented in your thesis. It proves that you are able to solve a problem on your own, correctly applying appropriate methods, and present the results in a way that suits academic standards. You may make use of all your knowledge you acquired during your studies and are invited to present own ideas and arguments.

In contrast to a seminar paper, you will either choose from a topic from the website or come up with an own idea for a bachelor thesis. During your writing time, you will be guided by experienced academic staff and can make use of the office hours in case you need further assistance. However, you are in charge of your thesis and it is your responsibility to proactively work on the assigned topic. Appointments with your advisor should be used for discussing ideas and issues based on your input, it is not a Q&A session where the advisor dictates your paper.

### **2.3. Master Thesis**

When you write your master thesis, you probably have written quite many papers before, including your bachelor thesis. Therefore, you are already experienced in the field of academic writing and now, as the final piece of your studies, you will have six months

in order to do a deep, profound analysis of a specific topic. This is both, a great chance as well as a lot of work. From finding the idea, crafting your first outline, perhaps doing an empirical analysis, and finally holding the result in your hands (and after the thesis being graded receiving your master degree!) it is a long process, usually with ups and downs. However, when looking back, most students are quite happy with what they achieved and some of them even decide to stay in academia.

Regardless of your future plans, your master thesis project starts with finding a topic. As said before, you will be engaged in a six months full-time project. This gives you enough time and freedom to investigate a topic you are interested in from almost every perspective. As with the bachelor thesis, you will either choose from a topic from the website or come up with your own idea. Again, you will be guided by experienced academic staff who is there for you if you need further assistance. In contrast to your bachelor thesis though, you will most likely see your supervisor more often, especially when you are conducting empirical research. Even though this guide is intended for any thesis project, the master's thesis is probably the kind of project it is most useful for. In the following sections, there are many important pieces of support in any phase of your project. Take the time to go through this guide, read the relevant literature and, in case you have problems or questions, contact your supervisor to work out a solution.

However, again you are in charge of your thesis and it is your responsibility to proactively work on the assigned topic. You will present the final result and you determine how much (or little) effort you put in this work and you will be the one who will receive the consequences in terms of grading, good or bad. You are writing the thesis for yourself, to finish your studies, please keep that in mind. If you give your best and are highly involved in your thesis project, the result is typically rewarding for both, you and your supervisor who ideally is a mentor and sparring partner for your ideas, rather than a co-author.

### **3. Examination Rules and Final Statement**

Your bachelor or master thesis closes with a signed statement where you confirm (with your signature) that you wrote the thesis on your own, without any help not mentioned in the text, and also not using any other sources or auxiliary means then stated in your thesis. A prepared template of such declaration of authorship can be found on the website of the writing center: <https://www.leuphana.de/en/institutions/writing-center/resources/declaration-of-authorship.html>.

Importantly, the use of digital tools, particularly AI-based tools, requires documentation. Please the section on Digital Tools in this guide for further information.

**Important:** Details concerning the official submission process procedure can be found in your respective examination regulations and in case of doubt should be looked up there.

## **4. Research integrity**

### **4.1. Research Integrity**

As you embark on your Bachelor's or Master's theses, it's important to prioritize ethical considerations throughout your research journey. Ethical guidelines serve as your guiding compass, steering you to conduct your research responsibly and with integrity. Firstly, ensure that your research design and methodology adhere to ethical standards set forth by the Institute for Management and Organization. Obtain informed consent from participants, with the agreement clearly outlining the purpose of your study, their rights, and how their data will be handled.

We have prepared a consent form and an information sheet for this purpose (see website).

Respect participants' autonomy by allowing them to withdraw from the study at any point without repercussions. Safeguard confidentiality and anonymity, taking measures to protect participants' privacy and identities. Additionally, critically evaluate the potential impact of your research on individuals and communities, striving to minimize harm and maximize benefits. By upholding ethical principles in your thesis, you not only maintain the integrity of your research but also demonstrate your commitment to ethical scholarship and contribute positively to your field of study.

You can find further information here:

<https://www.leuphana.de/forschung/forschungskultur/ethikbeirat.html>

### **4.2. A Note on Plagiarism**

Plagiarism is defined as the use of another person's ideas, knowledge, or language without appropriate crediting of the source. Plagiarism is theft of intellectual property, and therefore is a serious offense. It cannot be tolerated in academic work. Any evidence of plagiarism in a student paper will result in a failing grade for the course. It is also inappropriate to use very long quotes from an author even if the material is properly cited and enclosed in quotation marks. Such a practice raises the possibility that students do not really understand the material they are quoting. Ideas should be expressed in the students' own words except for the occasional use of quotations from other sources to highlight or support specific points. For further information see the Harvard Guide for Using Sources and its guidelines on avoiding plagiarism: <https://www.extension.harvard.edu/resources-policies/resources/avoiding-plagiarism>

### **4.3. Guidelines for the Use of Digital Tools**

In the realm of Bachelor's and Master's theses, the integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) software (for example Chat GPT) has become increasingly prevalent. While these AI tools can offer support for data analysis, grammar checks and content creation, their usage for any of these purposes needs to be transparently declared in your thesis, including the specific prompts or algorithms employed. This transparency not only ensures academic integrity but also allows for the reproducibility and scrutiny of findings. Moreover, students must diligently guard against plagiarism by properly citing the sources of AI-generated content and rigorously verifying the originality of their work.

Since it is relatively easy for experienced readers to detect AI-generated text (including text that you may have written yourself, but then asked the AI to rewrite), and confirm such detections via available tools, your case will be forwarded to the examination board if such usage remains undeclared.

Furthermore, it is crucial to exercise caution when inputting data into AI systems, particularly sensitive or confidential information, to safeguard against breaches of privacy and confidentiality.

For example, you cannot upload interview transcripts into AI software, as this violates an agreement of informed consent (see section on research integrity).

The following website provides additional information:

<https://www.leuphana.de/lehre/weiterbildung/details/das-ist-chatgpt-studierende-informiert-zu-reflektiertem-gebrauch-anregen.html>

Seminar papers or theses are written academic products that are intended to demonstrate a student's abilities to work independently on an academic topic and their ability to adhere to standards of good academic practice as well as taking responsibility for one's own learning process. This means that students are asked to demonstrate that they can apply digital tools in ways that support them in their academic work as well as document the use of these tools in ways that allow supervisors or examiners to assess the independent nature of the student's work.

For seminar papers, the AI policies of the seminar may apply, but in general, students are asked to document the use of digital tools along a document stating the use in the form of an overview based on the different work-phases of writing the seminar paper.

For bachelor- and master-theses, students must document the use of all digital tools in a detailed overview based on the different work-phases of writing the seminar paper. Students are required to conduct and submit a reflection-based documentation of their AI-based tool use. They will be asked to write regular diary entry of their experience of using AI for various parts of their thesis writing process. A document with instructions for such diary entries is provided via the supervision webpage. When submitting their thesis, students will be asked to also submit the detailed documentation of their AI-based tool usage. In addition, students must sign the form "AI Statement for Responsible Use in Academic Work" and submit this with their thesis.

## 5. A Guide to Relevant Literature & Writing your Thesis

The next part is intended to guiding you through the process of writing your thesis – at any stage. From the very beginning when looking for a topic, to different methodological approaches, actual writing of your thesis and structuring your arguments, to finally presenting the result, there is useful material to support you out there and you are more than welcome to use it!

### 5.1. Finding an interesting topic

- Alvesson, M. & Kärreman, D. 2007. Constructing mystery: Empirical matters in theory development. *Academy of Management Review*, 32(4): 1265-1281.
- Alvesson, M. & Sandberg, J. 2013. *Constructing research questions: Doing interesting research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publishing.
- \*Booth, W. C., Colomb, G. G. & Williams, J. M. 2003. *The craft of research (2)*: University of Chicago press. Chapter 3 and 4.
- Colquitt, J. A. & George, G. 2011. Publishing in AMJ—part 1: Topic choice. *Academy of Management Journal*, 54(3): 432-435.
- Davis, M. S. 1971. That's interesting! Towards a phenomenology of sociology and a sociology of phenomenology. *Philosophy of the Social Sciences*, 1(2): 309-344.

### 5.2. Choosing an appropriate research design

- \*Bono, J. E. & McNamara, G. 2011. Publishing in AMJ—Part 2: Research design. *Academy of Management Journal*, 54(4): 657-660.
- Edmondson, A. C. & McManus, S. E. 2007. Methodological fit in management field research. *Academy of Management Review*, 32(4): 1155-1179.
- McGrath, J. E. 1981. Dilemmatics: The study of research choices and dilemmas. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 25(2): 179-211.

### 5.3. Conceptual research design

- Cornelissen, J. 2017. Editor's comments: Developing propositions, a process model, or a typology? Addressing the challenges of writing theory without a boilerplate. *Academy of Management Review* 42(1): 1-9.
- Mintzberg, H. 2005. Developing theory about the development of theory. *Great minds in management: The process of theory development*: 355-372.
- \*Smithey Fulmer, I. 2012. Editor's comments: The craft of writing theory articles—Variety and similarity in AMR. *Academy of Management Review*, 37(3): 327-331.
- Whetten, D. A., Felin, T. & King, B. G. 2009. The practice of theory borrowing in organizational studies: Current issues and future directions. *Journal of Management*, 35(3): 537-563.

### 5.4. Qualitative methods design

- Bansal, P. & Corley, K. 2012. Publishing in AMJ—Part 7: What's different about qualitative Research? *Academy of Management Journal*, 55(3): 509-513.
- Corley, K. 2011. The coming of age for qualitative research: Embracing the diversity of qualitative methods. *Academy of Management Journal*, 54(2): 233-237.
- Flick, U., von Kardoff, E. & Steinke, I. (Eds.). 2004. *A companion to qualitative research*. London: Sage.
- Gioia, D. A., Corley, K. G. & Hamilton, A. L. 2013. Seeking qualitative rigor in inductive research: Notes on the Gioia methodology. *Organizational research methods*, 16(1), 15-31.
- \*Eisenhardt, K. M. 1989. Building theories from case study research. *Academy of Management Review*, 14(4): 532-550.
- Eisenhardt, K. M. & Graebner, M. E. 2007. Theory building from cases: Opportunities and challenges. *Academy of Management Journal*, 50(1): 25-32.
- \*Langley, A. 1999. Strategies for theorizing from process data. *Academy of Management Review*, 24(4): 691-710.

- Locke, E. A. 2007. The case for inductive theory building. *Journal of Management*, 33(6): 867-890.
- Siggelkow, N. 2007. Persuasion with case studies. *Academy of Management Journal*, 50(1): 20-24.
- \*Suddaby, R. 2006. From the editors: What grounded theory is not. *Academy of Management Journal*, 49(4): 633-642.

#### 5.5. Structuring your argument

- \*Booth, W. C., Colomb, G. G. & Williams, J. M. 2003. *The craft of research (2 ed.)*: University of Chicago press. PART III.

#### 5.6. Drafting your thesis

- Academy of Management. 2010. Reviewer Sheet.
- \*Bem, D. J. 1987. Writing the empirical journal article. In M. P. Zanna & J. M. Darley (Eds.), *The complete academic: A practical guide for the beginning social scientist*: 171-201. New York: Random House.
- \*Booth, W. C., Colomb, G. G., & Williams, J. M. 2003. *The craft of research (2)*: University of Chicago press. PART IV.
- Grant, A. M. & Pollock, T. G. 2011. Publishing in AMJ—Part 3: Setting the hook. *Academy of Management Journal*, 54(5): 873-879.
- Peyton Jones, S. 2013. *How to write a great research paper: Seven simple suggestions*. In Cambridge University (Ed.), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g3dkRsTqdDA>.
- Sternberg, R. J. 2000. Article Writing 101: A crib sheet of 50 tips for the final exam. In R. J. Sternberg (Ed.), *Guide to publishing in psychology journals*: 199-206. New York: Cambridge University Press.

#### 5.7. Improving your writing style

- Gopen, G. & Swan, J. 1990. The science of scientific writing if the reader is to grasp what the writer means, the writer must understand what the reader needs. *American Scientist*, 78(6): 550-558.
- Huff, A. S. 1999. *Writing for scholarly publication*, Thousand Oaks, USA: Sage.
- \*Ragins, B. 2012. Reflections on the craft of clear writing. *Academy of Management Review*: amr. 2012.0165.
- Starbuck, W. H. 1999. *Fussy professor Starbuck's cookbook of handy-dandy prescriptions for ambitious academic authors*: [www.stern.nyu.edu/wstarbuc/writing/Fussy.htm](http://www.stern.nyu.edu/wstarbuc/writing/Fussy.htm).
- Williams, J. M. & Colomb, G. G. 2012. *Style: The basics of clarity and grace (4th ed.)*. Boston: Longman.

#### 5.8. How to reference properly

- \*Campion, M. A. 1997. Rules for references: Suggested guidelines for choosing literary citations for research articles in applied psychology. *Personnel Psychology*, 50(1): 165-167.

#### 5.9. What is your theoretical and practical contribution?

- Bacharach, S. B. 1989. Organizational Theories: Some criteria for evaluation. *Academy of Management Review*, 14(4): 496-515.

- Corley, K. G. & Gioia, D. A. 2011. Building theory about theory building: What constitutes a theoretical contribution? *Academy of Management Review*, 36(1): 12-32.
- Cornelissen, J. P., & Durand, R. 2014. Moving forward: Developing theoretical contributions in management studies. *Journal of Management Studies*, 51(6), 995-1022.
- Feldman, D. 2004. What are we talking about when we talk about theory? *Journal of Management*, 30(5): 565-567.
- Geletkanycz, M. & Tepper, B. J. 2012. Publishing in AMJ—part 6: Discussing the implications. *Academy of Management Journal*, 55(2): 256-260.
- Klein, K. J. & Zedeck, S. 2004. Introduction to the special section on theoretical models and conceptual analyses: Theory in applied psychology: Lessons (Re) learned. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 89(6): 931.
- \*Locke, K. & Golden-Biddle, K. 1997. Constructing opportunities for contribution: Structuring intertextual coherence and "problematizing" in organizational studies. *Academy of Management Journal*, 40(5): 1023-1062.
- Romme, A. G. L. 2003. Making a difference: Organization as design. *Organization Science*, 14(5): 558-573.
- Suddaby, R. 2014. Editor's comments: Why theory? *Academy of Management Review*, 39(4): 407-411.
- \*Whetten, D. A. 1989. What constitutes a theoretical contribution? *Academy of Management Review*, 14(4): 490-495.
- \*Whetten, D. A. 2009. Modeling theoretic proposition. In A. S. Huff (Ed.), *Designing Research for Publication*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications. 217-250.

#### 5.10. Presenting your thesis

- Davies, G. 2010. *The Presentation Coach*. UK: Capstone Publishing Ltd. Chapter 1-7.
- \*Great Link to Video on Principles of Power Point Presentations:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lwpi1Lm6dFo>

#### 5.11. Ethical considerations

- Autor, D. H. 2011. Correspondence. *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 25(3): 239–240.
- Bedeian, A. G., Taylor, S. G., & Miller, A. N. 2010. Management science on the credibility bubble: Cardinal sins and various misdemeanors. *Academy of Management Learning & Education*, 9(4): 715-725.
- \*Senat der Leuphana Universität Lüneburg. 2009. Richtlinie der Leuphana Universität Lüneburg zur Sicherung guter wissenschaftlicher Praxis und zum Verfahren zum Umgang mit wissenschaftlichem Fehlverhalten. In *Leuphana Universität Lüneburg (Ed.)*. Lüneburg.
- \*Harvard Guide for Using Sources and its guidelines on avoiding plagiarism:  
<http://sites.harvard.edu/icb/icb.do?keyword=k70847&tabgroupid=icb.tabgroup106849>

## 6. The Kick-off Page

The Kick-off Page is intended to structure the first discussion with your supervisor. Thus, the notes can still be rough. To help you preparing the Kick-off Page and your thesis, use the readings in the Kick-off Package.

**Name:**

**Student ID:**

**E-Mail:**

**Title (tentative):**

**Submission date:**

**Date:**

### 6.1. Topic

Describe your research project by completing the following three phrases. See also Chapter 4 of the Craft of Research for help.

- Topic: I am studying/working on \_\_\_\_\_.
- Question: Because I want to find out who/how/why \_\_\_\_\_.
- Significance: In order to understand how/why/what \_\_\_\_\_.

### 6.2. Research Design

Briefly sketch the research design you intend to use to answer your research question(s).

- Research method: Conceptual/Qualitative/Quantitative/Mixed Methods Approach?
- Data: What data will you use? Primary/Secondary? How do you collect the data?
- Analysis: How do you plan to analyze your data?

### 6.3. Theoretical and Practical Contribution

Briefly sketch your theoretical contribution. See also Whetten (2009) "Modeling Theoretic Propositions" for further input.

### 6.4. Project Plan and Risk Assessment

Very roughly, sketch your time plan. What are the risks associated with your plan and how do you intend to overcome emerging problems?

### 6.5. Core Literature

List 4 to 5 core articles (other than the literature provided by your supervisor) for your research project. See also list of academic journals in Kick-off Package.

## 7. Other Useful Information

### 7.1. Finding Literature

The following links are very helpful for finding literature:

Google Scholar: <http://scholar.google.de/>

Web of Knowledge: <https://apps.webofknowledge.com/>

Leuphana Library: <http://katalog.leuphana.gbv.de/DB=1/LNG=DU>

### 7.2. Use A Reference Programm!

It is highly recommended to use a citation program for writing your thesis. This way you will have less trouble with the references and bibliography (especially at the end of your thesis). There are quite many reference programs out there, examples are EndNote, Citavi, or Mendeley. Which one you use is up to you, however, use it from the very beginning in order to get the most out of it. While the first two are commercial solutions (for Citavi there exists a Campus License for our students), Mendeley is a free, open-source software ([www.mendeley.com](http://www.mendeley.com)). It is platform-independent and from personal use, Prof. Dr. Trittin-Ulbrich can highly recommend it (and is still using it herself).

### 7.3. Conducting empirical qualitative research

If you are considering conducting a qualitative empirical thesis, you may find it challenging to gain access to interview partners or sites for observations. Then, you may want to consider using other empirical material, including publicly available information on webpages, or weblogs, or use digital technologies to access the phenomenon that you are interested in. Several free online courses are provided that provide a good introduction into how to collect ready-available data. I recommend you have a look at the following material:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1cIGjGABB2h2qbduTgfqribHmog9B6P0NvMgVuiHZCI8/edit>

## 8. Highly Regarded Journals in the Field of Management and Organization

No	Journal	Abbreviation	Impact Factor	5-Year Impact
1	ACADEMY OF MANAGEMENT REVIEW	AMR	10,631	14,170
2	ACADEMY MANAGEMENT ANNALS	AMA	12,283	18,616
3	JOURNAL OF MANAGEMENT	JOM	8,080	8,027
4	ACADEMY OF MANAGEMENT JOURNAL	AMJ	4,974	11,891
5	JOURNAL OF APPLIED PSYCHOLOGY	JAP	5,067	6,952
6	ORGANIZATION SCIENCE	OS	3,257	4,975
7	JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS STUDIES	JIBS	7,724	5,534
8	ORGANIZATIONAL RESEARCH METHODS	ORM	4,918	5,713
9	JOURNAL OF MANAGEMENT STUDIES	JMS	5,839	5,196
10	JOURNAL OF BUSINESS VENTURING	JBV	6,000	4,571
11	JOURNAL OF ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIOUR	JOB	2,986	4,734
12	STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT JOURNAL	SMJ	5,471	7,859
13	MANAGEMENT SCIENCE	MS	4,219	3,935
14	ORGANIZATION STUDIES	OS	3,941	3,355
15	ADMINISTRATIVE SCIENCE QUARTERLY	ASQ	7,313	8,391
16	ORGANIZATION	ORG	2,701	3,949
17	ACADEMY OF MANAGEMENT LEARNING AND EDUCATION	AMLE	3,271	4,902
18	LONG RANGE PLANNING	LRP	4,041	4,365
19	ACCOUNTING ORGANIZATIONS AND SOCIETY	AOS	3,412	4,806
20	HUMAN RELATIONS	HR	3,632	4,659

Teilrating: Allgemeine BWL: [https://vhbonline.org/fileadmin/user\\_upload/JQ3\\_ABWL.pdf](https://vhbonline.org/fileadmin/user_upload/JQ3_ABWL.pdf)

Teilrating: Organisation/ Personal: [https://vhbonline.org/fileadmin/user\\_upload/JQ3\\_ORG\\_PERS.pdf](https://vhbonline.org/fileadmin/user_upload/JQ3_ORG_PERS.pdf)

Teilrating: Strategisches Management: [https://vhbonline.org/fileadmin/user\\_upload/JQ3\\_SM.pdf](https://vhbonline.org/fileadmin/user_upload/JQ3_SM.pdf)

## 9. Style Guide

### 9.1. Submitting your thesis

Typically, bachelor and master theses will be submitted directly to the examination authority (Prüfungsamt) and then distributed to your supervisors. For seminar papers, the rules differ. As pointed out before, for the official regulations and requirements, please consult your examination authority ([bachelor Prüfungsamt/](#) [master Prüfungsamt](#)). These are the ones that are legally binding!

- Make sure to add all material from the appendix, including your documentation of AI-based tools as well as the signed AI regulation form to your material.
- For bachelor- and master-theses: While officially you need to submit all materials and your thesis digitally, we additionally request a printed copy of your thesis to be submitted to us. No binding is needed, simply put the main text body of the thesis into an envelope with the address of the professorship and the supervisor's name and send it to us (our post box is located in building 6, ground floor).
- If you have collected empirical material for your thesis, please submit with your thesis all original data, including interview recordings, all signed forms of consent, or other original data sets with your thesis. If the webportal of the examination authority does not allow for such data files, send them directly to your supervisor via email or via GDPR conform transfer tool.

### 9.2. Cover Sheet

Each thesis has to contain a cover sheet. Basically, you are free to design your own cover sheet, however, it must contain the following information:

- Name of the professor or academic staff supervising your thesis
- Title of your thesis
- Type of thesis (Seminar, bachelor, master)
- Your name, matriculation number, address, phone number, and Email address
- Date of submission

On the next page, you will find a sample.

### 9.3. Sample Cover Sheet



**LEUPHANA**  
UNIVERSITÄT LÜNEBURG

Bachelor's / Master's / Seminar Thesis

**<TITLE>**

<German Title, in case thesis written in English>

**Prof. Dr. Hannah Trittin-Ulbrich**  
Institute of Management and Organization  
Professor for Business Administration, particularly Business in Society

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<Name of first reviewer, usually Prof. Dr. Hannah Trittin-Ulbrich>  
<Name of second reviewer>  
Supervised by <Name of supervisor>

Submitted by:  
<Last name>,<First name>  
<Handover Date>  
<Matriculation number>  
<Address>  
<ZIP Code> <City>  
<Phone>  
<Email>

#### **9.4. Abstract**

Each thesis starts with a 100-200 word abstract, which includes a brief summary of the content and the main findings of the thesis. The abstract is mandatory. In the abstract, try to be as “reader-friendly” as possible, so that also non-specialists will grasp the core of your study. Also, do not use any references in the abstract. Typically, the abstract is written at the end of your research process. Please also add six keywords to your abstract, just the way you know it from journal articles you read. This way you provide the reader with a short summary of your work, also indicating in which academic sub-fields the thesis can be classified.

#### **9.5. General Structure and Table of Content**

A systematic structure is the core of your thesis. When compiling your final document, make sure to include all parts in the right order. The following structure is, in general, valid for any academic paper and kind of thesis. For further information, please refer to the respective literature referenced above.

1. Cover sheet
2. Abstract
3. Table of Content
4. List of Figures
5. List of Tables
6. List of Abbreviations
7. Body (your “actual thesis”)
8. Reference list
9. Appendix
10. Interviews, including transcripts (when doing qualitative research)
11. Surveys, including code book (when doing quantitative research)
12. Declaration of Authorship / Final Statement
13. Documentation of the Use of Digital Tools

The Table of Content reflects the structure of your thesis. Make sure that your (sub-)topics are mutually exclusive and, if important for the thesis, collectively exhaustive. Your headlines should be precise and succinct. Avoid “one-word-headlines” as well as long-winding phrases. The Table of Content is essential and basically the “backbone of your research” – so invest enough time in crafting it and make sure that it reflects the actual content of your paper as well as the focus of your research. The literature referenced above will help you on this topic.

## 9.6. Specific Body of the Thesis

### 9.6.1. Length

According to the time, you have to work on your thesis, the lengths is adjusted. Basically, a seminar thesis is the shortest version, the bachelor thesis is in between, and the master's thesis is the longest. When judging the length, only the actual body of the thesis is counted, appendices, for instance, are not included. In order to be fair, all equal types of theses need to be of equal length. Often, it is harder to produce a short text rather than a long one – while still delivering the same context, of course. So please avoid both, too short and vacuous theses as well as overloaded, long-winding ones. **The goal is to meet the specifications below, with a tolerance of +/- 10 per cent.**

- Seminar papers are somewhat special. They can be written in groups or by individuals, as the only study achievement you receive credits for as well as part of a bigger examination system, for instance in addition to a presentation. Therefore, the length will be announced in the seminar by your respective supervisor.
- A bachelor thesis is about **15,000 words in length**, which equals 30 pages (single line spacing).
- A master thesis is about **22,500 words in lengths**, which equals 45 pages (single line spacing).

### 9.6.2. Layout

If not specified otherwise, use the following layout for the entire thesis.

- DIN A4 paper in portrait format (single pages can be landscape if necessary, e.g. for bigger tables)
- Margins: 4cm left, 2cm right, 2,5cm top and bottom
- Font: Times New Roman
- Font size: 12pt
- Line spacing within text: 1.5
- Line spacing within tables: 1.0
- Full justification (Blocksatz)
- Hyphenation
- Hanging indention within directories or indexes
- Pagination, lower right corner
- Print on both sides

### 9.6.3. Structure of Content

Though the literature referenced above gives you quite enough inspiration, this part will briefly outline the structure of your thesis. The body (of each thesis) is divided into three major parts: introduction, actual body (literature review, theoretical background, hypotheses and research model, methods, analysis/results), and discussion. This general structure helps you to present your research in an appropriate, well-arranged manner. Before submitting your thesis, come back to this initial structure and check, whether all these parts can be found in your thesis in the respective manner. Also, make

sure that your Table of Content matches your actual body – not in terms of headlines but rather in terms of what is written under the respective headlines. Finally, come back to your initial Kick-off page and see, whether you achieved the goals you set there and if you did answer the questions you raised.

## **10. Open Access Publication**

Bachelor's and master's theses can be published via PubData if they have received a grade better than 2.5 and have a recommendation for publication from the respective reviewer.

Further information can be found on the MIZ website at: [www.leuphana.de/en/services/miz/research-publish/student-thesis-co.html](http://www.leuphana.de/en/services/miz/research-publish/student-thesis-co.html)

You can initiate the submission of your dissertation or student thesis independently using the following link by logging in with your Leuphana account and following the instructions:

<https://pubdata.leuphana.de/submit?collection=ffc82e3b-ddde-4b6f-957c-e8f7b3ac69d4>

After the final submission, your documents and information will be reviewed by the PubData team and, if necessary, enhanced with metadata before they are published.

PubData not only offers space for research data as well as dissertations and student theses, but also for various other literature publications such as books, journal articles, reports, working papers and term papers. In addition, alternative formats such as videos, podcasts, posters and much more can be published, as long as they were created in the context of Leuphana. The submission of these alternative materials can be started via the following link: <https://pubdata.leuphana.de/submit?collection=f3fed124-7088-4264-ab5c-12d6a168dd25>

PubData is hosted and continuously improved by the Media and Information Centre (MIZ). If you have any questions about using PubData, please do not hesitate to contact us at [pubdata@leuphana.de](mailto:pubdata@leuphana.de)

## **11. Contact**

The team holds regular consultation hours. Please see MyStudy for further information.

If you are contacting us for the first time, please provide the following information: Your name and what you study, the courses that you may have attended with us, what (broad) topic you want to address in your thesis, what is your general timeframe, and why do you think we are the appropriate supervisors for your thesis.

<https://www.leuphana.de/institute/imo/unternehmen-in-der-gesellschaft.html>