# Recommendations for Preparing a Thesis

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I. General Information

- Mandatory registration of the thesis after consulting your supervisor
- Duration: 20 weeks
- Credit points: Master’s Thesis: 27 ECTS credit points; oral exam (colloquium): 3 ECTS credit points
- Submission at your supervisor or at the faculty’s secretary (C303): 2 bound versions + 1 PDF version on a CD-ROM (added and fixed to one of the bound theses)

II. Recommended Resources

1. Writing and Referencing

Writing theses
- Creedy, John: Research Without Tears – From the First Ideas to Published Output, 2008 (LS/A Allg 440)
- Swetnam, Derek and Swetnam, Ruth: Writing your Dissertation, 3rd edition 2000
- Turabian, Kate L.: Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations, 8th edition 2013 – very recommendable & comprehensive

General writing advice
- Cooper, Sheila and Patton, Rosemary: Writing Logically, Thinking Critically, 3rd edition 2000 (LS/A Spra 384)
- Siepman, Dirk: Writing in English – A Guide for Advanced Learners, 2008 (A Spra 375)
- Skern, Tim: Writing Scientific English – A Workbook, 2nd edition 2011 (LS/A Allg 444)

* Including their Schmalkalden University library code if available
Referencing
- Turabian, Kate L.: Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations, 8th edition 2013

Websites
- http://www.learnerassociates.net/dissthes/
- http://final-year-projects.com/
- http://www.bibme.org/citation-guide – citation guide for several styles
- https://www.citethisforme.com/ – citation guide

2. Methodology

Research Methods
- Bryman, Alan: Social Research Methods, 3rd edition 2008 (LS/A Soz 74)
- Creswell, John W.: Research design: qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods approaches (LS/A Soz 74) – very recommendable
- Saunders, Mark et al.: Research Methods for Business Students, 6th edition 2012 (LS BWL 7)

Qualitative Research Design
- Silverman, David: Doing Qualitative Research, 4th edition 2010
- Silverman, David: Interpreting Qualitative Data, 5th edition 2015 (A Soz 74)

Quantitative Research Design
- Kaplan, David: The SAGE Handbook of Quantitative Methodology for the Social Sciences, 2004
- Mohr, Lawrence B.: Understanding Significance Testing, 1990 (A Soz 80)
3. Dictionaries

Bilingual German – English
- Duden Oxford: Großwörterbuch Englisch (A/LS Spra 63.4449)
- Routledge Langenscheidts Fachwörterbuch Wirtschaft, Handel und Finanzen: englisch-deutsch, deutsch-englisch, (A Spra 367 5403)

Monolingual
- Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary of Current English (A Spra 363)
- Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (A/LS Spra 363)
- Longman Business English Dictionary (LS Spra 367)

Monolingual dictionaries are always suitable and recommendable for finding synonyms and for the spell check.

English Grammar (or newer editions)
- Longman English Grammer, New York, 1997 (LS Spra 375)

Internet
- http://dict.leo.org/
- http://dict.cc
- http://dict.tu-chemnitz.de/

4. Further Helpful Resources for Writing

Academic phrasebank
- http://www.phrasebank.manchester.ac.uk/ – a huge collection of sample phrases useful for academic writing
- http://www.click2go.umip.com/i/academic_phrasebank/appe.html – the above academic phrasebank extended for purchase (at a relatively low price)

Concordancers
Search a word in its context: search a specific word and how it is connected in a sentence (e.g. which prepositions a verb is used with; which verbs a noun is used with)
- http://lextutor.ca/conc/eng/ – e.g. to see which prepositions the verb “apply” is used: search the word “apply” sorted by 1 word to the right in for example the British National Corpus (BNC written)
- http://corpus.byu.edu/bnc/ – British corpus (select: KWIC)
5. Literature Search

Published papers
- **EBSCOhost**: excellent database of international journals/published papers: Access via the university’s intranet (or using a VPN client to connect to the university’s intranet): 
  http://www.hs-schmalkalden.de/Bibliothek – EBSCOhost, or directly: 
  http://web.a.ebscohost.com/ehost/search/basic?sid=c0b812cc-15a6-4e4d-98bd-6c172c76056d%40sessionmgr4005&vid=0&hid=4114&preview=false
- **ECONBIZ**: online database on economic literature – service of the Leibniz information Center for Economics
  http://www.econbiz.de/

Working papers
- **EconPapers**: current and past discussion/working papers in economics
  http://econpapers.repec.org
- **Social Science Research Network**: current and past discussion/working papers in the social sciences
  www.ssrn.com

Economic data
- Online data base of macroeconomic and financial data on most countries in the world (from IMF, World Bank, EU etc.)
  http://www.allthatstats.com/en/
- Eurostat: 
  http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/

III. Structure and Format

1. Structure of a Graduation Thesis

2 Title page (Mandatory text and style see downloadable file on the MasterIBE website: Title Page)
2* (Preface/Acknowledgements)
3 (Table of) Contents
4* (List of) Abbreviations
5* (List of) Symbols
6* (List of) Exhibits/Figures
7* (List of) Tables
8 Chapters (introductory chapter, main chapters, summarising chapter)
9* Appendices
10 (List of) References/Bibliography
11 Declaration (Mandatory text and style see downloadable file on the MasterIBE website: Declaration)
non-mandatory. These parts are only needed in special cases.

You should take care that your main chapters have a generally symmetric structure, i.e. that chapters’ lengths largely correspond to each other in terms of length and detail/level of subchapters.

2. Format

- DIN A4
- Font: 11pt or 12pt, use one of the standard fonts (e.g. Arial, Helvetica, Times New Roman) consistently
- Line spacing: 1.5 or 2
- Margins: top: 3 cm, left: 2.5 cm, right: 2.5 cm, bottom: 3 cm
- Print one-sided
- Include page numbers

3. Common Abbreviations

The following list shows a selection of common English abbreviations applicable within a thesis, without the need of separate explanation. Other abbreviations have to be introduced either within footnotes or need to be alphabetically listed after the table of contents.

- p. page
- pp. pages
- ed. editor
- eds. editors
- i.e. id est – that is to say
- e.g. exempli gratia – for example
- ibid. ibidem – previously mentioned (especially for the usage within footnotes)
- et al. et alii/alia – and others
- vol. volume
- Anon. Anonymous (if a source lacks an author)

IV. Referencing

Recommendations for citing and referencing published material can be found in various books, on a variety of websites and in respective software programmes (see above). Please consult your thesis supervisor for the preferred referencing style and in case of doubt.
When writing a piece of work, you will need to refer in your text to the material written or produced by others. This procedure is called citing or quoting references. Consistency and accuracy are important to enable readers to identify and locate the material to which you have referred. The same set of rules should be followed every time you cite a reference – this rule is most important for your graduation thesis. (However, if you are submitting your work for publication to an academic journal, you should check for their recommended citation style.)

References need to be cited in two different places. Firstly at the point at which a document is referred to in the text of the work; secondly in a list of references (bibliography) at the end of the work.

All statements, opinions, ideas, conclusions etc. taken from another writer’s work has to be cited – by quoting directly, paraphrasing or summarising.

1. Bibliography

The term bibliography describes references to cited works given in a list at the end of the text. These are usually described as bibliographic references. References should be listed in alphabetical order of the authors’ names. If you have cited more than one item by a specific author, this author’s works should be listed chronologically (earliest first), and by letter (2015a, 2015b) if more than one item has been published during a specific year.

Whenever possible, elements of a bibliographic reference should be taken from the title (and copyright) page of the publication.

Each reference should use the elements given in the following examples for the different types of published work you may have cited. Punctuation and formatting may depend on the citation style you select (e.g. Harvard System). For each types of published work, the mandatory elements are given below. Thereafter, examples for practical use are listed. You may use other styles than the Harvard System – please consult your supervisor.

Capitalisation, punctuation and formatting (italics or underlined) may vary (even in the Harvard System). However, please note that once you decided for a particular format, your reference style should be consistent throughout your thesis.

Monograph

Surname, Initials
Year of publication
Title
Volume/edition (if not the first)
Place of publication
Publisher

Examples:

- One author:

- Two authors:

- More than (two or) three authors:

Whether you use ‘et al.’ for more than two or more than three authors is a matter of referencing style and taste.

Variations: e.g. use “&” or “and” (but: consistently across all types of work!)
Referencing of two or more authors should be done analogously in the following types of works.

**Book section (section in an edited book)**
Surname, Initial(s) *(of the author(s))*
Year of publication
Title of contribution
In: Surname, Initial(s) *(of the editor(s)) (ed./eds.)*
Title of Book *(can be underlined or italicised)*
Place of publication
Publisher
Page numbers of contribution

Example:

**Journal articles**
Surname, Initial(s).
Year of publication
Title of article
Title of journal *(can be underlined or italicised)*
Volume number
Issue number
Page number(s)

**Example:**


**Conference paper**
Surname, Initial(s).
Year of publication
Title of article
In: Surname, Initial(s) (*of the editor(s) of the conference proceedings*) (ed./eds.)
Title of conference proceedings (*can be underlined or italicised*)
Date and place of conference
Place of publication
Publisher
Page number(s)

**Example:**


**Internet**
Author/editor
Year
Title
Available at: (URL)
Date of Access

**Examples:**


Please note that the exact date of accessing the source must be given.

**Publication of an organisation/corporate body** (e.g. government publications)
Name of issuing body
Year
Title *(can be underlined or italicised)*
Place of Publication
Publisher
Report Number *where applicable*

*Example:*


**Thesis**
Surname, Initial(s)
Year
Title *(can be underlined or italicised)*
Designation (and type)
Name of the institution to which submitted

*Example:*

Edinburgh University.

**CD-ROM**
Author/editor
Year
Title *(can be underlined or italicised)* [type of medium]
Edition
Place of publication
Publisher
Available at: Supplier/database identifier or number (optional)
Date of Access (optional)

*Example:*

Crunch Media

**Personal communication**
Personal communication does not represent recoverable data and thus are not included in the bibliography (list of references). Cite personal communications in the text only. Give the surname and initials of the communicator and provide as exact a date as possible
Example²:
Many designers do not understand the needs of disabled people according to J.O. Reiss (personal communication, April 18, 2004)

For more details on referencing further types of works, please consult relevant sources (e.g. books, publications on referencing).

2. In-text Citations

If you cite a source in the text, you may either use footnotes or the Harvard system. Using footnotes, you should cite the source in full if you use it for the first time, and you should use a short version providing the author’s surname and the year of publication and page(s) afterwards. The Harvard System avoids the usage of footnotes as the references are inserted at the appropriate passage of the text: Cited publications are referred to in the text by giving the author’s surname and the year of publication in parentheses. Page numbers should be included if reference is made to particular parts of the reference

Examples:

Footnotes
e.g. after a direct quote in the text): “…¹ or after paraphrasing a statement: ….¹

¹ Smith, 2003, p. 35. [or:]
¹ Smith, J., 2003, p. 35. [or:]
¹ Smith (2003), p. 35.

Harvard System (in-text)
“…” (Smith, 1991, p.35) [or:]
“…” (Smith 1991: 35) [or:]
Smith (1991) concluded that…

Notes on the In-text Citation Style of the Harvard System

a) Author’s name occurs naturally in the text
If the author’s name occurs naturally in a sentence, the source’s year is given in parentheses

Example: In a popular study, Poterba and Summers (1995, p. 52) argue that…

b) Author’s name does not occur naturally in the text
If the author’s name does not occur naturally in a sentence, both name and year are given in parentheses.

Example: More recent studies (Meier & Tarhan, 2007, and Brunzell et al., 2013) show that ...

c) More than one document by one author in a given year
If an author has published more than one cited document in the same year, distinguish them by adding lower case letters (a, b, c etc.) after the year within the parentheses. These lower case letters have to be used in the bibliography in the same way to clearly identify the reference mentioned in the text.

Example: Miller (2015a) discussed the subject ...

d) Two authors
If a source has two authors, use both surnames in the in-text citation

Example: Spraakman and Jackling (2014) proposed that ...

e) More than (two or) three authors
If a source has more than (two or) three authors, cite the first author followed by ‘et al.’ Whether you use ‘et al’ if the source has more than two or more than three authors is a matter of referencing style and taste.

Example: Wilson et al. (1997) conclude that ...

f) No author
If there is no originator or the author cannot be identified, use ‘Anon.’ (for anonymous).

Example: A recent article (Anon., 1993) claimed that ...

However, if it is a reference to newspapers or other sources where no author is given, the name of the newspaper/journal can be used in place of the author or ‘Anon.’ whichever seems most helpful. You will need to use the same style in the reference list, therefore the name of the newspaper (or else) may be more helpful.

Example: The Times (2015) stated that ...

g) Source quoted in another publication
If you refer to a source quoted in another piece of work, you have to cite both in the text. Both sources must be included in the list of references. Be careful: Do not blindly refer to publications cited by others which you have not read!

Example: A study by Smith (1960 cited by Jones, 1994, p. 24) showed that ...
h) Quotations
A short quotation of less than a line may be included in the body of the text in quotation marks but if the quote is longer, start a new line and indent it. Always include the page number if you quote directly. Use quotes scarcely.

Example: ... therefore “good practices must be taught” (Smith, 2004, p. 15) and we should ...

i) Figures, graphs, tables, diagrams
Figures etc. should be referenced as though they were a quotation with the author and date given alongside and full details in the list of references.

3. Software
Collect, organize, share & (automatically) cite references according to a particular referencing style

- **Endnote**: [http://endnote.com/](http://endnote.com/)
  Schmalkalden university offers a free version for its students: [http://www.hs-schmalkalden.de/Literaturverwaltung.html?highlight=endnote](http://www.hs-schmalkalden.de/Literaturverwaltung.html?highlight=endnote)
- **Zotero**: a very recommendable and free tool to organise your references: [https://www.zotero.org/](https://www.zotero.org/)

4. Usage of AE or BE
You should decide about writing your thesis in American English or British English and should check before with your professor/advisor. No matter what language you choose, the use within your paper should be consistent.

5. Handling of Direct Quotations
English language quotations are marked with quotation marks in the text. For quotations from other languages it is recommendable to translate them into English serving a fluent reading. However, the original quotation should be put in a footnote. Direct quotations should be scarcely used and limited to special cases. In case of doubt ask your supervising professor.