UNIVERSITÄT HOHENHEIM

Guideline

for the preparation of

Master, Bachelor and seminar theses

University of Hohenheim

Department of Agricultural Market (420b)

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Outline

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1. Introduction

The seminar paper, Bachelor's and Master's thesis each form an essential part of the examination. In the seminar paper, students learn basic scientific working techniques for the first time and under supervision and learn how to apply them in practice. The Bachelor's thesis is the first final student project, as the Bachelor's degree leads to a professional qualification. Accordingly, the requirements are higher than for a seminar paper, especially as it is assumed that the students have already dealt with the requirements for scientific work as part of a seminar paper. The Master's thesis is the second student thesis, which is associated with higher standards (particularly in terms of content). In general, students should demonstrate that they have learned during their studies to work independently on a problem from their field of study using scientific methods within a specified period and scope.

A scientific study is characterised by objectivity, reliability and validity. A paper can be described as objective if the results are independent of the researcher, i.e. other people would come to the same conclusion. It is therefore important to keep the subject of the work (or the line of reasoning) comprehensive and verifying for the reader, e.g. by providing precise and complete references. Reliability is a measure of the dependability or accuracy of scientific results. This also means that one's own opinion and facts must not be mixed.

Regarding validity, it is important to stick as closely as possible to the topic to be dealt with when writing a scientific thesis. Many things may appear interesting and worth communicating to the author of a paper in the course of writing. However, if this is irrelevant to the argumentation sequence (which must be constantly checked), the presentation of what is “only” interesting should be avoided.

In the context of the three theses, it is the student's task, in particular, to find the relevant specialist literature, process it critically and put the findings and results clearly on paper. The most important content-related, formal, technical and organisational requirements for scientific work in written form are briefly explained below. As a general rule, however, individual requirements vary depending on the institute, subject area and supervisor, and the thesis should always be prepared in consultation with the supervisor.

2. Steps in preparation of written theses

Writing a seminar paper, Bachelor's or Master's thesis takes time - not only for the actual writing of the thesis, but also for narrowing down the topic, searching for literature, etc. This chapter presents essential work steps schematically, which can also be used to divide and determine a schedule. This should be understood as a suggestion and coordinated with the supervisor.

2.1. Preparing and defining the topic

The topic to be worked on is defined and outlined in an initial discussion with the supervisor. The topic's analysis is then based on this, based on reading into the subject area and an initial literature search.

The concrete delimitation and definition of the topic leads to the creation of a rough outline and the definition of the main points of the thesis, which are described in a preliminary introduction with the problem, objectives and approach.

In a second meeting with the supervisor, any necessary adaptations or specifications of the topic and key points can be made based on the rough outline and introduction. This is followed by registering the thesis with the examination office (for Bachelor's or Master's theses).

When obtaining the supervisor's signature by e-mail, please copy the following address: Silke.Wegst@uni-hohenheim.de.

2.2. Literature search

Academic papers are not written in a “airless space” (KORNMEIER 2008a, p. 836). In order to write a well-founded and argumentatively convincing paper, a suitable basic framework must first be created. This framework consists of studying the relevant literature and preparing the current state of research on the respective topic. Two strategies for literature research are briefly outlined below. For further information on this topic, please refer to the **courses in the KIM library**.

General internet searches are generally not suitable for literature searches. **Specialized databases of the KIM** such as Scopus, Econlit, Wiso, Econis, Repec, AgEcon Search or Google Scholar should be used.

You can access the databases via the database information system (DEBIS) on the KIM homepage.

The **KIM library** is also recommended as the first point of contact for the use of literature management systems. Members of the University of Hohenheim can use Citavi and Zotero as licensed, free literature management programs. In addition, personal advice and support is offered for content-related and technical questions, as well as questions about getting started with reference management programs. When searching for literature, a distinction can be made between a snowball system and a systematic search.

2.2.1. Snowball system/cross-referencing

With this method, a few central topic-related sources are first identified. Journal articles are best suited for this, as they usually reflect the most up-to-date state of current research or discussion on a topic. The sources listed in the bibliography can then be

used to identify further literature (backward referencing), which in turn can be used to review the literature used, and so on. The principle also works the other way around: Scientific search engines such as Google Scholar can display which subsequent works have referred to this work under “cited by” for selected central literature (forward referencing). The advantage of this is that a relatively large amount of relevant literature on the selected topic can be identified relatively quickly. However, there is also the danger of so-called “citation cartels” (KORNMEIER 2008b, S. 1137), so often only articles with opinions from the same school of thought are found.

2.2.2. Systematic search

This approach involves searching for all relevant literature sources from the beginning. Here, too, research in specialist journals or scientific databases (e.g. Scopus) is recommended as a starting point. In doing so, you should also consider years further back. It is advisable to first define a search string with the help of which an initial literature base is compiled. Abstracts and then entire articles can then be scanned using defined inclusion and exclusion criteria to identify the sources that are relevant to your research interests.

2.3. Working on the topic

After preparing the topic and defining it, the process of working on a topic can be schematically outlined as follows:

- Literature study,
- Specification and elaboration of further chapters (fine structuring)
- Writing the literature and methods section
- Concept and design of the survey and evaluation (for empirical work)
- Discussion with the supervisor
- Surveys, evaluations & writing the thesis
- Technical completion of the thesis & formal examination
- Submission of the thesis

2.4. Submission of the thesis

The thesis must be submitted to the examination office.

All passages in the thesis taken verbatim or analogously from publications or other external communications must be individually identified as such.

The thesis must be accompanied by a declaration by the author that the thesis was written independently and without the use of sources and aids other than those specified and that the thesis has not been used as an examination assignment in any other degree program.

Furthermore, it must be declared that it is known that the submitted version can be checked for plagiarism using analysis software. The author must sign this declaration. (see examination office Declaration of independende)

The thesis must be submitted to the Examinations Office by the deadline as an unencrypted digital text document (pdf).

The title of the thesis must not differ from the title in HohCampus; an Application to change the title must be discussed with the team of supervisors beforehand.

3. Formal structure of scientific theses

The structure of a scientific thesis is as follows:

- Title page (see Appendix)
- Table of contents (outline)
- List of figures (as required)
- List of tables (as required)
- List of abbreviations (as required)
- List of appendices (as required)
- Text of the thesis (structure according to chapter 4.1)
- Bibliography
- Appendix (as required)
- Declarations (for Bachelor's and Master's theses, see appendix & examination regulations)

This formal structure must be adhered to!
This structure is described in detail in the following sub-chapters.

3.1. Design of the title page

The title page of the thesis should be designed according to the institute's requirements. A template for the title page is included in Appendix 1.

3.2. Structure

Every academic paper must contain an organised outline that precedes the thesis's text as a table of contents (see table of contents in this guide). On the one hand, this outline provides an overview of the content of the topic being worked on, and on the other hand, it indicates the focal points set by the author. Overall, the main chapters and their subdivisions should have a balanced relationship regarding the scope and respective subdivisions.

The thesis's content should be structured so that a logical flow of ideas emerges, which must be recognisable in the outline. The outline should thus reveal a “common thread” and can be described as meaningful if it shows a reader who is not informed about the topic of the work at a glance.

This is why KRÄMER (1999, S. 103) describes the table of contents as the “most important key to a thesis”.

A distinction can be made between numerical and alphanumerical order. Only the numerical order will be discussed here. The main sections of a text are numbered consecutively, starting with one; each subordinate level begins again with the number one (see table of contents, p. I). It should be noted that too much subdivision of the topic can lead to confusion and thus hinder the logical flow of the text and the reader's understanding. Other formal aspects need to be considered when creating an outline. KRÄMER (1999, p. 110) lists the following aspects:

The individual bullet points should be of equal, higher or lower priority so that the points represented in each case are on the same factual level.

A bullet point must contain at least two sub-items if it is further subdivided. More than three levels of subdivision should be avoided.

Main chapters should be balanced in terms of scope and subdivision.

The structure headings must correspond to the textual content of the corresponding paragraph and should be formulated concisely and precisely.

No unfamiliar abbreviations, formulas or symbols should be used in the headings.

The bullet points must be repeated verbatim as headings in the following text and provided with the corresponding page numbers of the text in the table of contents.

The content and meaning of a heading should include all the (sub-)headings under it.

3.3. Indexes

If figures or tables are in the text section, they must be in separate lists.
The figures/tables must be numbered consecutively with Arabic numerals and provided with suitable headings. The respective lists must contain the following three details:

- Figure numbers
- Figure headings
- Page number on which the respective figure is located in the text section.

The same applies to tables.

3.4. List of abbreviations used

If uncommon abbreviations are used in a text, in the footnotes or in the bibliography, these abbreviations must be separately listed in a list of acronyms at the beginning of the work. Abbreviations recognised by the Duden dictionary, such as “etc.” and “e.g.” are not included in the list as they are part of common knowledge.

4. Text of the thesis

The actual text of the thesis is subdivided. The subject matter of the chapter and how it is dealt with in the sub-chapters of the second or next level of the structure is presented in the necessary brevity. Sub-chapters are at least two paragraphs long.

4.1. Typical structural elements of a scientific thesis

1. Introduction and research question
2. Literature overview
3. Conceptual framework
4. Data and methods
5. Results
6. Discussion, conclusion

Note:

Individual structure elements can also be combined in one chapter or represent subchapters of another structure level, e.g. simultaneous presentation and discussion of results or conclusion chapter including limitations, outlook, implications and summary.

4.2. Introduction and research question

The introduction of a thesis serves to classify the topic to be dealt with in an overarching topic complex, to narrow it down according to the research question, to present the problem, and to explain the objective.

The following points are therefore explained in the introduction:

- Importance of the topic
- Justification of the problem
- Identification of the research gap and delimitation of the topic or problem
- Aim of the work or study
- Research question(s)
- Overview of the structure of the thesis

A draft outline should be submitted (see the department's separate guidelines on the supervision process). Adjustments can still be made in the course of the thesis.

Facts, logic, brevity and objectivity characterise the text of a thesis. Long and convoluted sentences are incomprehensible and confusing. Therefore, if possible, clear, simple main sentences with only one statement per sentence are preferable (KRÄMER 1999, p. 140 ff.). A neutral presentation free of judgment is essential. Dividing the text into several paragraphs with relevant content makes the text clearer. Avoiding the passive voice with verbs also increases the “liveliness” of the text. So, use active forms whenever possible.

4.3. Literature overview

The section “Literature overview” (also “Literature review” or “Theoretical background”) is a central component of a thesis, as it represents the scientific context of your research. This section systematically presents relevant theories, models and previous research results to show the current state of research and classify your research question. It is important to critically examine the selected literature and highlight differences in approaches and results. Above all, the reader should be able to see where there are still gaps in the research and/or disagreement in the literature this paper addresses.

The literature overview should be logically structured. It is advisable first to present broader theoretical approaches and then specifically address the topic of your work. However, It is unnecessary to reproduce generally known knowledge or fundamental findings in this chapter. For example, if your topic is “Agriculture 4.0”, it is unnecessary to describe the history of agriculture starting with the first cultivation attempts in Mesopotamia. Always ask yourself whether what you have written contributes specifically to answering the research question you have posed.

4.4. Conceptual framework

This chapter forms the theoretical foundation of the work and sets out the central assumptions and concepts that guide the research. Here, the relevant theories are explained in detail, and their relationship to the research question is worked out. In addition, the conceptual framework, which serves as an analytical framework, is presented. This framework links the theoretical considerations with the empirical investigation by explaining how central concepts and relationships are operationalised and applied in the analysis. If a model (e.g. a theoretical or structural model) is used, it should also be explained and visualised in this section to illustrate the relationships between the variables or concepts.

If the work is empirically based on hypotheses, these are precisely derived and formulated in this section. Each hypothesis should follow the theory logically and contain testable statements. The aim is to provide the reader with a clear, theoretically sound structure to guide the subsequent empirical investigation.

4.5. Data and methods

The “Data and methods” chapter in an empirical thesis serves to present the basis of the analysis transparently. Here, the data sources used should be described in detail, including information on the origin of the data (e.g., primary or secondary data), the period of data collection, and the methods used to collect the data. In the case of secondary data, the source of the data must always be stated.

In the case of independent data collection, e.g. through a quantitative survey, it is important to describe each step of the data collection. Imagine that uninvolved third-parties are to repeat the data collection based on your description and ideally achieve similar results.

Concerning data quality, it is important to characterise the sample in terms of socio-demographic characteristics (age, gender, education, income, place of residence, etc.). The extent to which the sample can be regarded as representative of a population (group) should also be addressed. Any limitations of the data, such as possible distortions, missing values or methodological challenges, should also be disclosed. In this chapter, the sample's descriptive statistics (e.g. mean value, standard deviation, maximum/minimum of the variables used) can already be presented and described.

After describing the data collection and the sample, it is also important to provide an overview of the methods used to analyse the data. This should clearly state why the method was chosen and how it was applied. This applies equally to quantitative data (e.g., regression analysis) and qualitative data (e.g., content analysis). Reference should always be made to relevant literature on the methodology used.

4.6. Results

The results chapter is one of the central chapters of the thesis. Here, the main findings of the (empirical) study are presented objectively and clearly. The focus must be on presenting the pure results without placing them in the context of the theory or interpreting them in depth - this is done in the subsequent discussion section.

The results should be presented in a structured and comprehensible order. It is advisable to start with the research's descriptive results and then move on to the results of the quantitative or qualitative analysis.

Depending on the type of analysis, statistical key figures, tables, graphs or other visualizations can be used to present the results. These visualisations should be explained understandably and integrated into the text.

4.7. Discussion and conclusion

The results are interpreted in the discussion, placed in the context of comparable literature, and critically reflected upon. In contrast to the previous chapter, in which only the objective results are presented, the discussion focuses on analysing the significance of these results. The following questions should be answered: Have the hypotheses been confirmed? How do the results compare with other studies? What implications do the results have for politics, practice or science? What are the strengths and limitations of the study? What further research questions arise from the work? It is important not only to emphasise the positive aspects of your work but also to openly address weaknesses or ambiguities.

The conclusion serves as the final section and should summarise the most important findings of the work. In contrast to the discussion, no new interpretations or questions are introduced here, but the core results and their significance are presented briefly and concisely. A good conclusion closes the circle to the introduction by returning to the questions posed at the beginning and answering the extent to which these could be clarified in the course of the work. It should also provide implications for practice or research and an outlook for future research opportunities. A strong conclusion leaves the reader with a clear and well-founded overall impression of the work and places it in a larger overall context.

4.8. Reference list

Only those titles verifiably considered or cited in the bibliography should be included in the work. Each title must be listed with the essential bibliographical information (name of the author(s), year of publication, title of the publication, place of publication, publisher, page numbers for journals and anthologies) in alphabetical order of the authors' surnames (for examples, see bibliography p. 26). As a rule, first names are not written out in full. Single line spacing is used when listing the individual titles; the text is written with approximately an indent. 1 cm from the second line onwards. A space (e.g. 6 pt before the beginning of the paragraph) is left between the individual references (THEISEN 2006, p. 190). Each reference should end with a period. A reference management program (e.g. Citavi, Zotero etc.) is recommended.

The following information is required for monographs (books):

- Surname and (abbreviated) first name of the author
- Year or, if not available, the indication n.d. (= no date)
- Title of the book (subtitles can be omitted)
- Place of publication or “without place of publication”, if there are more than two places, only the first is mentioned and the addition u. a. is added.
- Publisher
- If the work has been published in a collection or series, this should be noted.

In the case of articles (journal articles), the author and year are listed by points one and two above. If the author is not listed, this should be indicated with the “without author”.

- Surname and (abbreviated) the author's first name, if not available, the indication “without author”
- Year or, if not available, the year n.d. (= no date)
- Title of the article
- Name of the journal with the prefix “In:”. Common abbreviations may be used for journal names
- Number of the volume
- Number of the volume, the issue number or the edition
- Page references
- DOI?/ link to the journal article.

Internet sources must also be listed in the bibliography. There is a wide range of information on correctly citing internet sources. Since the purpose of a source reference is that a cited text passage can be found based on the information and can therefore be traced and checked, it is always correct and important - regardless of which rules you follow - to cite everything that serves to identify the online source (o. V. 2005). **The retrieval data of the source must be stated.**

The important bibliographical details are shown below:

- Author's name (see above) or the indication “without author”
- Date of creation (if known). Since this information is often missing in Internet documents, additions such as n.d. (“no date”) or ‘without date’ should be used.
- Title of the source
- Where on the Internet was the source consulted or on whose website was it found?
- URL of the website with the addition “Online on the Internet”
- Date of consultation or last update

The bibliography (p. 24) provides examples of references for monographs, articles, and internet sources.

Legal sources are listed in a separate list following the bibliography.

4.9. Appendix

The appendix follows immediately after the bibliography, whereby the page numbering continues. Illustrations used in the appendix are numbered consecutively (e.g. A 1, A 2,...) and listed with the appendix headings and the corresponding page numbers in an appendix index. The appendix only contains what is not necessary for understanding the text, i.e. it does not serve to continue the text of a work “under a different sign” (THEISEN 2006, p. 171). It is, therefore, particularly appropriate if the reader is to be provided with further information relevant to the topic. Examples of appendix components include calculations for figures and tables presented in the text or questionnaires used for empirical studies. Appendices are not obligatory components of a paper; their usefulness depends on the thesis.

5. Design of the thesis

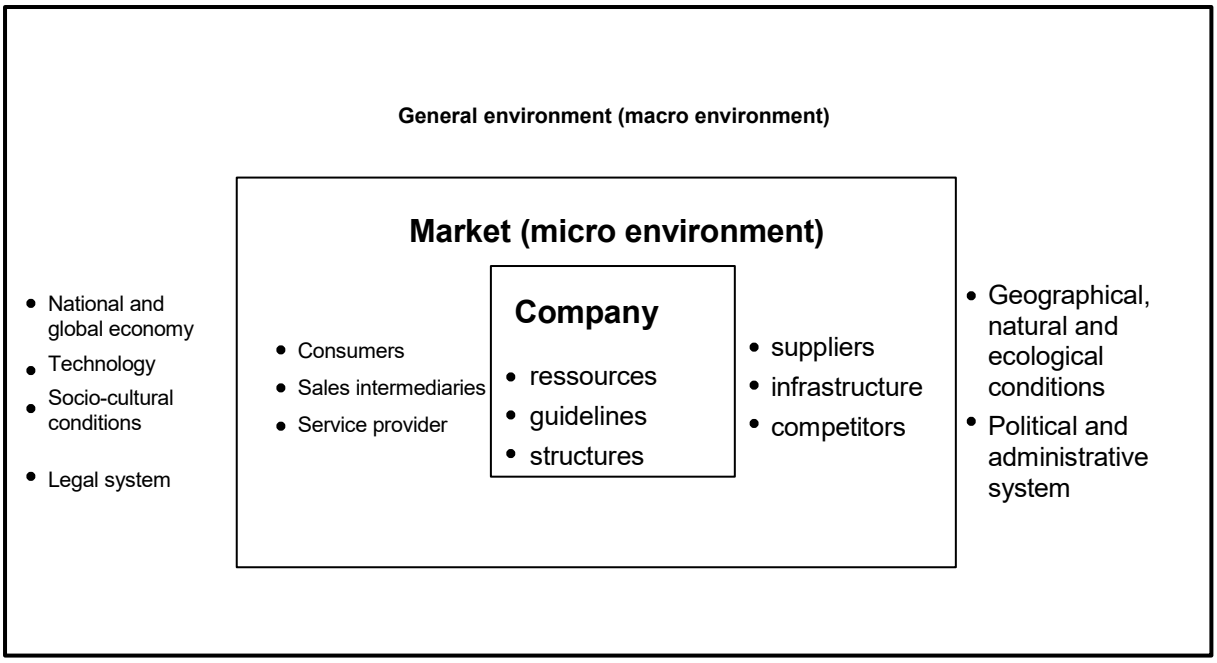
The design of a thesis is based on specific criteria that support both argumentation and readability. These criteria are presented in the following sub-chapters.

5.1. Figures and tables

Figures and tables are used to illustrate facts. However, it should be ensured that the number and size of the selected illustrations are in a balanced relationship to the text. Although the exact definition of a “balanced ratio” varies depending on the topic and agreements with the supervisor, it should be noted that the use of illustrations as “page-taking” is not accepted.

The presentation (chosen here as an umbrella term for the three forms of visualization) must be comprehensible on its own, i.e. contain all the information necessary for understanding. It is particularly important to ensure that, for example, the axes of a graph or the rows and columns of a table are labeled. However, an explanation is also always required in the text, as is a reference to the illustration, e.g. “As shown in Figure 13” or “(see Figure 13)”. Figures and tables must be mentioned in the text before they appear, i.e. they must be announced to the reader. The description of the contents can be given before or directly after the table. In any case, it is important to ensure that overviews, figures and tables are not left without comment.

Figure 1: Analysis fields for marketing decisions



Soruce: NIESCHLAG et al. 2002, S. 69.

Table 1: Shopping location preference, expenditure per purchase and number of household purchases by type of establishment in Germany in 2007

Types of business	Penetration (households in %)	Ø expenditure[1] per household in €	Ø expenditure per purchase in €	Number of purchases[1] per

				household
Large supermarkets	89.7	843	28.61	30
Small supermarkets	77.2	430	16.02	27
Supermarkets	73.4	290	14.14	21
Drugstores	86.2	177	11.06	16
Discounters	97.7	1,257	17.99	70

[1] Only consumer goods for daily needs

Source: Own depiction according to A.C. Nielsen GmbH 2008, p. 197.

5.2. Citation

The use of other people's thoughts and statements must always be indicated by citing the source. Care must be taken to ensure that quotations are not distorted by being taken out of context. All sources and secondary materials that have been published in any form and are therefore traceable and verifiable are eligible for citation. This also includes dissertations and postdoctoral theses. Citing unpublished master's or diploma theses is not usual. However, if such works are used as sources in exceptional cases, they must of course be identified and referenced. As such works are not accessible to the reader, the cited results must be described in a way that is sufficiently comprehensible for the reader.

Trade journals without a review process (e.g. top agrar) cannot be cited as primary sources. The boundaries between citable and uncitable sources are fluid and also depend on the data sought and the topic dealt with (THEISEN 2006, p. 141). These borderline cases should then be discussed with the supervisor. In general, the literature used should be selected in such a way that the level of content corresponds to the standard of a scientific paper. For example, articles from current specialist journals with a peer review process are particularly suitable here. THEISEN (2006, p. 60) describes them as one of the most important sources for scientific work. On the one hand, the majority of current scientific discussion takes place there, and on the other, they represent a constantly new addition to the literature overview.

What does not need to be cited in a scientific thesis is general knowledge that can be taken from any conversation dictionary. This also applies to relevant technical terms and commonly used terms. However, terms of central importance to the work should be defined and explained.

5.2.1. Direct quotation

“The best remedy against ambiguity is the literal quotation” (KRÄMER 1999, p. 188). A literal adoption of a source into one's own text is referred to as a direct quotation and is indicated by quotation marks. Quoted text passages must not be altered, i.e. they must be accurate to the letter and character. Minor omissions within the quoted text are to be indicated by two (..) (for one word) or three (...) (for several words) dots. If something is added to a quotation as a supplement or explanation, or if the quotation is rearranged, the addition or change must be enclosed in square brackets [ ]. Direct quotations should be used as sparingly as possible.

Example: “Successful study is hardly possible without knowledge of the methods and techniques of scientific work (...)” (THEISEN 2006, p. 1).

If foreign-language texts are used in your own translation, this should be indicated.

5.2.2. Indirect citation

An indirect quotation is a non-literal but substantive incorporation of other people's ideas into one's own text. This includes the analogous reproduction of a source or the use of a source as an argumentation aid (CORSTEN AND DEPPE 2002, p. 63). The analogous reproduction of another person's intellectual property must also be identified in such a way that it remains clear whose ideas or opinions are being reproduced. In its external form, the indirect quotation differs from a direct quotation in that it does not use quotation marks. Introductions such as “according to THEISEN” or “according to KRÄMER” are also possible.

Example: According to THEISEN (2006, p. 1), successful study is hardly possible without knowledge of the methods and techniques of scientific work.

A secondary citation occurs when secondary literature is cited rather than the original text. The use of secondary citations is only tolerated in cases where the original text cannot be consulted or a copy cannot be obtained despite an intensive search.

Example: “If you quote too little, you arouse the suspicion that you are trying to feign originality. If you quote too much, you arouse the suspicion that you want to show off your literacy” (KLIEMANN, 1973, quoted from THEISEN 1992, p. 132).

5.3. Citation techniques

Basically, the usual citation techniques are full citation and short citation. With both variants, it is possible to work with footnotes or with the so-called Harvard system. Citing using footnotes is unusual in the natural sciences and economics and should not be used in the thesis. However, the aim of all existing systems is identical: the reader should be able to find the cited source as quickly as possible if required (KRÄMER 1999, p. 191). This guide recommends and describes the Harvard system. With this citation technique, the short reference to the source (author, year of publication and page number) is made in the running text. The full citation with all relevant bibliographic data is then included in the bibliography. It must be ensured that the assignment of the short and full citation is clear. For example, care must be taken to distinguish titles with small letters if the same author has published several titles in one year (e.g. KORNMEIER 2008a; KORNMEIER 2008b). In the case of sources with more than two authors, only the first-named author is cited. The other authors (who must be listed in full in the bibliography) are referred to by the abbreviation “et al.” (et alii = and others). When quoting the page number, strict attention must be paid to whether only one passage is quoted (e.g. p. 20), whether the quoted passage also affects the following page of the work (e.g. p. 20 f.) or whether the statements extend over several pages (e.g. p. 20 ff.). Here “f.” stands for following and “ff.” for subsequent.

If an entire paragraph of the paper is structured by summarizing a literature source and reproducing it analogously, the requirements of academic citation are generally satisfied by stating the source at the end of the paragraph. At the beginning of such a passage, however, it should be pointed out again which author is being quoted in the following.

Example: “In the case of literal quotations, it (the short reference) follows immediately after the closing quotation mark and precedes any subsequent punctuation marks” (KRÄMER 1999, p. 192).

THEISEN (2006, p. 146) describes the Harvard system as reader-friendly and economical in terms of writing and printing.

The four rules for direct and indirect quotations are:

- Quotations must always be identified as such,
- Quotations must be exact,
- Quotations must be direct,
- Quotations must be appropriate (RÜCKRIEM et al. 1997, p. 170 f.).

If text passages are identified in a paper in which the verbatim adoption of a source or the content of other people's ideas has not been marked in accordance with the guidelines presented here, the paper is considered plagiarized and therefore failed.

5.4. External form of the thesis

In addition to the content and formal requirements for the text, the following specifications for the external formatting of the paper must be adhered to:

- Submission exclusively in electronic form as a pdf file!
- Margins: left approx. 3 cm, right approx. 2 cm
- Font: Arial or Times New Roman
- Font size for text, outline and bibliography: 11 pt or 12 pt
- Font size in footnotes: 10 pt
- Justification with hyphenation
- Line spacing for text and outline: 1.5 lines.

The length of the papers depends on the focus (literature or empirical research) and the degree you are aiming for, whereby the respective examination regulations can provide an initial indication of the number of pages required.

Notes on the number of pages: See separate guidelines on the supervision process!

5.5. Use of generative AI

Special care should be taken when using generative AI systems to support the creation of thesis. These tools can be helpful for gaining inspiration, structuring ideas or improving linguistic formulations. However, they should only be used as a supplement. It is important that the scientific content, analysis and argumentation are developed independently. It is essential to clearly identify all sources used and to always critically scrutinize the results of the AI. AI-generated texts should not be adopted directly, as they may contain inaccuracies and do not generally meet academic standards.
At the University of Hohenheim, generative AI systems may generally be used as an aid in the preparation of term papers, seminar papers and thesis. These include ChatGPT, Midjourney and Perplexity. However, the use of these systems usually requires the creation of a user account and consent to the applicable data protection regulations. If you wish to use generative AI systems, it is your own responsibility to familiarize yourself with them. The department assumes no responsibility/liability in this regard.

If generative AI systems are used in the preparation of the thesis, a declaration on the use of generative AI must be attached to the thesis in addition to the declaration of independence (see appendix).
Since the use of generative AI is a rapidly developing field and the University of Hohenheim regularly adapts the legal situation regarding its use accordingly, please inform yourself about the latest form.

5.6. Use of gender-appropriate language

The use of gender-appropriate language when writing scientific papers is defined in the guidelines of the University of Hohenheim. Please follow these guidelines (Gender Guidelines).

6. Text processing

6.1. Designing the text

When writing academic papers, it is very helpful to work with **format templates** (THEISEN 2006, p. 255). This gives you a quick and easy way of formatting identical sections of text (paragraphs, headings, references under illustrations, bulleted lists, etc.) uniformly with regard to various parameters such as font size, font type and line spacing.

When you assign a style sheet, you apply a group of formatting in one step. THEISEN (2006, p. 255 f.) offers a short introduction to creating style sheets. If you want to assign a special combination of attributes such as text alignment, tab stops and line spacing to an entire paragraph, we recommend using **paragraph format templates**. **Character styles**, which affect the font and size of the text as well as the bold and italic formats of the selected text in a paragraph, can also be helpful and make word processing easier.

Tips and tricks for working efficiently with word processing programs can be found on the KIM homepage (kim.uni-hohenheim.de). There, members of the University of Hohenheim can download digital books, learning videos and exercises free of charge. Help and guidance can also be found on the Internet and in the relevant literature (cf. HAHNER et al. 2010). It is also a good idea to attend a corresponding course at KIM.

6.2. Directories

You should place indexes at the beginning of your text (see chapter 3). Word processing programs offer the option of creating directories (e.g. table of contents, list of figures or bibliography) automatically. The advantage of automatic creation is that you do not have to spend time typing the list and you do not have to spend time searching for page numbers and updating them. However, you must ensure that you update the respective index at the end of the text editing process.

6.3. Labels

Tables, figures and graphics must be labelled (see chapter 4). Word processing programs also offer help with the creation of captions. The computer-aided creation of captions simplifies your work, as it allows you to number figures automatically, for example automatically numbered. Suppose you have ten illustrations in your text and would now like to insert an additional illustration as a second illustration in your text. Insert the illustration at the intended position and label it. If you use automatic numbering, the word processing program will update the numbering automatically.

7. Presentation

Notes on the defense: See also separate guidelines on the supervision process!

In a seminar as well as in the presentation of Bachelor's and Master's thesis, you should present key aspects of your written work in a presentation. For Bachelor's theses, the presentation lasts 15 minutes, followed by another 15 minutes of discussion (30 minutes in total). (See Examination Office Presentation)

In the Master's defense, you must present the main thesis, results and methods of your Master's thesis. For Master's thesis, the presentation lasts 20 - 25 minutes, followed by a discussion of approx. 20 minutes. The defense lasts a minimum of 30 and a maximum of 45 minutes. (See examination office Defense)

The times stated above must be adhered to as closely as possible. The presentation is an oral performance. You should therefore base your choice of words and sentence structure on the spoken language (this need not and should not be unscientific!) and not more or less obviously read your text from the seminar paper (CORSTEN AND DEPPE 2002, p. 95). So, speak freely. To support your speech, we recommend using postcard-sized index cards on which you can write down key words on the topic, examples, use of media, etc. Number these cards so that you can refer to them later. Number these cards so that they are easier to organize.

If you are unsure, you should rehearse your presentation at home in front of a mirror or in front of friends. There is also specialist literature on this topic, which will not be comprehensively replicated here (you will usually have attended a corresponding presentation skills module at this point in your studies). A few key points are mentioned below (as a recap).

7.1. Structure

The structure of a presentation is similar to the structure of a written thesis:

1. Introduction and research question

   (name the topic, present the structure of the presentation, introduce the topic)

2. Theory und conceptual frame

3. Model und hypotheses

   (name the important aspects, explain, contrast, weigh up, illustrate with examples)

4. Methods

5. Data

6. Results, discussion, conclusion

7. Summary, assessment, stimulate discussion

Make sure that you have all the utensils you need for the presentation with you. Organize your material carefully so that you don't have to search for anything for a long time. Test the duration of your presentation in advance to make sure you can keep to the time frame.

Questions from the audience are legitimate. However, at the beginning of your presentation, you can ask them to wait until the end if they would otherwise throw you off track. Overall, it makes sense to clarify any ambiguities in the content first and to answer questions that go beyond the presentation later. If you support your presentation with slides, slide numbering is very helpful for the subsequent discussion.

The presentation can be followed by a discussion, if planned. First, any questions from the audience should be clarified, then the topic or the thesis, assertions and presentations you have put forward may be discussed. This discussion should remain as close to the topic as possible, but may also go beyond it. Depending on the respective requirements, the discussion will be led by a lecturer or examiner or you will have to lead the discussion yourself. All questions and suggestions are initially directed at the discussion leader or yourself. You must respond and possibly encourage further discussion or further questions and lead back to the topic. It can also be helpful to prepare some introductory questions and discussion points in advance (THEISEN 2006, p. 231).

7.2. Use of media

You can support your presentation by using media. However, these media only serve as support and are never an end in themselves.

Projector, slides: It is advisable to provide the slides with little text and to arrange it clearly. Use a sufficiently large font (min. 20 pt, headings min. 24 pt). Indents facilitate orientation, but should not degenerate into endless columns. There are tables, boxes, shading, illustrations, graphics, pictures, symbols and much more. But not everything is suitable for your presentation. For example, according to CORSTEN AND DEPPE (2002, p. 97), “flying in” objects is inappropriate. So choose carefully, selectively and in line with the topic. Less is often more. Landscape format of the slides is preferable.

Note: Sources also belong on slides, e.g. at the bottom! However, bibliographies as the last slide of a presentation (“Here are my sources”) are an unattractive conclusion to the presentation. Better: keep the list of references as a hidden slide and show it when asked.

During the presentation, you must ensure that the slides are projected correctly (sharpness, screen, size). Explain your slides freely and do not read out what is written on the slide. This will make it easier for you to maintain eye contact with the audience.

7.3. Presentation style

Due to nervousness, many speakers tend to over-jump. This manifests itself, for example, in a restless swaying back and forth, rocking with the foot, spasmodically holding pens or playing with materials. So always try to step out of yourself for a moment and look at yourself in order to stop such actions. It is important, for example, to ensure that you stand firmly (after all, you are also taking a firm stand in your presentation). Remember: nervousness is part of giving a presentation in front of an audience. Even experienced speakers experience this. However, a certain inner tension is also positive for you and your presentation.

Gestures support the spoken word. You can also use your arms, but don't overdo it. Facial expressions also support your presentation. You can win over your audience with a friendly smile. But don't let your facial expressions freeze into a mask. Important: You want to convey content and neither deliver an entertainment show nor sing your audience to sleep (see also CORSTEN AND DEPPE 2002, p. 98 ff.).

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Appendix

Appendix 1: Title page

Example for a title page

UNIVERSITY OF HOHENHEIM

Faculty of Agricultural Sciences
Institute for Agricultural Policy and Markets
Department of Agricultural Markets
Prof. Dr. Sebastian Hess

Seminar, Bachelorand Master thesis

[Title of the thesis]
[possible subtitles]

Submitted by
[Name]
Matriculation number:

Stuttgart-Hohenheim, [Month Year]

Appendix 2: Declarations

See Homepage Uni Hohenheim – Examinations office – Final Thesis Declaration of originality: See https://www.uni-hohenheim.de/fileadmin/uni_hohenheim/PA/formulare/allgemein/Erklaerung-fuer-digitale-Abschlussarbeiten.pdf

Declaration on the use of generative AI

https://www.uni-hohenheim.de/fileadmin/uni_hohenheim/Studierende/Studienorganisation/Pruefungen/KI_in_Pruefungen/Erklaerung_zur_Verwendung_generativer_KI-Systeme.docx