

Chair of Marketing & Human Resources Management
Univ.-Prof. Dr. Dr. Ruth Stock-Homburg

Guidelines for the formal design of scientific theses

- from June 2025 -

1. Important information for the submission

Bachelor's theses, Master's theses, Studienarbeiten and seminar theses must be submitted *digitally* via email to the supervisor.

Your submission must include

- The written work as a Word document (or LaTeX file) as well as a PDF file as a **single**, complete file each (cover page, indexes, text and appendix),
- And, if applicable (e.g., in the case of empirical work), additionally relevant appendices, such as the complete data set (incl. raw data, syntax, output), evaluation scripts or transcripts.
- All students need to disclose the use of generative AI and AI-assisted technologies in their Bachelor's theses, Master's theses, Studienarbeiten and seminar theses by adding one of the following four statements in the submission email send to the supervisor.
 - o I have not used generative AI and AI-assisted technologies at all.
 - o I have used generative AI and AI-assisted technologies for checking grammar, spelling, references, translation etc.
 - o I have used generative AI and AI-assisted technologies for ideation but used my own words in formulation.
 - o I have used generative AI and AI-assisted technologies for the generation of new text in section(s) XXX.

Bound copies are not required.

Bachelor's and Master's theses must also be submitted to the study office ("Studienbüro") and uploaded to TUBama in due time.

2. Scope of work

Seminar thesis: 10 pages of text per person in the Bachelor's degree, 15 pages in the Master's degree, if necessary working on a topic in pairs according to the specifications of the seminar leader

Bachelor thesis: 50-60 pages text

Master thesis and Studienarbeiten: 60-80 pages text

The page numbers refer to the text section (Arabic page numbers), including graphics and tables. The remaining parts of the thesis (Roman page numbers) do not count (see point 5). Shorter or longer theses are only permitted in consultation with the supervisor.

For a thesis in paper format, the formal guidelines also apply. Exceptions are only permitted after consultation with the supervisor.

3. Order of the parts of the thesis

- **Title page**
- **Abstract** (100-250 words, for Bachelor and Master theses and Studienarbeit; this must be written in German AND English if the paper is written in German. For English-language papers, an abstract in English is sufficient.)
- **Table of contents**
- **List of figures/tables**
- **List of abbreviations**

- **Main text**
- **Bibliography**
- **Appendix**
- **Affidavit** (for Bachelor and Master theses and Studienarbeit)
- **[Blocking note, if required]**

4. Title page

In general, we recommend using the corporate design of the TU Darmstadt. You can find corresponding templates here: https://www.intern.tu-darmstadt.de/arbeitsmittel/corporate_design_vorlagen/index.de.jsp (document „Vorlage_Bericht_mit_Fusszeile“)

The color to choose is blue (#0083cc: 0r, 131g, 204b).

The title pages for the scientific theses should include: Department and chair designation, type of thesis, topic of the thesis (or seminar, if applicable), deadline, supervisor, and editor with matriculation number.

Example of a title page:

<p><i>Title of the seminar/bachelor/master thesis</i> <i>Studienarbeit</i></p> <p><i>Title</i> <i>of the scientific work</i></p> <p>submitted at</p> <p>Department of Law and Economics Chair of Marketing & Human Resource Management Univ.-Prof. Dr. Dr. Ruth Stock-Homburg</p> <p>Supervisor: Title, name of supervisor 1 Title, name of supervisor 2</p> <p>Technical University of Darmstadt</p> <p><i>Winter term/sommer term 20XY/XZ</i></p> <p>from</p> <p>first name last name Matriculation number</p>
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Address
Tel.
Place, date

5. Table of contents

The parts of the thesis, such as table of contents, list of figures, list of tables, list of abbreviations, bibliography, appendix, affidavit, should be numbered consecutively in Roman numerals, starting with I. The table of contents should always be accompanied by appropriate page numbers.

The text part is arranged in numerical order according to the principle of graduation. It should be noted that each level of structure should have at least two bullet points.

The following diagram shows a simplified representation of a table of contents.

	Page
List of tables	II
List of abbreviations	III
...	...
1 Introduction	1
1.1 Practical and scientific relevance	1
1.2 Goals of the thesis	2
1.3 Structure of the thesis	3
2 Conceptual basics	3
2.1 ...	4
2.1.1 ...	4
2.1.2 ...	5
2.2
3
4
5
6 Scientific and practical implications	...
...	...
Bibliography	V
Appendix	VI

The abstract comes before the table of contents and is therefore not listed in the table of contents.

6. List of figures and tables

All figures and tables are to be included in directories. Figures and tables shall be numbered separately. Each figure and table shall have a title. The pages of the directories shall be numbered consecutively with Roman numerals.

7. List of abbreviations

Only all subject-specific abbreviations are included here in alphabetical order, especially abbreviations of journals, organizations, associations, and legal texts.

Example:

ASQ	Administrative Science Quarterly
JM	Journal of Marketing

Common abbreviations such as ca., e.g., fig., etc. are not included. If, in exceptional cases, abbreviations are unavoidable, these should also be included here, e.g. in the case of internal company abbreviations.

8. Text section

In principle, theses can be written in German or English, depending on the thesis announcement and agreement with the supervisor.

The work must be submitted in error-free language. If the number of spelling, punctuation, or expression errors (grammar, sentence structure, style) exceeds a usual level, a deduction of at least one grade will be made!

The margins are

Top: 2.5 cm

Bottom: 2 cm

Left: 2,5 cm

Right: 2.5 cm

Justification is to be selected. Attention should be paid to an appealing text design and formatting. The thesis should be written in "Times New Roman" font. The font size in the text, table of contents, etc. must be 12 points. The work (text, table of contents, etc.) should be written in 1.5-line spacing. For paragraphs, the setting "spacing after paragraph 12 pt" must be used. The pages of the parts (without title page) before and after the text part are to be numbered with Roman numerals, the individual pages of the text part with Arabic numerals. When using bullets, make sure that a correct sentence is maintained.

Example:

The psychology of risk behavior examines in detail

- risk handling during the initial determination of a decision situation,
- risk handling during the determination of a decision situation, and
- risk handling by information search.

Footnotes are used for text supplements and text explanations. They are identified by superscript numbers, and the footnotes are numbered consecutively. A font size of 10 points is to be used for the footnotes. The spacing is single-spaced. Footnotes shall be appended to the page on which they are inserted in the text.

Each figure and table are given a title and, if necessary, a reference (see section 9 "Citation technique").

Example:

Figure 12: Overview of behavioral science theories (Stock-Homburg 2006, p. 23).

Figures and tables are to be integrated into the text if they are related to the text. Extensive presentations such as questionnaires, legal texts, etc. are to be placed in the appendix. For the text in figures and tables, the font type "Times New Roman" with a font size of at least 10 points is selected.

9. Citation technique

It is recommended to use a literature management program (e.g. Citavi, Zotero). Even when using such a program, the bibliography must be checked manually.

As a matter of principle, all references and borrowings in a scientific thesis must be identified by means of source references. This does not only include references and borrowings from published publications, but also those from not yet published sources, presentation and lecture materials as well as discussions with experts. If literature sources are completely missing in a thesis, it will be graded with 5 (poor).

For citations, the citation in the text is to be used uniformly. It is possible to use APA (<https://apastyle.apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines>), the Harvard citation or the citation according to MISQ.

The extent of the citation (beginning and end) must be clearly recognizable. The source reference is placed at the end of the section or argumentation in the case of longer non-literal quotations. It may be useful to mark the beginning of the quotation with appropriate introductory sentences.

References to another place in your own work or to statements of other authors in scientific literature, whose opinion is not reflected in the text, should also be marked with an addition.

Literal quotations are to be placed in quotation marks and accompanied by page numbers.

Second-hand quotations are taken from secondary sources. One takes over thereby a quotation of an author, without informing oneself in the primary source about the original wording! Second-hand citations are only permissible if the primary source cannot be obtained. In the case of "generally accessible scientific literature", second-hand quotations cannot be accepted! If it is not possible to compare the quotations found in secondary sources with the original text, then the note "quoted from" (it follows the source from which one has taken the quotation) or "quoted in" is to be applied.

Example:

Source reference to the primary source, quoted in: Source reference to the secondary source.

Figures and tables which are taken over in the original are provided with the source reference. If the illustrations of a source are included in the thesis in a slightly modified form (e.g. minor omissions), they are marked "based on". Graphs and tables prepared by the author are marked with the note "Own representation".

The source references are omitted in the list of tables/figures.

10. Bibliography

The bibliography does not have a chapter number. It is placed at the end of the text before the appendix. The page numbering is Roman (see section 5). The information in the bibliography must correspond to the source reference in the text. The bibliography contains exclusively and completely the sources cited in the text.

The bibliography must be arranged alphabetically and chronologically by author, i.e. if there are several works by one author, they are arranged according to the year of publication, beginning with the oldest work. In the case of several works by one author from one year, lowercase letters beginning with "a" are introduced after the year number (e.g.: 1980a, 1980b). The order of a, b, c, etc. follows the order of the source references. If an author has written a work in cooperation with several authors, this work is to be included in the bibliography following his individual publications. The works with one co-author are cited first in alphabetical and chronological order, then those with two co-authors.

Internet sources are to be regarded particularly critically, since in the Internet everyone can publish its thoughts and opinions. In principle, Internet sources are permitted if they cannot be replaced by other citable sources. In addition to the name, abbreviated first name and title of the document, the Internet address (URL) and the date of access are given.

Documents that are only available online require more extensive source citations since permanent availability cannot be assumed and even possible changes to the document must be expected. In any case, the title should contain information that makes it easier to find the document using search engines if the Internet address (URL) changes. If it is useful to classify the source and no author is known, the institution (e.g. university, company) that published the source should be indicated. If the author is completely unknown (which makes the source itself very questionable), the abbreviation "n. a." (no author) is used. When citing Internet sources, the date of publication is indicated, which is evident from the source. If there is no reference to this date within the source, "n. d." is used.

If available, please include the DOI (digital object identifier) in the bibliography for all sources.

11. Affidavit (for Bachelor theses/Master theses/Study theses/Seminar theses)

"Thesis Statement pursuant to § 22 paragraph 7 of APB TU Darmstadt

I herewith formally declare that I, **first name last name**, have written the submitted thesis independently pursuant to § 22 paragraph 7 of APB TU Darmstadt without any outside support and using only the quoted literature and other sources. I did not use any outside support except for the quoted literature and other sources mentioned in the paper. I have clearly marked and separately listed in the text the literature used literally or in terms of content and all other sources I used for the preparation of this academic work. This also applies to sources or aids from the Internet.

This thesis has not been handed in or published before in the same or similar form.

I am aware, that in case of an attempt at deception based on plagiarism (§38 Abs. 2 APB), the thesis would be graded with 5,0 and counted as one failed examination attempt. The thesis may only be repeated once.¹

Darmstadt, (date)

(Signature)

12. Further literature

In addition to the formal guidelines for the design of scientific thesis listed in this document, reference should be made to the relevant literature, which should be consulted to answer numerous questions in the context of the preparation of a written thesis.

In particular, the following work is helpful in the formal design of a scientific thesis:

Theisen, M. R. (2011), Wissenschaftliches Arbeiten: Technik, Methodik, Form, 15th edition, Munich.

13. Public Communication on behalf of the Chair of Marketing and Personnel Management

In the context of a thesis, all public communication requires the written consent of the chair head. Public communication includes in particular the following contents: Sending invitations or acquisition emails to potential study participants or representatives of networks, advertising for other support of the work, holding information events or seminars on the findings of the work.

Furthermore, students are not permitted to appear in the name of the chair of Marketing and Human Resource Management during the period of preparation of the written work without the written consent of the chair.

14. Intellectual property and rights to the thesis

In case of using existing data of the chair, the rights as well as the intellectual property of the survey instruments remain with the chair. The use of provided data must be explicitly noted at the beginning of the thesis as well as in the empirical part of the thesis. The transfer of rights to the thesis or excerpts from the thesis to third parties requires the written consent of the chair head.

With the registration of your thesis at our chair you declare your agreement with these regulations.

¹ This sentence does not apply to seminar theses.