

Guidelines Master's thesis

Length of the thesis (text): 50 pages (+/- 10%) with font size 12 and line spacing 1.5. The academic office provides suggestions on form and layout on its web pages.

What constitutes a good Master's thesis?

- A well specified research question which is analyzed and discussed systematically.
- A research question set in context of the relevant literature, ongoing debates in the (sub) field or lasting controversies.
- Literature research is part of your independent work as author. The WiSo Library offers (general) courses on search strategies etc. and specific advice on your literature search.
- Your independent analysis of the topic, traceable presentation of your thoughts and well-argued conclusions.
- Critical examination of your own results and conclusions, documented in your thesis.

On the structure of the thesis

- Table of contents including page numbers.
- Introduction (4-8 pages): Relevance and motivation of the research question, embedded in the literature, overview of the following analysis.
- Main sections (3-4 chapters): You structure the material that you present to reflect your approach to your research question. Each chapter must be explicitly related to your research question. Make sure that the structure is obvious and easy to follow. Devise meaningful headings. Use a decimal system (2.1, 2.2, etc.) and do not divide the text into too many subsections (three levels are usually sufficient).
- Concluding chapter (5-10 pages): summary of the substance of your argument, key findings, open questions/aspects not covered in the thesis, future research.
- Bibliography.
- The completed and signed declaration of authorship including disclosure of your use of AI tools.

Tables and figures are numbered consecutively and provided with complete references.

Footnotes can be used for short comments that would disrupt the flow of the argument in the main text, e.g. references to supplementary literature or to other parts of your thesis.

References, bibliography

References within the text document your discussion/analysis of the relevant literature. The bibliography contains all sources/texts cited in your thesis with complete details.

ALL REFERENCES IN THE TEXT MUST CONTAIN:

- **AUTHOR(S)**
- **YEAR**
- **PAGE NUMBER (maximum 2 pages)**

If you refer to the overall results of a paper, refer to the page on which you found the author(s)' summary that is most relevant to your work. All literature used in the paper is listed in the bibliography with complete details (e.g. in one of the styles suggested by googlescholar: MLA, APA or ISO 690). If available for the text/article, please include DOI or URL.

If you have any questions or doubts concerning referencing or bibliography, please ask (send an email)!

Systematic violation of these guidelines, references that are not traceable/do not document your independent engagement with the relevant literature and similarly grave errors in documentation result in a grade of 5.0.