



# Formal Guidelines for Written Assignments and Theses<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> This guide is partly based on the "Academy of Management Journal (AJM) Style Guide for Authors" (2014, Vol. 57, No. 5,1) and was adapted to the requirements of the Chair for Strategy and Organization of the Faculty of Social and Economic Sciences of the University of Bamberg



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## 1. Literature research

### 1.1 Procurement of literature

There are substantial funds available for the procurement of literature. Essential possibilities are:

- Economic databases for journal articles: [Business Source Ultimate | EBSCO](#), [EconBiz](#), [American Economic Association](#), [JSTOR](#), [wiso](#)
- [Electronic Journals Library](#)
- [Bamberg Catalogue](#)
- [Library network Bavaria](#)
- [Database information system of the University of Bamberg](#)
- Scientifically oriented databases: [ScienceDirect](#), [ResearchGate](#)
- [KVK - Karlsruher Virtual Catalog](#) (provides an overview of almost the entire literature available worldwide)
- [Google Scholar](#) (contains scientific works and working paper)

To manage the (relevant) literature, special literature management programs such as [Citavi](#) (free of charge; for Windows) or [Zotero](#) (free of charge; for Windows, Mac, and Linux) are suitable. To learn the basic functions of these programs, the Bamberg University Library offers free courses. Registration and more detailed information can be found in the VC course "Registration for courses at the Bamberg University Library".

### 1.2 Quality criteria for scientific literature

When selecting sources, it is important to pay attention to their citability:

- Generally considered citable are, for example:
  - Scientific textbooks, specialist dictionaries and encyclopedias, dissertations/ha-bilitations, journal articles
- Usually considered uncitable:
  - Introductory literature/textbooks, transcripts/scripts, seminar papers, general In-ternet sources, general encyclopedias, specialist dictionaries, and consumer magazines.

Even if a source's content is generally considered citable, it is important to *question* its statements/figures/tables and so forth *critically*. Criteria as the seriousness of an editor, the state of research or possible aims of the text (political, financial, propaganda...) should be considered. Journal rankings can help to find respected (highly ranked) journals. For high-quality work, A and B journals should be used (rating of the VHB-JOURQUAL3), whereby the *VHB-Journal Ranking* gives a good overview, especially for business-related journals.

## 2. Structure of final theses

- Title page (*cover sheet at the chair's website*)
- Table of contents
- List of figures, abbreviations, or tables
- Written elaboration:

1.

2.

2.1

2.1.1

2.2

} *Next outline level only if at  
least 2 subsections*

*(For more specific contents of subsections, see "3. Structure and style of the written work ")*

- References
- Appendix (if necessary)
- Eidesstaatliche Erklärung (in german)

## 3. Structure and style of final theses

### 3.1 General structure

The setup of the following structure is only schematic. In the written work, the individual points of the outline must be formulated accordingly.

1. Introduction → Introduce the topic (relevance, research gap, research question, goal & order of the work)
2. Theoretical basics → What theories is the work based on?
3. Methodology → Which method was used in which way and why?
4. Results
5. Discussion and limitations
6. Conclusion / outlook / further research

### 3.2 Structure of an empirical study

Cover page

(Abstract)

**Table of contents**

**Introduction**

**Theory and hypotheses**

**Methodology**

Data and sample

Variables (independent/ dependent)

**Results**

**Discussion**

Critical reflection of the results

Synthesis of the results with the literature

**Conclusion / outlook / further research**

Limitations

**Bibliography**

**Appendix**

Eidesstattliche Erklärung

### 3.3 Structure of a literature review

Cover page

(Abstract)

**Table of contents**

**Introduction**

**Methodology**

(description of the procedure for the literature review)

**Results of the literature review** (usually divided into several chapters depending on the topic and state of research)

**Discussion**

Critical reflection of the results

Synthesis of the results with the literature

**Conclusion / outlook / further research**

Limitations

**Bibliography**

**Appendix**

Eidesstattliche Erklärung

## 4. Formal guidelines

### 4.1 General aspects

- Page size: Din A4
- Font: Times New Roman 12 Pt.
- Alignment: Left, justified, automatic hyphenation
- Line spacing: 1,5
- Page numbers: Right bottom
- Margins: Left: 4,0  
Right: 1,5  
Top: 2,5  
Bottom: 1,0

### 4.2 Page numbers

- Roman (I, II, III): Indexes (Table of Contents, References, Annex, Declaration on oath)
- Arabic (1,2,3): Written elaboration (Starting with 1)
- Scope<sup>2</sup>
  - Bachelor theses: 11.000 words (+/- 10%)
  - Master theses: 22.000 words (+/- 10%)

The word count includes the entire main text (from the first heading to the last word of the conclusion) including figures (counts as one word), tables, in-text citations.

All others such as bibliography, list of figures, list of tables, appendix or cover page are not included in the word count.

### 4.3 Headings

According to the AMJ style, there are only three different levels of headings. It is important that no level may be skipped and that each sub-level must consist of at least two headings.

The outline should correspond to the following example:

**METHODS**

*[Main headings – 1st level:*

*In capital letters, centered, bold]*

**Data and Sample**

*[2nd level: left-aligned, bold]*

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<sup>2</sup> (exc.: cover page, table of contents, list of figures, abbreviations, or tables, appendix etc.)

<b>Measures</b>	[2nd level]
<i><b>Independent variables</b></i>	[3rd level: indented, italic, bold]
<i><b>Dependent variables</b></i>	[3rd level]

## 5. Citation

### 5.1 General aspects

In general, foreign ideas must always be correctly identified by literature references! Throughout the entire work, the reader should be able to follow the thought process and check the findings.

Citation is done according to the Academy of Management Journal (AMJ) guidelines in the form of citations within the text. This citation style is also available in Citavi. A distinction is made between direct and indirect citations, which are always followed by a period.

Direct citation: used when word-for-word copying of individual sections

- Marked by quotation marks
- Page details in the reference required: e.g., 345 or 345 f. (for 345 and the following page 346) or 345 ff. (for 345 and multiple following pages)
- If words are left out within a direct citation, this should be indicated by
  - [.] for an omitted word
  - [...] for more than one omitted word
- *Example: "In the case of a sole proprietorship, the equity base is limited by the assets of the company. (Wöhe, 1996: 346).*

Indirect citation: when thoughts and explanations are taken over in the same sense

- Reproductive content in *your own words*
- Changed word order counts as plagiarism
- No page numbers within the bibliography
- *Example:*
  - *Original (Wöhe, 1996: 346): "In a sole proprietorship, the equity base is limited by the assets of the company "*
  - *Indirect citation: While in a general partnership, the partners have unlimited liability, in a KG there is a limitation of liability for the limited partners (Wöhe, 1996).*

## 5.2 Figures and Tables

Before a figure/table is shown, it must be *addressed* in the text, if necessary with "(cf. Fig. Xy)".

After that, it can be *shown* before it is *discussed* in the text.

- Use "own representation" as a source for your own figures
  - ➔ For illustrations created independently by the author, which are not based on existing illustrations from other sources
- If necessary with the addition "based on"
  - ➔ For already existing illustrations from a source modified or altered by the author
- In case of one-to-one adoption of the illustration ➔ direct citation (see above)

## 5.3 Special cases

Error in the original: add [sic!] directly after the error

- The word sic (lat. sīc) means "really so"
- *Example: "With the help of the regression analysiz [sic!] it could be shown thet [sic!] there is no connection between the examined variables. "(Kaiser, 2005: 162).*

Changes in direct citations: use square brackets and the addition "Author's note ".

- *Example: "These [detailed; author's note] hints for handling direct citations were by no means superfluous. "(Kaiser, 2005: 373).*

Highlighting:

- Highlighting in the original text (e.g., bold, underlining, or italics) must always be adopted. Otherwise, these have to be indicated by a note in square brackets: [emphasis in the original].
- The emphasis in the original text is indicated with the addition "emphasis by the author" in the text.
- *Example: "These notes on dealing with direct citations were no means [emphasis by the author] superfluous. "(Kaiser, 2005: 373).*

If the original source is not accessible: Reference to secondary literature (direct citation)

- In the text: (Schulte, 1975: 68).
- Reference list: both sources have to be mentioned



Direct citation within a direct citation: "citation within a citation" between simple apostrophes and also indicate the second (indirectly cited) source (short reference and bibliography)

- *Example: "The relevance of this' unusual development in the customer satisfaction research '(König, 2004: 87 ) can only be partly evaluated at this time "(Kaiser, 2005: 346).*

If necessary, data is missing: Use of the addition "Anonymous ", "n.p. "(no place), "n. d. "(no date).

- *Example:*
  - *In the text: (Anonymous, 1983a: 3).*
  - *In the bibliography: Anonymous. 1983a. Eigenschaften erfolgreicher Führungskräfte. Blick durch die Wirtschaft, n.p.(5): 3-4.*

With several authors:

- If a source of 3-6 authors is cited for the first time, all names are given, each additional citation with the addition "et al. ". The corresponding citation in the bibliography contains all names.
- *Example:*
  - *In the text: (Schenk, Klümper, Leise, 1977: 30) [1<sup>st</sup> reference]*  
*(Schenk et al., 1977: 30). [2<sup>nd</sup> reference]*
  - *In the bibliography: Schenk, K. E., Klümper, B., & Leise, N. 1977. Industrielle Ost-West-Kooperationen. Stuttgart, New York: Lucius & Lucius.*
- For seven or more authors: addition "et al." already in the first citation. The corresponding reference in the bibliography contains all information.
- *Example:*
  - *In the text: (Wang et al., 2020: 721).*
  - *In the bibliography: Wang, J., Feng, L., Palmer, P. I., Liu, Y., Fang, S., Bösch, H., O'Dell C. W., Tang X., Yang D., Lui L., & Xia, C. (2020). Large Chinese land carbon sink estimated from atmospheric carbon dioxide data. Nature, 586(7831): 720-723.*

## 6. Bibliography

In general, all sources used in the elaboration must be listed completely in the bibliography.

The data must be given as follows:

Monographs: Last name, initials. Year. **Title**. Place of publication: Publisher.

- *Example: Wild, J. 1982. **Grundlagen der Unternehmensplanung** (4. Aufl.). Opladen: VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften.*

Collective works: Last name, initials. Year. Chapter title. In: initials and last name of the publisher (eds.), **the collective work title**: page reference. Place of publication: publisher.

- *Example: Albert, H. 1972. **Theorie in den Sozialwissenschaften**. In: H. Albert (eds.), **Theorie und Realität**: 3-26. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck.*

Journals: Last name, initials. Year. Title. **Name of the journal**, year (issue if necessary): pages.

- *Example: McComb, D. 1979. **The International Harmonization of Accounting: A Cultural Dimension**. *The International Journal of Accounting*, 14(2): 10-13.*

Internet sources: Last name, initials. Year: title, URL: link, status: date of retrieval.

- *Example: Trochim, W. 2002. **The research methods knowledge base**, URL: <http://trochim.human.cornell.edu/kb/index.htm>, status: 10.02.2002.*

*Example for a bibliography:*

*(The sources used in this example are not generally valid and conclusive but must be chosen according to the topic; the example is only intended to illustrate the correct adoption of the sources)*

### REFERENCES

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