

Guidelines for scientific writing

1. General remarks

Write your seminar paper/thesis in a way that an Economics student who is as advanced in his studies as you are, can understand the paper without having to read the literature you refer to. Make sure to present the ideas, thoughts and results intuitively, understandable, vividly and in a logical and consistent manner. We strongly advise you against writing about something that you have not really understood yourself.

2. Formalities

- Scope of a seminar paper: 5.000 – 7.000 words (ca 15-20 pages of continuous text)
- Scope of a bachelor thesis: 8.000 – 10.000 words (ca 25-30 pages of continuous text)
- Scope of a master thesis: 12.000 – 18.000 words (ca 40-55 pages of continuous text)
- The page count includes headings and footnotes. It excludes cover page, table of contents, list of abbreviations, list of tables, list of figures, tables and figures in the text, bibliography, appendix and affidavit
- Font and font size: "Times New Roman" 12pt
(Headings and footnotes are not covered by this regulation)
- Line spacing: 1.5
- Margins: top 2.5cm; bottom 2.0cm; right 2.5cm; left at least 2.5cm (use wider spaces if the work is bound)
- Page numbers at the bottom of the page (centered or right)
- Page numbers start after the table of contents. For the list of abbreviations, figures and tables use the Roman numerals. From the continuous text onwards use the Arabic numerals.
- Thesis should be printed double-sided

All seminar papers must be submitted to Bianca Bittner (Room 205 WiWi) in stapled and punched paper form. Additionally, please send an e-mail attached with the PDF version of your paper to bianca.bittner@uni-passau.de.

For bachelor and master theses, please make sure that you fulfill the requirements of the Examination Office (*Prüfungssekretariat*) for your specific major.

3. Elements and order of the seminar paper/thesis

- Cover page
- Table of contents
- List of abbreviations (if necessary)
- List of figures (if necessary)
- List of tables (if necessary)
- Text
- Bibliography
- Appendix (if necessary)
- Affidavit

4. Design of the cover page

- Name of the university, department and chair at which the paper is submitted
- Title of the paper
- Type of work (seminar paper, bachelor thesis, master thesis, diploma thesis)
- Title of the seminar
- Name of the seminar leader/thesis supervisor
- Name of the author
- Address of the author
- Major and matriculation number of the author
- Date of submission

5. Table of contents

All sections appearing after the table of contents must be listed in the table of contents. Use the Arabic numeral system with a maximum of three levels. The first level has single-digit numbers, the second level two-digit numbers and the third three-digit numbers. The digits are separated by dots and there is no punctuation behind the last digit. The headings of sections in the table of contents must match those in the text. The headings of individual sections should neither coincide with the overall topic of the paper nor with headings of subsections. The corresponding page number must be aligned on the right-hand side of the page.

Example:

List of figures.....	i
List of tables.....	ii
1. Introduction.....	1
2. Theoretical background.....	3
2.1	3
2.2	6
3.	9

6. List of abbreviations

In order to keep the text comprehensible and easy to read, abbreviations should not be used extensively. In particular, you should try to keep (unofficial) abbreviations you introduce yourself to a minimum.

All abbreviations which are not listed in the latest edition of the Oxford English Dictionary have to be explained in the list of abbreviations (see “3. Elements and order of a scientific paper”). The variables and parameters of the theoretical or econometric models should not be included in the list of abbreviations, but have to be explained in the text.

The first time an abbreviation appears it should be written in parenthesis after the word(s) it refers to. Thereafter, only the abbreviation must be used. E.g. if one wants to abbreviate United States of America, it should be written as United States of

America (USA) the first time it appears in the text and as USA thereafter.

7. List of figures and tables

If you use figures and tables, please list them in a list of figures and in a list of tables that precedes the continuous text (see “3. Elements and order of a scientific paper”).

Each list should be on a separate page. Use the same titles for the figures and tables in the list and in the text. If you include very(!) few graphs and tables, you can create one combined list of figures and tables instead of two separate lists. Name this section “list of illustrations”.

8. Figures and tables in continuous text and appendices

You may use figures and tables to illustrate research results more vividly.

Nevertheless, only relevant tables and figures should be included and, if included, they should be clearly explained in the continuous text. They must always contain a heading and a reference. Tables and figures without any description of the contents are worthless.

Figures and tables which are of interest in terms of content but are not essential for understanding the text can be included in the appendix. However, do not simply place them in the appendix without providing any explanation; you should always make clear why the figure or table is needed. Keep in mind that figures and tables in the appendix should be included only in exceptional cases.

9. Equations in the continuous text

Mathematics purely for the sake of mathematics is not appropriate in an economic seminar paper/thesis. However, you can of course use equations from formal models to illustrate an economic reasoning. The variables, parameters and calculation steps must always be explained in a comprehensible and intuitive manner.

10. Citations

Make sure that one can always trace back assumptions, arguments, results, etc. to the original authors by including in-text citations. If you fail doing so, you implicitly pretend that other authors' arguments or findings are your own. This is considered to be theft of intellectual property. All seminar papers/theses submitted to the chair are tested for plagiarism via an automated search algorithm.

In general, you should paraphrase other authors. Use direct quotations (literal quotes of phrases/parts of sentences) only in exceptional cases. Always consider whether a direct quotation is really needed or whether you can paraphrase the corresponding statement in your own words.

For in-text citations you need to use an author-year system (e.g. Harvard Citation style). This implies that either you include the author and year in parentheses or the author in the running text and the year in parenthesis. Examples, respectively: The introduction of a minimum wage increases the reservation wages (Falk et al., 2006). Falk et al. (2006) come to the conclusion that the introduction of a minimum wage increases the reservation wages.

If you refer to a joint work by two or three authors, all surnames must be stated, e.g. (Bauernschuster and Schlotter, 2015) or (Bauernschuster, Falck and Wößmann, 2014). For a team of four or more authors, you only have to state the author named first on the paper - followed by et al., e.g. (Bauernschuster et al., 2010). Be aware however, that you have to list the names of all authors in the bibliography at the end of your thesis!

Always refer to the page numbers if you cite from a book, e.g. (Angrist and Pischke, 2009, p.231). If you cite articles from scientific journals, page references can be omitted.

In the (exceptional) case of direct quotes note that the phrases/parts of sentences you quote literally are enclosed with quotation marks, “ ”. Omitted parts of the original text must be indicated by parentheses and ellipsis (...). If you add something in order to give a more detailed explanation or account for syntactic alignment, the respective letters or words must be enclosed with square brackets – this might for example be necessary if it is not clear in the quotation to which part of the sentence a pronoun

refers. If elements of the quote are already enclosed with quotation marks, this is indicated by ‘ ’. If parts of the original sentence are highlighted (printed in italics, bold or underlined) this should not be changed in the quotation. If you want to emphasize certain parts of the quote by yourself, indicate the change of the original text by placing [emphasis added] enclosed in square brackets after the respective change. Longer quotes should be indented and single-spaced; this eliminates the need for quotation marks. If you use direct quotes, you must always include page numbers.

Please note that we expect your results to be based on findings published in scientific peer-reviewed journals. However, there are large quality differences within the range of scientific journals. Please have a look at the *Handelsblatt Economics Journal Ranking* in order to get an idea about high and low quality journals.

If, during your research, you come across scientific papers which belong to the category *working paper* or *discussion paper*, this means you have found a version of a paper which is still preliminary in the way that it is not published in a refereed journal or book volume yet. It does not mean that the paper in question is too bad to get published in high-quality journals. Almost every paper that is published in a peer-reviewed journal was a *working paper* before it was submitted. Nevertheless, always check (most easily on the respective authors' homepages) whether a working paper has been published in a refereed journal in the meantime. If this is the case, you should no longer quote the working paper version, but refer to the published version.

Websites such as Wikipedia etc. are not valid references for a scientific seminar paper/thesis.

11. Footnotes

If you consider that more detailed information on certain aspect is needed, you can place it in a footnote at the bottom of the page. The footnotes must not be misused to save space in the main text and to outsource statements that are necessary for the understanding of the arguments you make.

12. Bibliography

The bibliography starts on a new page and lists all the literature you refer to in a clear and structured manner. This means that each and every reference you explicitly use (i.e., quote or paraphrase) in the text must be listed. Do however not state the literature you read during your research process but you did not refer to in the final version of your text.

The bibliography should be single-spaced and organized in a consistent way. Make sure to clearly separate individual publications from each other by granting additional space between them. References must be listed in alphabetical order according to the name of the first author. The authors' surname must be written in full while their first name(s) should be abbreviated (e.g. John Smith should be written Smith, J.). If several publications of one author or a group of authors are referred to, list the articles in chronological order. If you use various publications of one or a group of authors from the same year, distinguish each other by using lower case letters behind the year (e.g. Bauernschuster 2014a, Bauernschuster 2014b) – both in the text and in the bibliography. If no place or year of publication is specified, n.p. or n.d. is written instead. If no author is mentioned, this has to be marked with n.a. as well.

We recommend the “Harvard Citation style” for your bibliography. For detailed information see for example: <http://www.citethisforme.com/harvard-referencing>

If you prefer to use a different citation style, still make sure that your bibliography and citation is always consistent!

Applications:

- Books:

Surname, First initial. (Year published). *Title*. Edition. Places of publication (maximum 3): Publisher.

Examples:

Adair, T. (2001). *Just capital – the liberal economy*. London: Macmillan.

Varian, H. (2006). *Intermediate micro economics – a modern approach*. 7th ed. New York, London: W.W. Norton & Company.

- Individual chapters in an edited book:

Surname, First initial. (Year published). Chapter Title. In: First initial. Surname of editors, eds., *Book Title*, xth edition. Places of Publication: Publisher, Pages.

Example:

Gerrard, B. (1992). Beyond the Treatise: Continuity or Change. In: B. Gerrard and J. Hillard, eds., *The Philosophy and Economics of J.M. Keynes*, 1st ed. London: Elgar, pp. 15-20.

- Individual articles in journals

Surname, First initial. (Year published). Article Title. *Journal Title*, Volume (Issue), Pages [or *forthcoming* if accepted at the journal but not yet published].

Example:

Bauernschuster, S. and Rainer, H. (2012). Political Regimes and the Family: How Sex Role Attitudes Continue to Differ in Reunified Germany. *Journal of Population Economics*, 25(1), pp. 5-27.

- Working Papers:

Last Name, First Initial (Year). Essay title. *Working paper series*, number.

Example:

Krueger, A.B. and Ashenfelter, O. (2018). Theory and Evidence on Employer Collusion in the Franchise Sector. *IZA DP*, No. 11672.

- Quotations from the internet:

Last Name, First initial. (Year published). Page title. [online] Website name. Available at: URL [Accessed Day Month Year].

If there is no author stated, use this structure:

Website name (Year published). *Page title*. [online] Available at: URL [Accessed Day Month Year].

Example:

Universität Passau (2018). *Informationen zu Diplom-, Bachelor- und Masterarbeiten*. [online] Available at: <http://www.uni-passau.de/index.php?id=310> [Accessed 10th September 2018].

13. Affidavit (declaration of authorship)

I hereby declare that I have written the present work independently and that I have not used sources other those indicated. I have cited all the material which has been quoted or paraphrased from external sources. The work has not yet been submitted to any other examination authority and has not yet been published.

Passau, [date of submission]

[Signature]