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Guidelines for Writing the Bachelor and Master Theses

At the

Junior Professorship of Entrepreneurship

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1. General

This guide prepares students for a successful thesis at the Junior Professorship of Entrepreneurship and lists the most important information. The document provides information about the formal requirements, the application, the submission, and the presentation of the thesis.
Theses at the professorship should be written in English language. The approximate number of pages should be 35 pages for Bachelor theses and 50 pages for Master theses (a variation from up to 5% is acceptable). Depending on whether the thesis is an empirical work or a literature review the time varies. Table 1 gives the times for the Economics study programs.

Note: The details given above can vary depending on the study program. In case of discrepancies between this document and the examination regulations, the regulations of the examination office of your respective study program always apply.

	WiWi B.Sc.	**WiWi M.Sc.**
Literature Review (Time in weeks)	Max. 9	Max. 17
Empirical Work (Time in weeks)	Max. 13	Max. 26

Table 1: Overview of the times.

2. Initial points

2.1 Requirements

Students can see the objective of the professorship on the website. The students should prepare a **project proposal** on a topic aligning with the professorships objective and add it to their application. Otherwise, curriculum vitae, a letter of motivation, proving their English language skills, and the current grades (transcript of records) should be included in the application to the professor: Daniela.gimenez@tu-dortmund.de. After the deadline, students will be notified whether they are accepted or rejected. Accepted students must confirm their acceptance in the next few days. Otherwise, another student, who is on the list, will get the place. Students can find further formal requirements in the examination regulations of the respective degree program. The project proposal will be shaped after consultation with the potential supervisor.

Checklist for the preparation of the final thesis:

- □ The requirements of the examination regulations are clear.
- □ If applicable, a conversation with the potential supervisor has been held.

2.2 Selecting a Topic

The purpose of every scientific thesis is to contribute to the state of scientific knowledge. For this purpose, a research question must be formulated in relationship with the current state of research and expands or deepens it through the thesis. Table 1 gives an overview of different types of questions of a possible scientific thesis. The supervisor guides the student in developing a specific research question for the proposal.

Type of question	Guiding question	Example
Description	What is the problem? How does reality look like?	Which companies are engaged in intense human resources development? How has labor mobility in the EU changed since 1990?
Design	Which measures can be adopted to achieve the goal?	Which personnel development measures are suitable for generating social competence? How can labor mobility in the EU be promoted?
Explanation	What do we know about this topic? What do not we know about it? Why is this a problem?	Why do companies differ in their personnel development intensity? Why has labor mobility in the EU (not) changed since 1990?
Foresight	How does the future look like? Which changes will occur?	How will the human resource development intensity of companies in one industry change? How will labor mobility in the EU change in the next five years?
Evaluation	How is a certain condition evaluated against this background?	How should the personnel development of companies be evaluated in terms of equal opportunities (or environmental adaptation, etc.)?

Table 2: Adapted from Bänsch & Alewell (2013).

2.2.1 Cooperation with companies

Before establishing the cooperation, the student needs to specify and discuss the topic with the supervisor. Students can also propose a topic or in exceptional cases, develop it in cooperation with companies. In any case, the requirements of a scientific thesis must be met:

- The topic must be relevant and topical in the scientific context.
- It must also aim to contribute to scientific knowledge.
- In terms of content, the topic needs to align with the goals of the professorship.

2.2.2 The Role of the Supervisor

The professor or the academic staff member will supervise the thesis. Since the thesis is an independent scientific qualification, the supervisor only plays a supporting role. The student is expected to show initiative and work independently.

The student has the responsibility to attend the supervisor's office hours and to obtain feedback. To ensure constructive cooperation with the supervisor, structuring the questions before the meetings will enhance the discussions. Bergener, Clever & Stein (2018) provide tips on communication with the supervisor, and further topics such as self- and time management.

2.2.3 Literature Review

Students can and should use the services of the TU Dortmund Library to search for literature. In addition to the physically available books, students also have access to a large number of e-books via electronic literature search. If a particular source is not available via the electronic literature search, students have the option of requesting an interlibrary loan or submitting an acquisition proposal.

In addition, students have access to relevant databases (such as Scopus, JSTOR, EBSCOhost, or OECDiLibrary) via the TU Dortmund Library site. Students can find the list here. The university library also offers courses on "search strategies, research tools, acquisition, evaluation and processing of literature."

2.3 Project Proposal

The topic and the project proposal must not only meet scientific requirements but also represent the central starting point for answering the research question. The project proposal is the base of the thesis, helping students to structure as well as classify the topic and the research question. Through the project proposal, the student shows the supervisor that he/she has dealt with the topic and which components his/her thesis will essentially contain.

The project proposal consists of 3-5 pages for all other students and should include:

- The motivation of the topic
- The main research question
- Possible theoretical framework
- Research method
- Overview of the data
- The expected results
- The contribution of the thesis
- Reference list

The student will discuss the project proposal with the supervisor. The project proposal should include a timetable in which the student explains the main milestones of the thesis. For bachelor students of economics, the project proposal is relevant for the examination, and will be graded. The revision of the project proposal is maximum four weeks. If the project proposal meets the above requirements (a grade of at least 4.0), the thesis can be formally registered.

2.4 Registration

After the project proposal is finished and graded, the professorship registers the thesis at the examination office (NOTE: this applies exclusively to applicants from the economic (WiWi) program, applicants from other disciplines must obtain and submit all documents from their respective examination office on their own). The processing time starts approximately two weeks after registration. The processing time depends on the respective program, the type of thesis and the research method.

Students can find further information about the examination regulations in the respective degree programs.

Checklist for registering the final thesis:

- □ The research topic has been found in discussion with the supervisor.
- □ The project proposal has been prepared and evaluated (and graded with at least 4.0).
- □ The formal registration with the examination office has been completed.

3. Content

3.1 Example of a Thesis Structure

	Cover page
	Summary
I	Table of Content
II	List of Figures
III	List of Tables
IV	List of Abbreviations
V	List of Symbols
	Text section with:
	1. Introduction
	2. Theoretical framework
	3. Methodology
	4. Results
	5. Discussion
	6. Conclusion
VI	Reference list
VII	Appendix
	Declaration of Authorship

Figure 1: Example of a thesis structure

The cover page is the first page of the thesis and it should contain the following information (Please see appendix 1 and 2):

- Name and, if applicable, the logo of the TU Dortmund University
- Name of the Faculty of Economics
- Name of the junior professorship Entrepreneurship
- Title of the thesis
- Type of thesis (Bachelor thesis, Master thesis, ...)
- Names of first and second examiners
- Name, matriculation number, course of study, faculty, and address of the author
- Date of application and submission

The maximum one-page **abstract** gives the reader a brief overview of the contents of the thesis and describes the objectives. It contains the central question, the methodological approach, the relevant results, and the conclusion. The abstract must be written in German and in English (regardless of the language of the thesis). Each abstract should be max. 200 words.

The **table of contents** provides a brief overview of all sections of the final thesis. The content is represented by the section headings (e.g. 1./1.1) and the corresponding page number in Arabic numeration. Before and after the content part, the lists of figures, tables, abbreviations, and symbols as well as the bibliography and the appendix are listed with Roman page numbers. The automatic directory function of Microsoft Word is recommended for this.

The **list of figures** (and the list of tables) gives an overview of all figures of the thesis and lists them with the consecutive number (Figure 1, Figure 2, ... or Table 1, Table 2, ...) as well as the page number. Since most theses contain several figures, the list of figures is a useful part of the thesis.

In the **list of abbreviations**, all subject-specific abbreviations are included in alphabetical order, especially abbreviations of journals, organizations, associations, and legal texts. Common abbreviations such as e.g., fig., i.e., etc. are not included in this list. Abbreviations should be explained once only in the text, and then no further explanation is necessary. Students should wisely use abbreviations.

In the **list of symbols**, used variables and mathematical formulas, if available, are listed in alphabetical order. Symbols should be explained once only in the text, and then no further explanation is necessary.

The **reference list** contains all sources cited in the text section (sources not cited in the text section are not listed in the reference list). This list needs to be in alphabetical order. Single publications (one author) are listed before joint publications of the same author, and newer publications before older ones. In the case of several publications of an author in the same year, these are marked with an addition to the year of publication in the text (2008a; 2008b; ...). Sources from the Internet / World Wide Web are also listed. The recommended citation style is the American Psychological Association (APA), which is explained in more detail in section 3.4.

The reference list should never be created manually. It is essential to use a literature management program for having a consistent reference list and error-free literature work. TU Dortmund offers the Citavi license for free. Even though the author uses a management program,

the author himself/herself is responsible for ensuring the correctness of the index and references. An overview of relevant literature management programs can be found in Adam, Musiat, Stöhr & Wenz (2016).

Figures, tables, and more extensive derivations that do not directly belong in the text can be included in the **appendix**. The appendix is to be marked as such. The pages are numbered consecutively but do not count towards the total volume of the paper. In all other respects, the present guidelines also apply to the appendix.

The **declaration of authorship** must be included at the end of each scientific paper. The current version of the affidavit can be found on the homepage of the TU Dortmund University.

3.2 Layout

Besides the cover page, each page of the thesis is to be numbered with the page number (bottom right). The title of the chapter is to be indicated in the header of each page. The page margins are to be set as followed:

- Top: 2.5 cm
- Bottom: 2 cm
- Right: 2 cm
- Left: 3 cm

The text should be written with 1.5 line spacing (18 points). Footnotes should be written with single-line spacing (12 points). The text should be written using the Times New Roman proportional font or an adequate serif font with a size of 12 points. Footnotes should be numbered and inserted in the same font but in a size of 8 points. The first-level heading should be in 14-point boldface, second-level headings should be in 12-point boldface, and the third-level headings should be in 12-point but not boldface. A consistent font must be used throughout the thesis.

As a rule, centered justified flat type is to be used. The first line of each paragraph is indented unless the respective paragraph immediately follows a (sub)heading. Word's automatic hyphenation or manual hyphenation is recommended. Please avoid CAPITALS, VERSALS, Underlining, g e s p e r t e, and ***MULTIPLE*** for emphasizing. You should limit yourself to italics and bold as emphasis styles. Microsoft Word and LaTex are recommended for the preparation of the thesis.

Page size	DIN A4
Page margin	□ Top: 2,5 cm □ Bottom: 2 cm

	□ Right: 2 cm □ Left: 3 cm
Font type and size	□ Text in Times New Roman (12) □ Footnotes in Times New Roman (8)
Line and Space	1,5-time (18 points)
Paragraph formatting	□ Flat type, centered justified □ Automatic hyphenation □ 12pt space after each paragraph □ Indentation of the first line of each paragraph (unless the paragraph starts immediately after a heading).
Page number	□ Insert the page number in the lower right-hand corner. □ The cover page and declaration of authorship are not numbered. □ Use Roman numbers for the indexes and appendices. □ Use Arabic number in the text.

Table 3: Overview of the layout

3.3 Writing style

A scientific work must have a common theme in its line of argument and be comprehensible to the reader. Sentences should therefore build on each other and form a logical chain. Binding words between the sentences represent the relationship between the statements and help the reader to understand. The writing style of scientific work is clear, precise, and consistent. The statements should be written in short sentences. Redundancies and filler words (e.g. perhaps, often, rather, frequently, sometimes, rather, etc.) should be avoided. Occasionally, parentheses may be used (e.g., numbers may be given). Students should avoid paragraphs with only one sentence. Likewise, there should be no blank lines between paragraphs.

Students should read "Rules of good scientific practices" at the TU Dortmund (in German language). A formal writing style is expected. Students should write in a formal style. Footnotes can facilitate the flow of reading but students should use them wisely. In addition, a section should comprise at least half a page of text.

3.4 References and Citation

The rules of good scientific practices specify that external ideas or arguments must be cited. When the references and citations are missing, the thesis will be graded „deficient" in consequence it will be a „fail". In this section, the citation technique according to the APA style that is recommended for the thesis will be exemplified |.

The correct citation depends on various factors such as source type (book, book chapters, journal article, internet source, among others), number of authors, and citation method (direct vs. indirect). In addition to the reference in the text, an overview of the citations should be in the reference list. The most common references according to the APA style are presented below.

Note: This document does not claim to be complete. Reference techniques that are not discussed in this document can be researched on the Internet or requested from the supervisor.

Citation type

Direct:

According to Gimenez-Jimenez et al. (2020, p.19) “the venturing process have a gendered component, but also this is influenced by country-level contextual variables, such as culture.”

Indirect:

Gimenez-Jimenez, Edelman, Dawson, and Calabro (2020) show that gender and culture influence the venturing process.

Number of Authors

For *one author*, only the last name and the year are mentioned. (last name, year)

In the case of having *two authors*, the last names and the year are mentioned. (last name & last name, year)

For *three to five authors*, the surnames and year are mentioned once (Surname, Surname, Surname, & Surname, 2017) and abbreviated as "et al." throughout the rest of the paper (Surname et al., 2017).

In the case of *having six or more authors*, the abbreviation "et al." is used from the first mention (Surname et al., 2017).

In the reference list, regardless of the number of authors, all authors are always cited by last name and initials.

More than one Citation in the Text

When they are more than one citation in the text, please use a semicolon to separate each citation (Surname, Year; Surname, Year).

Rerefence List

Source type: Book

Example:

Krcmar, H., Eckert, C., Roßnagel, A., Sunyaev, A., & Wiesche, M. (2018). *Management sicherer Cloud-Services: Entwicklung und Evaluation dynamischer Zertifikate.* Wiesbaden: Springer Gabler.

Format:

Surname of the author, Initial of the first name. (Jahr). Book title (Edition). City, Country: Publisher.

Source type: Contributions from collective works

Example:

Gabaldon P., Giménez D. (2017) Gender Diversity on Boards in Spain: A Non-mandatory Quota. In Seierstad C., Gabaldon P., Mensi-Klarbach H. (eds) Gender Diversity in the Boardroom. (pp. 44-74). Cham: Palgrave Macmillan.

Format:

Surname of the author, Initial of the first name Author1 & Surname of the author, Initial of the first name Author 2. (Year). Book Chapter Title. In Surname of the author, Initial of the first name Author1; Surname of the author, Initial of the first name Author 2 & Initial of the first name Author 3 (eds), Book Title (pp.(en)). City, Country: Publisher.

Source type: Journal

Example:

Gimenez-Jimenez, D., Edelman, L. F., Minola, T., Calabrò, A., & Cassia, L. (2021). An Intergeneration Solidarity Perspective on Succession Intentions in Family Firms. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice, 45*(4), 740-766.

Format:

Surname of the author, Initial of the first name Author1 & Surname of the author, Initial of the first name Author 2. (Year). Article Title. *Journal name, Volumen*(issues), pages(number).

Source type: Internet

Example:

Marks, N. (2020, 15. Februar). Risk-based cyber risk reporting. Abgerufen am 21. März 2020, von https://normanmarks.wordpress.com/2020/02/15/risk-based-cyber-risk-reporting/

Format:

Surname of the author, Initial of the first name Author1. (Year, Day. Month). Article Titel [optional type of article], from http://website name

Figures and Tables

Figures and tables help to structure the work and to visualize and summarize key statements. In addition to creating your own figures, students can also use figures from scientific sources. However, these should be correctly cited and not inserted via scan or screenshot but created yourself (e.g. in Microsoft Visio or PowerPoint).

4. Termination

4.1 Submission

Students must submit the thesis digitally; the submission procedure is through ExaBase in the BOSS system on the day of the submission date at the latest. The submission deadline can only be extended in cases of illness requiring a medical certificate.
In addition to the digital submission via ExaBase only (students must follow the ExBase procedure).

Checklist for the submission:

- □ Is there an abstract in German and English?
- □ Have I mentioned all references?
- □ Have I cited all references correctly?
- □ Are all references in the reference list?
- □ Has the paper been proofread?
- □ Is the document error-free (no spelling mistakes, all commas)?
- □ Do I avoid using too many filler words (frequently, often, perhaps, rather...)?
- □ Have I avoided redundancies?
- □ Have I used all expressions consistently?
- □ Is the common theme clear?
- □ Are transitions between chapters smooth and meaningful?
- □ Have I mentioned all tables in the text?
- □ Have I checked the layout again?
- □ Are references in the text to figures and tables correctly labeled and numbered?
- □ Have I inserted the page numbers correctly?
- □ Are flat type, line and page breaks, and hyphenation correct?
- □ Did I include the declaration of authorship at the end of the thesis?
- □ Is the cover page correct, including title, type (bachelor's/master's thesis), registration and submission dates, as well as the names of the supervisors and personal details?

4.2 Presentation

The final thesis must be presented in a lecture. The lecture consists of a **presentation** (20 minutes for bachelor students; 25 minutes for master students), which is a short presentation of the thesis, and a discussion round, in which the contents of the presentation and thesis are discussed. The presentation does not aim at a complete reproduction of the thesis. During this time, the student should present essential information and the results of the thesis. Students

should justify why the topic is relevant to the current state of research and the goal of the thesis. Students should include a short presentation of the theoretical background as well as the method used to answer the research question. The presentation centers on the results and contributions of the thesis as well as addresses the relevance of the results for the literature and practice.

The structure of the presentation remains individual and depends on the student and his/her work. The presentation is usually **graded**. The weighting depends on the examination regulations of the respective study program.

5. Reference List

Adam, M., Musiat, J., Stöhr, M., & Wenz, C. (2016, December 06). Retrieved March 24, 2020, from https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:bsz:14-qucosa2-77350

American Psychological Association. (2020). Retrieved March 24, 2020, from https://apastyle.apa.org/

Bänsch, A., & Alewell, D. (2013). *Wissenschaftliches Arbeiten.* Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter.

Bergener, K., Clever, N., & Stein, A. (2018). *Wissenschaftliches Arbeiten im Wirtschaftsinformatik-Studium.* Berlin: Springer Gabler.

technische universität dortmund

Technische Universität Dortmund
Fakultät für Wirtschaftswissenschaften
Juniorprofessur Entrepreneurship

Titel der vorliegenden Arbeit Seminar-, Bachelor-oder Masterarbeit

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Zweitprüfer*in: Vorname Name
Betreuer*in: Vorname Name
Vorgelegt von: Vorname Name, Anschrift
Studiengang
Fachsemester
Matrikelnummer

Abgabedatum und Ort: TT.MM.JJJJ, Ort

Appendix 1. Example of the cover page