



**Guidelines for writing
Academic Papers at the
Northern Business School –
University of Applied Sciences**

As of september 2025

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1. Introduction to academic work

This guide to academic work at Northern Business School – University of Applied Sciences (hereinafter referred to as NBS) contains minimum standards that must be met when writing seminar papers and theses at the university. It also includes practical tips and tricks for the correct preparation of academic papers.

In addition to this guide, the "scheme academic work" document template is provided. This template serves as a formatting template that "only" needs to be filled with content. Students can find both files on the NBS OnlineCampus.

Dear student: Please use the recommendations and samples presented here as a guide for your own work. In addition, each discipline has its own characteristics when it comes to working with or considering academic standards. These can include, for example, different minimum content requirements, outlines, or citation styles. For this reason, it is particularly important that you discuss the specific requirements and standards with your supervisor in advance of your work.

In general, there are numerous sources of literature available on basic topics of academic work, different citation styles, and many individual topics (e.g., designing surveys). Reading these sources is highly recommended for familiarization and in-depth study in the field of academic work.

1.1 Classification as academic work

An academic paper involves the systematic, critical, logical, and source-based examination of a specific topic. It should not be descriptive in nature. A mere summary of (even excellent) reference books is not an academic paper, but rather a reproduction of existing knowledge (which, however, is not considered plagiarism¹ if the source is cited).

A submitted text can be classified as an academic paper if it answers a specific research question using an academic methodology. Every academic paper represents an individual contribution to the academic discussion of a topic. A certain degree of innovation is essential. The appropriate level depends, of course, on the type of paper. For seminar

¹ Further information on the topic of "plagiarism" can be found in Appendix 3.

papers and theses in bachelor's programs, a transfer of knowledge (e.g., the application of a theory from the subject area to a specific practical situation) is often sufficient. For more advanced work, e.g., in the context of master's theses and dissertations, the aim should be to develop your own model and/or provide well-founded empirical evidence with corresponding insights.

Under no circumstances should topics that have already been conclusively researched and published be revisited, unless the new work can at least serve as an update or validation. To this end, it is essential to familiarize yourself with the existing literature at the outset and identify any gaps in the research. If in doubt, your supervisor or scientists and practitioners working in the relevant field can assist you with the necessary research and classification.

Use your academic work to build your skills, especially with regard to basic methodology. Learning how to work academically is a key qualification of a degree program. The widespread belief that a degree program is primarily about learning relevant specialist knowledge is a fallacy. Specific subject knowledge is often only temporary. For example, information from the first semester may already be outdated by the time you write your thesis and, in extreme cases, may even have been refuted. The real skill that university studies teach is how to research and analyse information and present it in an academically appropriate style in such a way that you can provide your own answers to research questions. This is achieved not least through critical engagement with the current literature in the field of research.

It is therefore a central task of scientists and students to advance research and academic development. If only existing contributions are presented, science will remain at a standstill in the long term and render its *raison d'être* absurd. In this sense, academic work begins with the critical examination of existing sources, theories, and assumptions. Current empirical data is often used for this purpose.

Essentially, academic work is characterized by the systematic examination of a subject to be investigated or a formulated guiding/research question. This allows a clearly recognizable common thread and a comprehensible chain of argumentation to be developed in a text. It is important that the presentation is structured in a meaningful way and presented at an appropriate language level (technical terms, style). The starting point is a

clearly defined topic with a subject of investigation, research question, and methodology that is embedded in the academic discourse and research area.

1.2 Topic and research question

Finding a topic based on a research question is always a major challenge at the beginning of academic work. The challenge here is to identify an academic task or a current problem and, based on this, to formulate a topic in such a way that the work takes on an analytical character. Unclear, overly general questions or topics usually lead to a purely descriptive structure. This should be avoided at all costs, as it is unlikely to add any academic value.

A academic study only has added value if it meets the following four criteria:

1. The study deals with a clearly defined subject that is formulated so precisely that it is also recognizable to third parties.
2. The study must establish facts about this subject that have not yet been presented or at least shed light on the subject under investigation from a perspective that adds new insights to the current state of research.
3. The study must be useful to the reader. However, this always refers to objective usefulness, not a specific individual interest. The "reader" is assumed to be a person with academic training in the subject area.
4. The study must make it possible to verify or falsify the hypotheses made (verification, falsification).²

This necessarily means that all lines of thought that do not originate from one's own intellectual effort (e.g., through calculation, derivation, etc.) or can be assumed to be generally known must be substantiated by source references. They must satisfy the academic criterion of verifiability.

Another requirement of these criteria is that unacademic or normative statements must be avoided. This also includes statements taken from sources, especially if they are opinion-based and/or politically influenced.

² See Eco, Umberto: *Wie man eine wissenschaftliche Abschlussarbeit schreibt* (How to Write a thesis), 12th edition, Heidelberg et al. 2007, p. 39ff.

An example: "Income distribution in Germany is unfair" cannot generally be used as the starting point or conclusion of an academic paper, as the attribute "unfair" is opinion-based (= subjective) and therefore cannot be objectively evaluated. In an academic sense, however, a quantitative, empirical analysis would be conceivable. Income distribution in countries, regions, or population groups can certainly be presented and compared based on data and key figures (e.g., mean values, measures of dispersion, measures of concentration). A statement such as "Income distribution in Germany is different from that in Canada" can be tested quantitatively using relevant data sources and can therefore be academically verified or falsified with precision.

The distinction between (subjective) opinion and (objective) analysis is not always easy at first but becomes increasingly clear in the course of further academic work. It is important to note that the research topic and research question always take an objective perspective.

2. Basic approach

The following section deals with the basic approach to academic work and provides practical tips on time management, dealing with literature, the structure and organisation of the text, and the style of language used. The presentation serves as a guide and is intended to highlight the standards of the NBS.

2.1 Time management

Efficient time management is a challenge that is often neglected when writing academic papers. But what does sensible time management look like when writing an academic paper?

First, it is important to set realistic time limits. Experience shows that it is unlikely that you will be able to concentrate on an academic topic for more than five hours a day. There are too many distractions at university (e.g., fellow students, lunch) or at home (e.g., family, phone calls). There are certainly exceptions to this rule. Nevertheless, it should be noted that many students either greatly overestimate the time required or do

not actually use the reserved working time efficiently throughout (distractions and side activities that effectively reduce the effective working time). Generally, when planning your time, you should allow for a sufficient "time buffer" to ensure your own flexibility in writing your thesis. The final editing of a text is often particularly time-consuming.

Under these conditions, careful editing of a 15- to 20-page term paper can be expected to take an average of about 35 days. Below is an example of a possible time schedule for writing an academic paper:

Table 1: Example schedule for writing an academic paper.³

Concept		3 days
Research		7 days
Review and evaluation of sources and literature	Preparation of excerpts	5 days
Outline		2 days
Writing, figures	Introduction	2 days
	Main section	7 days
	Conclusion	2 days
Creating the directories		2 days
Correction		3 days
Printing & delivery		2 days
		35 days

In the case of empirical work, it is important to allow for significantly more time, especially for preparing the study and waiting for survey results. Consulting with supervisors and/or potential external partners is particularly labour-intensive and requires a certain amount of time.

³ Own representation.

2.2 Research and handling of sources and literature

The quality of an academic paper depends primarily on the quality and diversity of the sources used, as well as their evaluation.

Literature and data research should be carried out in parallel with the topic selection process, as this is the only way to ensure that sufficient suitable sources are available for the defined research questions and investigation methods. At the same time, the evaluation reveals open research questions or topics.

In general, academic standards must be considered when selecting. This includes both the content and the authorship (author, data source). Wikipedia, popular science encyclopaedias, internet portals such as, and reference works do not meet academic standards (anonymity, excessive simplification, partially subjective representations, one-sided selection of information). This also applies to company and advertising brochures, politically influenced representations, association opinions, etc., unless these are primarily needed in the work for the deliberate comparison of opinions or marketing statements. Daily and weekly newspapers should only be used if no other current representations are available due to daily developments. Here, too, there are of course qualitative differences (Handelsblatt vs. Bild).

Reference books, trade journals, dissertations, and academic papers, on the other hand, are usually suitable as a basis for content. Initial overviews and more detailed information can be found on the publication pages and literature recommendations of universities, research institutes, trade journals, and academic congresses in the field. Quality-assured individual data and time series can be found, for example, at Destatis, Eurostat, OECD, BVI, Bundesbank, and other recognized organisations.

Generally, it is important to ensure that the literature is up to date. However, this does not mean that repeated citation (later secondary source) necessarily leads to greater topicality. Especially in the case of academic theories and models, the original source is to be preferred in case of doubt. Therefore, try to identify the temporal and technical development of research lines and publications in the field.

In addition to quality, the quantity of the literature selection is also a frequently discussed topic. Since the selection always depends on which topic is being addressed and which

methodology is being used, it is not possible to define a binding number of sources. If you are unsure, you should always contact your supervisor.

2.3 Logical structure and organisation of the text

The paper must have a clear and well-thought-out structure that is based on the central idea and the research objective. Information and analyses that belong together thematically are dealt with and presented in one place. Multiple, possibly slightly modified presentations in different parts of the paper lead to unfavourable redundancies and, overall, detract from a clear "common thread."

It is helpful to review at least the following questions repeatedly at the beginning and during the editing process:

1. What is the central theme/topic?
2. What needs to be investigated for this and to what extent is it relevant?
3. What is the academic result of the work?

In most cases, a well-thought-out structural plan (e.g., as a graphic or table) can help.

When using each source and writing each paragraph, it is important to ask whether it is relevant to the specific question and whether it still follows the central theme. At the end of each major section, it is advisable to include a short summary that covers the course of the investigation, interim results on the previous train of thought, and the transition to the next section. This supports the comprehensibility of the procedure and the readability of the work.

Please note:

The outline for academic papers provided by NBS is only a formatting template. The chapter headings listed there are suggestions or "placeholders" and should not be used verbatim. Instead, it is advisable to familiarize yourself with the conventions of your own discipline and discuss the outline with your thesis supervisor.

2.4 Wording

In principle, an entire book could be written about the language of science, but there are some important criteria that must be met in an academic paper.

For example, the "I" form, as well as the "we" form, must always be strictly avoided throughout the entire paper. Personal pronouns are not used. In references to sources or authors, academic titles are not usually mentioned (first names, on the other hand, depend on the citation style and should be treated uniformly).

Academic papers always aim to convey an objective presentation. The author's attitude is indirectly revealed through the selection, arrangement, and assessment of the positions presented.

Verbatim citations from texts must be identified as such and referenced. They should only be used to a limited extent and where appropriate, for example, if the wording is unique and its exact reproduction is significant (e.g., definitions, laws). The uncommented copying of entire passages from other works is prohibited and is considered plagiarism, as is the stringing together of literal citations, because here too, the author's own contribution is hardly recognizable. Even a source reference does not remedy this significant deficiency.

Clear and transparent sentence structures are ideal, i.e., no nested sentences, but also no dominant paratactic syntax consisting only of short, unconnected sentences strung together. Academic papers are usually written in the present tense (except for historical references, etc.).

An overly journalistic style (superlatives or intensifiers of all kinds such as "enormous," "innovative," "exciting," "quantum leap," etc.) or colloquial expressions ("earn a pile of money," "make a profit," etc.) can quickly obscure the actual topic. Passages of this kind detract from the written work as a whole. Instead, the aim should be to provide a sober and objective analysis of the academic thesis or question.

However, this does not mean that the readability of the presentation should suffer. Every author must develop their own style, because there is no such thing as "the one perfect" writing style.

In addition, it is important to make reading easier by choosing meaningful sections. But: do not start a new paragraph immediately after a sentence.

Overall, your work should not only have an appropriate structure but also be formally appealing. Here are some basic recommendations to conclude:

1. Write simply and clearly.
2. Avoid unnecessary passive sentences.
3. Avoid the nominal style.
4. Be honest.

3. Formal requirements

The formal requirements for an academic paper are explained below.

3.1 Formal components of the paper

An academic paper should contain the following components in the order described:

- Cover page (with title, author, student ID number, semester, supervisor, personal details) (without page number)
- Restriction notice (signed, without page number)
- Table of contents with page numbers (Roman page numbers)
- List of abbreviations (if necessary, Roman page numbers)
- List of figures with page numbers (if necessary, Roman page numbers)
- List of tables with page numbers (if necessary, Roman page numbers)
- Body text (Arabic page numbers)
- Bibliography (categorized, in alphabetical order by author's last name, with Arabic page numbers)
- Appendix (with Arabic page numbers)
- Statutory declaration (signed, without page number)

The cover page contains only the most important formal information. The design should be functional, without images, drawings, or similar elements. The use of university and company logos is not permitted, as these are protected by copyright and may only be used for publications by the university or company.

The table of contents provides an initial structural overview of the work. It should be noted that, ideally, the central theme should be recognizable at first glance in the table of contents. When structuring the document, please note that each subheading must have at least two subpoints.

Please note:

The table of contents is the "calling card" of your work, which is given directly to the reader. It must be transparent and have a clear thread running through it. It is therefore essential to discuss the table of contents/outline with your supervisor.

The headings listed in the outline are only examples and should not be copied verbatim. Instead, develop headings that are appropriate for your own work.

Only abbreviations that cannot be assumed to be generally known should be included in the list of abbreviations. In general, abbreviations should be avoided in the text for convenience (e.g., "BWL" instead of "Betriebswirtschaft" [business administration]). If no abbreviations are used, the list of abbreviations can of course be omitted.

Please note:

Only abbreviations that the reader may not be familiar with or understand should be listed here. Basic terms such as "e.g.", "etc." should not be listed.

The list of figures and tables should include the figures and tables in the order in which they appear in the text, with the corresponding page numbers. Sources do not need to be cited here, as they are referenced directly in the text. If no figures and/or tables are used, the respective list can be omitted.

Please note:

The source is basically treated in the same way as the author of a book. If reference is made to a source, this should be indicated by "Based on ...". If you have created your own figures, this should be indicated by the following note: "Source: own representation."

The main body of the paper is essentially divided into three parts: The introduction first introduces the topic and develops the specific guiding question or thesis that guides the reader through the presentation or paper. It is also important to present the objective necessity of addressing the topic and, based on this, to formulate the aim of the paper and the course of the investigation. The introduction concludes with the classification of your own question within the research landscape. During this, the literature used should also be presented and a statement made about its value.

Please note:

The description of the objective of the paper is not the same as the research question. If necessary, the various keywords (1.1 Objectives, 1.2 Methodology, 1.3 Research Questions) can also be included as sub-points and rolled out thematically. Again, if you are unsure, contact your supervisor.

The chapter "Theoretical Framework" or "Current State of Research" serves to academically define the topic being addressed. Here, the current state of academic theories relevant to the research question is briefly presented. Current findings, but also current gaps in knowledge or open research questions can be highlighted. Ideally, the academic work will close one of these current research gaps.

Related topics or theories are defined in this chapter. Often, the same technical terms are used by different authors with different conceptual understandings. If there are no uniform definitions or if a technical term is used differently within a subject area, this chapter specifies which understanding of the term will be followed in the rest of the paper.

The main part of an academic paper contains elements such as theoretical reference, empiricism, analysis, derivation or new development, and results. The extent to which these elements are discussed individually in sections or directly combined with each other along a line of argumentation depends on the respective standards in the field. Discuss this with your supervisor in advance.

Theoretical arguments and analyses deal with facts, methods, data, and other content on an academic-abstract level. Formulated theses or questions must be considered. This includes a critical discussion of the research literature. An essential part of your own work is the examination of the actual question. Accordingly, it should be noted once again that it is important to present, evaluate, and discuss different opinions and perspectives from the research literature in concrete terms. References to the literature are important to support and further develop your own argumentation.

Empirical elements of the work use sources such as surveys, databases, and statistics to test theoretical knowledge or derive new theories. This often allows for a high degree of topicality and/or insight to be achieved in the work. However, this requires the sources used to be of appropriate quality and suitability (surveys that are too simple can therefore also be counterproductive).

The conclusion serves to derive and summarize the results. It also gives the author the opportunity to provide an outlook on the further development of the topic and to define related topics or questions.

The bibliography lists all sources and literature used. More extensive lists are divided into the categories "monographs/anthologies," "specialized journals/newspapers," "internet sources," and "statistics/surveys" if this structure offers added value for the recording (i.e., not if there is only one internet or legal source).

A source that was only read for background information but is not referred to in the text may not be included in the bibliography.

The bibliography and bibliography is followed by the "Declaration of Honor." This declaration is intended to remind you that any deviation from the required original work will have consequences under examination law.

Please note:

The declaration of honour must be signed with your first and last name (scan). If this is not the case, the supervisor may refuse to grade the paper.

All additions to the actual text, such as questionnaires and/or self-collected statistics, are compiled in the appendix. It is recommended that internet sources be provided in the appendix as evidence, as websites change quickly and this allows you to prove that the content was available on a now-changed page at the time of your research, as cited. In the case of PDF files, it is advisable to refer once again—in the traditional sense—to the page of the actual text reference. In the digital version of the work, such file formats can be embedded accordingly.

3.2 Page and text formatting

Academic papers must always be typed. The following settings must be used:

Margins:	3 cm on the right (margin for corrections), 3 cm on the left, 2.5 cm top and bottom
Font:	Arial
Font size chapter headings:	14
Font size other headings:	13
Text font size:	11
Font size footnotes:	8
Font size tables and list of figures:	11

Page numbering:	Bottom right
Line spacing (text):	1.5 lines
Line spacing (footnotes):	1 line
Text layout:	Justified with hyphenation

3.3 Scope of work

For term papers, a length of 15 pages is defined as the norm, and for bachelor's theses, a length of 40 to 60 pages. For a master's thesis, between 60 and 80 pages should be planned. The length of an internship paper is 20 to 30 pages. Important for all papers: Only the actual continuous text is counted. Figures or tables are only counted if they have been created by the author and offer independent content or added value (no pure copies or graphically recreated source material; no unnecessary enlargements). Figures and tables are by no means intended solely for illustration purposes—they must be classified and interpreted in the text and may not simply stand alone.

Any deviation from the specified page counts by more than 10 percent requires the express approval of the supervisor.

3.4 Tables and figures

Tables and figures, like citations, must be accompanied by source references. It must be clear whether the table or figure has been taken from the original or whether only the data has been taken, and the figure itself has been created.

Tables and figures must be numbered consecutively (Table 1, Table 2, ... or Fig. 1, Fig. 2, ...). The title of the table or figure must be given after the number.

Example:

Tab. 2: Age distribution of the sample.

For tables, the number and title are placed above the table. For figures, the number and title are placed below the figure.

Figures are best centred between lines, and figure captions are also centred. Numbering includes the main chapter number, and a period should be used as a separator. Individual images should be as large as necessary (keyword: resolution) but as small as possible, as shown in Figure 1.1. The apparent waste of paper is acceptable. As with tables, the limit is always the type of area. Several figures can also be placed in one line and referenced according to their position (left, centre, right) as shown in Figure 1.2. The images should be aligned at the same height, and their combined width can then fill the type of area. A space or tab is recommended to separate the figures. The reference to the musk ox's coat, for example, is then made by specifying the species, see Figure 1.2 on the right.

In the case of image citations, the source is indicated within the figure caption in the same way as sources in the text, i.e., either with a superscript number and footnote or with a reference in parentheses.

When presenting graphs and tables, care should be taken to ensure a consistent and academic design. It is advisable to use a consistent font size, colour scheme, symbols, etc. This means that you should refrain from using different and often poor-quality copies of existing graphs, but rather "recreate" the figures used in your own presentation.

3.5 Formulas

3.5.1 Creating formulas in Word

Formulas are easy to create with the formula editor. Therefore:

Write formula

$$e^x = 0$$

Align the formula to the right

$$e^x = 0$$

Place the number in brackets directly after the formula (this can also be done with automatic labelling)

$$e^x = 0(3.1)$$

Centre the formula using tabs

$$e^x = 0 \qquad (3.1)$$

Set references in the text as a guide.

3.5.2 Citation formulas in the text

Formulas and equations are not simply named in the text, but are meaningfully incorporated, as shown below in the mathematics of the pig.

A rule of thumb estimate of the volume of a pig can be given by mentally dividing the animal into the smallest possible cuboid with side lengths a , b , and c of the volume

$$V_Q = abc \quad (3.2)$$

. The following must then apply to the volume of the pig

$$V_s \leq a \cdot b \cdot c . \quad (3.3)$$

Since it can be assumed that a pig, like a human being, floats just below the surface of the water, its density should be approximately that of water, which is

$$\rho_{Wasser} = \frac{1000kg}{m^3} \quad (3.4)$$

. Therefore, equation (3.3) must also apply to the pig's mass

$$m_s \leq \rho_{Wasser} \cdot V_s . \quad (3.5)$$

4. Source work and citation

For a long time, a fundamental area of competence in higher education—namely, source work—was neglected at many universities and University of Applied Sciences. At best, a basic introduction to academic working techniques was provided in the humanities, but in engineering, economics, and law, skills in this area were taught only marginally, if at all.

On the one hand, this led to some very good work being marred by serious formal shortcomings, and on the other hand, it led to a "copy & paste" culture among students, which in some cases resulted in the copying of entire works by other authors. This development, which sadly culminated in the discussion about several high-ranking politicians and the partial revocation of illegally acquired doctoral degrees, began with term paper databases on the Internet. The emergence of such websites meant that more and more students chose the path of (partial) plagiarism as a supposedly easy way to quickly complete term papers, seminar papers, and theses. All work at the Northern Business School is checked using available plagiarism detection software.

4.1 Suitability and selection of sources

The "new" media, etc., offer a multitude of opportunities to obtain information and documents. However, this also poses a risk, as truly "everything" is published and thrown onto the market—much of it then finds its way into the professional community, both "good" and "bad." Generally, all literature to be included in your own work should be critically examined and questioned. Checking the origin of the source or examining the author's professional affiliation is an absolute must when it comes to developing sources and literature for seminar papers and theses. It also makes sense to take a closer look at the publisher of the publication, etc. However, caution is required with online sources. Here, it is important to always check exactly which institutions the links/web pages come from. A look at the imprint of the respective page is crucial.

Academic literature must meet the criteria of transparency and traceability. In the case of guidebooks, practical literature, and internet literature in particular, it is often impossible to distinguish whether the statements contained therein reflect the author's opinion or are academically sound facts. The statements are usually not traceable through source citations or references to specialist texts. Academic literature can be recognized by the fact that it contains many source citations and substantiates statements, figures, or other content with corresponding references.

Please note:

Don't just blindly accept sources and literature when writing your paper. Be critical of your sources: question what you read and check it against other sources and literature.

4.2 Citation style

There are slightly different citation conventions for the disciplines represented at NBS. In some cases, however, there are also significantly different requirements, particularly in law and engineering programs. The following rules apply to economics papers. Different citation guides for other disciplines represented at NBS can be found in the appendix.

Before starting your work, it is advisable to discuss the citation style and type of source references with your supervisor and agree on a method. In general, it is particularly desirable to select a citation style at the beginning and then use it consistently throughout the text.

4.2.1 Direct citations

Direct citations are used when the actual wording of the formulation is important (e.g., in definitions) or when a statement is so well and concisely formulated that rephrasing it by the student would add no value. However, direct citations should not be used too frequently (maximum of one to two short citations per page), because: A string of direct citations is not academic work; it lacks the independence that is essential for academic work.

Generally, direct citations must always be reproduced as they appear in the original source (i.e., including any spelling mistakes, etc.). Texts that are cited verbatim are placed in citation marks.

Please note:

Science must always be considered from an international perspective. Therefore, do not hesitate to use English-language materials in your work. Please note that English quotations are not translated. These must also be cited in the original.

Omissions of text passages should be indicated by three dots in square brackets, like this: [...].

Example of an omission in a direct citation: In contrast, Coenenberg's view can be agreed with when he points out that for "a large proportion of employees [...] the annual financial statement information is of only minor importance as a result of the existence of inter-company collective agreements"³³³.

Additions and/or comments made in the cited text must also be enclosed in square brackets and marked as follows: [word, author's addition]. Such additions are necessary when there is a need to incorporate the relevant citations into your own continuous text. In other words, it essentially serves to ensure verifiability and readability.

Example of an addition in a direct citation: The fact that small investors on the capital market are particularly vulnerable is characterized by the fact that, "unlike large investors, they generally have no opportunity [author's addition] to limit their risk through contractual clauses."³³⁴

4.2.2 Indirect citations

As a rule, sources are dealt with by means of indirect citation. Here, an evaluated text is reproduced in essence. For this purpose, a so-called excerpt is prepared for the sources used: a summary reproduction of a text in your own words, in relation to the question or topic of the work. Indirect citations are marked in a footnote with the addition "cf."

4.2.3 Footnotes

Footnotes contain explanations of the text and references to sources. Footnotes are always numbered consecutively, and care should be taken to ensure that a footnote is listed as completely as possible on the page where the corresponding text can be found. If a section of text requires references to several sources, these can be listed in a single footnote as a collective footnote and separated by commas. The use of two footnotes directly after each other ("..."^{335, 336}) should therefore be avoided.

4.2.4 Bibliography and bibliography

As already explained in section 2.2. "The formal components of the thesis," the bibliography and bibliography must include all literature cited directly or indirectly in the text and cited in full (no abbreviated citations). This means that **all** sources cited in the text must be listed in the bibliography (= bibliography). Conversely, no publications that are not referred to in the text may be included in the bibliography. The sources must be listed in alphabetical order by the authors' last names. If a title has been republished, the edition used for the thesis must be specified. For better readability, a hanging indent is used for

the second line and subsequent lines of the bibliography entry. Here, too, the principle of uniformity applies to the formal design.

Multiple publications by the same author should be listed chronologically by year of publication, starting with the oldest work. For extensive academic works, it may be useful to divide them into the categories "monographs/anthologies," "journals/newspapers," "internet sources," and "statistics/surveys."

Microsoft Word, which is included in your Office 365 package, offers various options under "References," such as managing sources and automatically generating a bibliography or list of figures from this information.

4.3 Specific sources

In addition to monographs, essays and internet sources are also generally used during literature research. Special citation rules apply to these. It should be noted here that if database extracts, calculations of your own, etc. form the basis for writing the paper, you should discuss and determine with your supervisor how to deal with this material in view of the upcoming correction of the paper.

4.3.1 Citing essays in anthologies and journals

When citing articles from anthologies or journals, additional information such as the editors of the volume is required.

For articles in anthologies, the following information is required and listed as shown: Last name and first name of the author. Title of the article, in: Last name and first name of the editor (ed.), title of the anthology, edition, place of publication and year, page number of the article (from/to), here: page cited.

Example of how to cite an essay in an anthology:

See Petersen, Marc: Einführung in das wissenschaftliche Arbeiten, in: Helmke, Jan (ed.): Grundlagen eines betriebswirtschaftlichen Studiums, 3rd edition, Wismar 2011, pp. 9-35, here: p. 14.

The citation method for newspaper articles is similar; the following information is required here: Last name and first name of the author, title of the article, in: Name of the journal, volume, issue number and year of publication, page number of the article (from/to), here: page cited.

Example of how to cite an article in a journal:

See Priller, Christian/Rathnow, Peter: Die Balanced Scorecard – Instrument zur Steuerung des Unternehmens in stürmischen Zeiten, in: ZfO – Zeitschrift für Führung und Organisation, 73rd year, issue 2/2004, pp. 102-106, here: p. 104.

For further references to the respective source, there is no obstacle to using the short form (more on this below).

In principle, when citing more than three authors or places of publication in the text, it is also possible to list only the first author/place with the addition of et al. in the footnote. This allows footnotes to be shortened in a meaningful way so that they do not become too confusing.

Example for authors (Anglo-American citation style):

¹ See Baetge/Krumnow/Löw/Nölle, [Bilanzrecht, 2003], p. 142.

¹ See Baetge et al., [Accounting Law, 2003], p. 142.

Example for places (classical citation style):

² See Eco, Umberto: *Wie man eine wissenschaftliche Abschlussarbeit schreibt*, 12th edition, Heidelberg/Munich/Landsberg/Berlin 2007, p. 39ff.

² See Eco, Umberto: *Wie man eine wissenschaftliche Abschlussarbeit schreibt*, 12th edition, Heidelberg et al. 2007, p. 39ff.

4.3.2 Citing Internet sources

The following information is required for Internet sources: Last name and first name of the author, title of the publication, page number (if available), on: complete link, date of publication (if available), date and, if applicable, time of last access.

Example of citing an internet source:

See Schmuck, Otto: *Die EU im Krisenmodus: Herausforderungen und Reformimpulse: Challenges and reform impulses*, at: <https://www.bpb.de/izpb/europaeische-union-345/324569/eu-im-krisenmodus>, 17.12.2020, last accessed on: 13.07.2021.

4.3.3 Citing oral sources (interviews, etc.)

Interviews are and remain a special type of source that must be given special consideration when writing seminar papers and/or theses. The use of such material must always be discussed with the respective supervisor. Preparing an interview in an academically correct manner involves a great deal of work.

The interview cannot be submitted as an MP3 or video recording. Before the conversation can be used as a "source," it must be carefully documented, in this case transcribed. This involves literally "copying" the interview. Absolute accuracy is required here. However, depending on the agreement with the supervisor, it is also possible to create a summary, which is then integrated into the appendix of the thesis. It is also crucial that the evaluation of an interview is not spread across the entire thesis. The aim should be to concentrate on one or two chapters.

4.4 Further citation rules and variants

A particular challenge in dealing with citation rules is the fact that there are no standardized, binding rules across disciplines in academia. In principle, most disciplines and academic cultures at various universities have developed their own rules for the . However, it makes sense to examine the purpose of citation rules. The main aim is to give the reader the opportunity to verify the author's statements. Only in this way can one sooner or later engage in further academic discourse.

4.4.1 First use of a source

In economics, it is customary to cite a source in full in a footnote when it is used for the first time, e.g.:

See Wöhe, Günter: Introduction to General Business Administration, 22nd edition, Munich 2007, p. 345.

Academic degrees and publishers are generally not mentioned. Essential components are surname, first name, full title (don't forget the subtitle!), edition (if higher than 1st edition), place, year, page number. If the author and/or place of publication are unclear, the designations "n.a." (no author) or "n.p." (no place) can be used.

If the source reference spans several pages, the additions "p. 345f." for pages 345 and 346, or "p. 345ff." for pages 345 to 347 or beyond are used.

4.4.2 Subsequent citation

For further references to a source that has already been cited, a short form may also be used, e.g.:

See Wöhe, (2007), p. 345. or

See Wöhe, loc. cit., p. 345.

The abbreviation "loc. cit." means "in the same place." The reference can also be made in the same form and manner using "ibid."

In general, care should be taken to ensure that the presentation of this paper remains consistent. Switching between abbreviations or citation styles should be avoided at all costs.

4.4.3 Multiple citations of an author

It sometimes happens that different works by the same author are used in an academic paper. These must therefore be distinguishable from one another, especially when using the abbreviated citation style. This is easy if the works were written in different years, as the year in the subsequent citation style clearly assigns the respective citation to a specific work. If the works were written in the same year, it is recommended to add "a" and "b" to the year and to clarify this assignment in the bibliography. The Anglo-American citation style deviates from this, as shown below.

4.4.4 Citation style according to APA

In many academic disciplines, the APA (American Psychological Association) citation style has become internationally accepted. It is the most used citation style worldwide and is characterized by a clear, simple, and precise way of citation literature. It does not use footnotes but instead cites sources or references in the running text.

Examples:

These results are also confirmed in other studies (Müller, 2018).

or

Meier et al. (2020) concluded in their study that ...

or

Current research findings show a clear correlation between the two factors (Schmidt & Schrader, 2021).

At first glance, mentioning references in the body of the text is unfamiliar to many students. However, it has the great advantage that the facts and authors can be read at the

same time. From a learning psychology perspective, this supports the connection and leads to a faster comprehension of content and authorship.

In addition, the simplicity and clarity of APA makes it less prone to formal citation errors. There are no special rules about when to use "cf." and when not to, nor are there any rules about the first or subsequent mention of sources.

Its international use in various disciplines and its clear and simple rules of application make it ideal for exam situations. Bachelor's students who are aiming for a master's degree in disciplines related to economics should familiarize themselves with this citation style.

In principle, students are free to choose their citation style. However, it is important that the chosen citation style is used consistently throughout. The mixed use of different citation styles is not permitted. In addition, it is advisable to discuss the type of citation style with your supervisor before writing your thesis.

4.5 Use of generative AI in academic work

The increasing availability of generative AI models (e.g., ChatGPT) offers new opportunities for academic work. These tools can support topic selection, structure writing processes, and facilitate linguistic revisions. In principle, their use does not constitute a violation of academic standards, if it is transparently documented, used reflectively, and combined with independent academic work.

However, uncritical or covert use can lead to accusations of plagiarism and jeopardize academic integrity. To avoid this, clear rules for use, documentation, and reflection are necessary.

4.5.1 Potential and limitations of AI-supported tools

Generative AI can be used to support the academic process, but it does not replace it. Students must learn to maintain control over the academic work process.

Potential:

- Idea generation, broadening of perspectives
- Development of rough outlines

- Linguistic revision and stylistic improvement

Limitations:

- No understanding of content, no academic validity
- Unreliable sources ("hallucinations")
- No methodological or logical argumentation skills

Please note:

Do not use generative AI for final text creation, but as a collaborative tool that is used in an iterative work process (e.g., for formulating initial ideas, not for submitting AI-generated raw texts).

4.5.2 Academic standards and transparency

The use of generative AI tools is only permitted if:

- their use is made completely transparent
- your own academic contribution remains clearly recognizable
- the use is critically reflected upon and documented

Mandatory components:

- A "Statement of Compliance" (see appendix) must be included with every written work.
- If generative AI was used, this must be explained in the methods section or in a separate section of the paper.
- All prompts and AI responses must be documented in the appendix.
- All digitally available literature used in the writing process must be included with the paper.

Please note:

Undeclared use of AI is considered academic misconduct. Avoid copying AI-generated texts verbatim without your own reflection, adaptation, or source verification.

4.5.3 Citation and source reference

AI-generated content cannot be cited in the traditional sense. Instead, the following rules apply:

- Do not list output from AI tools as primary sources
- When used: describe the use, name the tool (including version, date of use)
- Transparent documentation in the appendix: prompts used, sample outputs
- All real sources that contribute to the argumentation must be listed in the bibliography.

Important: It is your responsibility to fully disclose all sources cited and used and to attach them to your work (e.g., PDF files of articles or screenshots of AI outputs in the appendix).

Note: Additional exercises and instructions on using GenAI are provided in the "Academic Work" module and in the methodology seminars (literature work, qualitative/quantitative research, working with ChatGPT).

4.5.4 Recommendations for responsible use

- Use AI as a support, not a replacement.
- Keep a work log: When was AI used, and for what purpose?
- Check every AI-generated statement for accuracy and relevance.
- Use academic databases for reliable literature.
- Document all AI usage in writing and in a comprehensible manner.

The use of generative AI is permitted if it is transparent, reflective, and context specific. Students are responsible for the academic quality of their work and must be able to demonstrate that the use of AI tools serves the learning and knowledge acquisition process—and does not circumvent it.

Note: Additional exercises and instructions on the use of GenAI are provided in the "Academic Work" module and in the methodology seminars (literature work, qualitative/quantitative research, working with ChatGPT).

4.5.5 Misuse of AI tools

Abusive use of generative AI tools in academic work includes actions that violate the principles of academic integrity and/or significantly limit the student's own contribution.

This includes, in particular:

- Missing, manipulated, or non-transparent documentation of the use of AI tools (e.g., incomplete or incorrect information in the Statement of Compliance, omission of relevant prompts or outputs).
- Covert use of AI tools to create significant text passages, data evaluations, or analyses without a complete and comprehensible declaration in accordance with the guides in this guide.
- Uncritical or unchecked adoption of AI-generated content that has not been checked, adapted, or substantiated for technical accuracy or correct source references, especially if this content gives the impression of being one's own academic work.

Misuse that results in essential personal contributions no longer being recognizable may be considered an attempt at deception or academic misconduct in accordance with the provisions of the applicable framework study and examination regulations. This may result in failure of the examination.

5. Final editing, limits of proofreading

The completion of any academic paper is generally dedicated to the final editing of the text. This involves checking the presentation once again for argumentative consistency and logic, as well as correct spelling and formatting. In addition, it is recommended that the page numbers in the table of contents be checked against those in the body text. A similar approach is also recommended when checking the chapter headings, as a heading can easily "slip," which can disrupt the entire structure of the work.

We advise against attempting to do the final proofreading entirely on your own. Too often, you have worked on the text yourself, which makes it almost impossible to pay attention to minor errors. It is therefore highly advisable to have at least two other people look at the work. A person with expertise in the subject area should delve into the content of the text and check it for consistency, comprehensibility, etc. After incorporating the corrections, a second person who does not need any knowledge of the subject matter

should check the work for spelling errors. However, it is important to remember that the work must be written independently. Professional editing services should be avoided, as work that has been edited in this way must be treated as plagiarism.

6. Sample formulations

6.1 Restriction notice

If the work is marked as restricted, it can only be read by the supervising lecturers. This may be relevant, for example, when using internal company data. It makes sense to place the restricted access notice directly on the first page after the cover sheet. A restricted access notice could look like this, for example:

This thesis entitled "Title" contains confidential data belonging to the company "xyz." It may only be made available to the first and second reviewers and authorized members of the examination board. Publication and reproduction, even in excerpts, is not permitted.

Unauthorized persons may only view the thesis with the express permission of the author and the company "xyz."

Please note:

Such a note is really only used when working with sensitive data belonging to a company, etc., or when such data is evaluated in the work. Such a restriction note is therefore rather an exception and must be treated as such.

6.2 Declaration of honour

Please use the following text for the declaration of honour:

I hereby declare with my signature that I have written this paper independently and without outside help and have not used any sources or aids other than those specified. All texts taken verbatim or in substance from published and unpublished publications are identified as such. The work has not been submitted in the same or a similar form—even in excerpts—to any other examination authority and has not been published to date.

7. Bibliography and bibliography

Baetge, Jörg/Krumnow, Jürgen/Löw, Edgar/Noelle, Jennifer: Entwicklung des deutschen und europäischen Bilanzrechts, in: Küting, Karlheinz/Weber Claus-Peter (eds.), Handbuch der Rechnungslegung: Einzelabschluss, Kommentar zur Bilanzierung und Prüfung, 5th edition, loose-leaf (as of: 1st supplement 2003), Stuttgart 2003.

Eco, Umberto: Wie man eine wissenschaftliche Abschlussarbeit schreibt, 12th edition, Heidelberg/Munich/Landsberg/Berlin 2007.

Petersen, Marc: Einführung in das wissenschaftliche Arbeiten, in: Helmke, Jan (ed.): Grundlagen eines betriebswirtschaftlichen Studiums, 3rd edition, Wismar 2011, pp. 9-35.

Priller, Christian/Rathnow, Peter: Die Balanced Scorecard – Instrument zur Steuerung des Unternehmens in stürmischen Zeiten, in: ZfO – Zeitschrift für Führung und Organisation, 73rd year, issue 2/2004, pp. 102-106.

Stratenschulte, Eckart: Die Erweiterung der Europäischen Union, at: <http://www.bpb.de/internationales/europa/europa-kontrovers/38055/einleitung>, September 9, 2014, 4:10 p.m.

Wöhe, Günter: Einführung in die Allgemeine Betriebswirtschaftslehre, 26th edition, Munich 2016.

8. Appendix

Appendix 1: Special features of academic work in the field of social sciences

a) Citation

In addition to academic work in the disciplines of economics, law, and technology, regulations for social science work (political science, sociology, psychology, criminology) apply to the degree programs in security management and social work. In these disciplines, the Anglo-American Harvard citation style has become widely accepted, partly because publications are often in English. However, the same principle applies here: consistency in the citation style chosen is important. If a student decides to use the "classic" footnote citation style, this is perfectly possible in consultation with the supervisor but must then be used throughout the entire text.

All statements, results, data, etc. taken from other sources must be identified in the text by citing the source. In the Anglo-American citation style, a short reference (surname, year: page number) to the cited source is given directly in the text—i.e., not as a footnote, but in parentheses after the corresponding citation. The complete source reference must be included in the bibliography. Academic degrees are not indicated in citations in the text or in the bibliography.

Direct (verbatim) citations are placed in citation marks. It is essential to indicate the page number of the citation in the original publication. The citation must be reproduced verbatim, including any spelling mistakes.

Example:

"Irrational and antisocial behaviour is by no means the rule in mass accidents, but rather the rare exception" (Fiedler, 2012: 58).

The source can also be cited in the following form: (Fiedler, 2012, p. 58).

The page number can be omitted for indirect citations.

Examples of indirect citations with short references:

1: Naef (1982: 199) argues that exams can be practiced in order to combat exam anxiety.

2: Practicing for exams also plays a role in combating exam anxiety (Naef 1982: 199).

When citing a source, all authors must be listed. If the same source is cited repeatedly, it is sufficient to list the first author followed by et al.

Example:

Eid, Gollwitzer & Schmitt (2010)

For the second citation: Eid. et al (2010).

However, in the case of repeated citations with several authors, all authors must be listed in the bibliography.

Names of institutions and organisations (e.g., Federal Criminal Police Office, Federal Ministry of Justice, Senate of the Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg) are treated in the same way as personal names.

If you refer to a work that was not available in its original form (secondary citation), cite it as follows: (Robinson, 1961:15, cited in Naef, 1982). Only Naef's work will appear in the bibliography because only this work was used.

If several sources are listed as evidence for a statement, they should be sorted in ascending chronological order, i.e., starting with the earliest year. Within a year, the sources are arranged in alphabetical order by surname.

Example:

(Zacherle, 2009; Schneider, 2011; Still, 2011).

If several publications from the same year of publication are cited by one author (or authors), the lowercase letter "a" is placed after the year in the first source reference, "b" in the second source reference, and so on. These additions then also appear in the bibliography after the year so that a clear assignment is guaranteed.

Example:

(Still, 2011a), (Still, 2011b)

b) Internet sources

Internet sources are cited in the text with reference to the author and, if possible, the year of publication. The complete URL appears in the bibliography with the date of access. If

no author and/or year of publication is given, the date of access and the complete URL address must be provided, preferably as a footnote.

c) Bibliography

Sources are listed in the bibliography as follows (basic form and examples):

Monographs

Basic form: Author's last name, first name (abbreviated), year of publication (in parentheses). *Title*. Edition, place of publication.

Eid, M., Gollwitzer, M, & Schmitt, M. (2010). *Statistik und Forschungsmethoden*. Weinheim.

Schröder-Naef, R. (2003). *Rationeller lernen*. 21st updated edition, Weinheim.

Schwind, H-D. (2007). *Kriminologie*. 17th revised and expanded edition, Heidelberg.

Essays from anthologies

Basic form: Author's last name, first name (year of publication). Title. In: Name, first name (ed.). *Title*, edition, place of publication, pp. _-_.

Merton, R. K. (1968). *Sozialstruktur und Anomie*. In: Sack, F. & König, R. (Eds.). *Criminal sociology*. Frankfurt/M., pp. 283-311.

Articles from journals

Basic form: Last name of author, first name (year of publication). Title. In: *Name of journal*, volume, pp. _-_.

Balloff, R. (1997). Die Beteiligung und Mitwirkung von Kindern und Jugendlichen in familienrechtlichen Verfahren. In: *Praxis der Rechtspsychologie*, 7, pp. 22-29.

Reuband, K.-H. (2006). Steigende Punitivität in der Bevölkerung – ein Mythos? In: *Neue Kriminalpolitik*, 18, pp. 99-103.

Internet sources

Internet sources must be cited with the full Internet address and the date of the search according to the following pattern:

Anderson, J. (1994). *Genesis of a Serial Killer: Fantasy's integral role in the creation of a monster*. URL: <http://www.angelar.com/~jeremy/genesis.html> (Date of research: July 2, 2014).

Unpublished works

Unpublished works are cited according to the basic format for monographs.

Opp, A. (2005): *Lebenssituation „illegaler“ Migranten in Deutschland*. Unpublished term paper, University of Applied Sciences for Public Administration, Hamburg.

d) Appendices

Appendices are numbered consecutively (Appendix 1, Appendix 2, etc.) and given a title.

Example:

Appendix 1: Riots at soccer games in northern Germany since 2010.

Each individual appendix begins on a new page. The appendices are listed at the end of the table of contents without page numbers.

Appendix 2: Checklist for writing an empirical paper

It may well be that empirical work is required during your studies—that is, work in which you collect and evaluate your own data. This type of work differs in some respects from "standard" term papers in terms of its nature and structure. For example, the structure and focus may need to be formulated differently. These papers also follow a completely different line of argumentation than is usually the case with purely literature-based papers. In order to be able to respond appropriately in this area, the following checklist is provided to assist in the preparation of empirical papers.

1. Empirical theses
 1. Quantitative work
 - Survey research
 - Who is your target audience?
 - How do you reach your target group?
 - How many people do you want to survey?
 - How long should the survey take?
 - What questions should be asked?
 - Questionnaire design & validation
 - Are the questions technically sound (do they correspond to the theoretical section)?
 - Are the questions consistent?
 - Has a reliability analysis been performed?
 - Has exploratory factor analysis been performed, if necessary?
 - Has selectivity been considered?
 - Are the questions relevant and appropriate for the hypotheses?
 - Sample description
 - Who was surveyed?
 - Where and how were the interviews conducted?
 - How long did the survey take?

- Who participated?
 - Relevant/standard sociodemographic data (age, gender, etc.)
- Is the sample sufficiently heterogeneous?
- (A sample does not necessarily have to be representative!)

- Frequency description
 - Which subgroup gave which answers?
 - Are there any response tendencies?

- Correlations & causalities
 - Are there correlations between group characteristics (e.g., age) and response tendencies? (Correlation!)
 - Can the correlation be plausibly explained?
 - Are there other plausible explanations?
 - Can other plausible explanations be ruled out?

2. Qualitative work

- Guide design
 - Who should be interviewed?
 - What should be asked?
 - Are the questions relevant?
 - Are the questions technically sound?

- Interview conduct (standardized, partially standardized)
 - Standardized: very high comparability, low flexibility
 - Partially standardized: high comparability, somewhat more flexible
 - Are individual partial answers relevant?
 - Are general statement patterns sought?

- Evaluation and interpretation
 - What similarities are there in the responses?
 - What differences are there?
 - Which empirical findings do the answers correspond to?
 - Which empirical findings do the answers contradict?

- Are the answers consistent (do the interviewees contradict themselves; if so, in which areas)?

2. Non-empirical theses

1. Literature review

- Data collection & research
 - Where was the literature searched?
 - How large is the literature base?
 - Is the literature base described as a sample according to criteria?
- Selection criteria
 - What criteria were used to select the literature?
 - Place of publication,
 - year of publication,
 - specific authors,
 - specific topics,
 - only empirical literature,
 - ...
 - Why were these criteria chosen?
- Critical reflection
 - Were the literature chosen appropriately?
 - What gaps are there in the selected literature?
 - Are there any notable features in the selected literature:
 - Citation circles? (e.g., certain authors cite each other conspicuously often)
 - Evaluation patterns (e.g., certain authors tend to evaluate in a biased manner)
 - Methodological peculiarities (e.g., little empirical literature, existing empirical literature has relevant gaps, etc.)

3. Hypotheses

- What research gap does the hypothesis close?
- What academic knowledge does the hypothesis generate?

- Are the hypotheses derived from the subject matter?
- Is the hypothesis reflected in the theory section as a research gap?

- Formulating hypotheses
 - o What type of hypothesis is it?
 - Difference hypothesis
(e.g., there is a difference between A and B)
 - Correlation hypothesis
(e.g., there is a (positive/negative) correlation between A and B.)
 - Change hypothesis
(e.g., A changes when B (does not) apply.)
 - State hypothesis
(e.g., The earth is not flat.)

- Testing hypotheses
 - o Is there sufficient data (findings) available to verify the statement of a hypothesis?
 - o What is the result of the evaluation of the data?
 - Hypothesis is confirmed.
 - Hypothesis must be rejected.
 - The statement cannot be verified with the available data.
 - o Can the anti-thesis (statement contrary to the hypothesis) be rejected/confirmed with the available data?

- Gaining knowledge through hypotheses
 - o What does the result of the hypothesis testing mean?
 - Which academic findings are expanded, supplemented, updated, confirmed, or, if applicable, now obsolete?
 - How does your own finding fit in with other findings?
 - What other findings does your own finding contradict?

- Outlook and limitations
 1. Outlook

- Implications for practical application
 - What recommendations for action can be derived for practical application?
 - Which currently common applications should be retained or changed?
 - Which currently common applications prove to be (in)effective?
- Implications for further academic work
 - What further research gaps are now opening up?
 - How could these research gaps be closed?

2. Limitations

- Critical reflection on the methods
 - What are the methodological strengths of the chosen approach?
 - What are the methodological weaknesses of the chosen approach?
 - What other or complementary approach would have yielded further/better insights?
 - Did the method contribute to gaining insights?
- Assessment of significance (specific, general, etc.)
 - Are the findings specific (e.g., only valid for a certain period of time or only for a certain group of people)?
 - Can the findings be generalized?
 - Under what conditions do specific findings apply and under what conditions do generalizable findings apply?

Appendix 3: Plagiarism

From an academic point of view, plagiarism is nothing more than a citation error. Missing source references or bibliographic references constitute methodological errors in academic work. Regardless of whether there is any intention to deceive, such errors, if they occur frequently or systematically, can mean that the essential (examination) requirements for writing an academic paper have not been met.

Types of plagiarism

- Complete plagiarism: verbatim copying without appropriate citation
- Paraphrased plagiarism: modified copying without appropriate citation
- Idea plagiarism: copying trains of thought, argumentation structures, and argumentation structures without appropriate literature/source citation
- Translation plagiarism: copying from a text in another language without citing the source
- Structural plagiarism: copying a structure (outline, structure of arguments, etc.) without citing the source
- Self-plagiarism: borrowing from one's own academic work without appropriate citation

Avoiding plagiarism

- A literature reference must be provided in the text for every assertion (unsubstantiated statement).
- All thoughts, passages, and ideas that have been taken must be cited.
- A literature reference must be provided for ideas or thoughts that have inspired the work.
- If there are any unclear passages or uncertainties, it is advisable to consult with your supervisor.

Appendix 4: Checklist for correcting the thesis

1. Has the declaration of honour been signed?
2. Are there still errors in the table of contents?
3. Are the page numbers in the thesis set correctly?
4. Have meaningful paragraphs been formulated? Not: one sentence = one paragraph!
5. Has the bibliography been checked for accuracy?
6. Have the footnotes been checked again?
7. Have all internet sources been checked for relevance and reliability?
8. Are technical terms written and formulated consistently?
9. Have the correct tenses been used in the text?
10. Are there still any "I" or "we" formulations in the text of the paper?

Appendix 5: Evaluation criteria Format and formalities

Yellow card

The following, among other things, will result in an undesirable grade:

- Unclear question
- No reader-friendly, coherent structure
- No learning objectives formulated, no common thread
- Frequent spelling, grammar, and wording errors
- Missing or incomplete documentation of the use of AI-based tools (e.g., in the information provided in the Statement of Compliance, in prompts/outputs in the appendix).
- Incomplete or inconsistent source references that make traceability difficult or do not comply with the requirements.

Red card

The following, among other things, will result in failure:

- Accumulation of "yellow card" criteria
- Plagiarism
- Missing or frequent incorrect references
- Missing or grossly incorrect indexes
- Predominant use of inappropriate literature
- Use of AI-based tools without declaration and to an extent that makes it difficult/almost impossible to recognize the student's own work.
- Missing or manipulated source references that make it difficult/impossible to verify the accuracy of the content and academic integrity.

Appendix 6: Statement of Compliance on the use of generative AI

I hereby declare that I have used generative AI in the following manner in the preparation of this academic work:

1. Tool used (name, version, date of access if applicable):

e.g., ChatGPT (GPT-4), accessed on June 15, 2025

2. Purpose of use (multiple answers possible):

Topic identification/brainstorming

Suggestions for structure

Linguistic optimization

Rephrasing/paraphrasing

Explanation of terms/methods

Other: _____

3. Description of AI use:

(Please briefly explain how the tool was used in the work process—e.g., to develop a question, to improve the style of individual sections, etc.)

4. Reflection:

I have critically reviewed all AI-generated content, have not blindly accepted it, and have taken responsibility for the academic quality and accuracy of my work.

5. Sources:

I have fully cited all real sources used and referenced in my work and included them in the work as a bibliography or appendix.

6. Transparency:

(Optional) I have documented my prompts and sample AI responses in the appendix.

Date/Signature

Appendix 7: Examples of AI use

Scenario 1: Iterative prompt sequence for topic selection (business administration)

Context:

Module: Marketing

Topic area: Sustainability and consumer behaviour

Objective: Development of a suitable term paper topic + initial narrowing down

1. Start prompt – Generate ideas

Prompt (input):

"I am studying business administration and would like to write a term paper in the marketing module. I am interested in the topic of sustainability. Please give me 3 specific, academically workable questions on this topic that are suitable for a theoretical literature review."

AI output (example excerpt):

1. How do sustainability labels influence consumer purchasing behaviour in online retail?
2. What role does greenwashing play in brand perception?
3. How do Generation Z and baby boomers differ in their sustainability-related consumption behaviour?

2. Follow-up prompt – narrowing down based on the literature

Prompt:

"Which of these three questions do you think can be particularly well addressed by existing academic literature? Please justify your selection with examples of suitable sources or theoretical frameworks."

AI output:

"The question about greenwashing and brand perception is particularly suitable, as there are numerous studies on corporate social responsibility, consumer trust, and brand management. For example, articles in the *Journal of Business Ethics* or *Journal of Marketing* provide suitable frameworks."

3. Prompt for formulating a topic title

Prompt:

"Based on this question, formulate three possible working titles for a term paper in the style of a theoretical literature review."

AI output:

- "Greenwashing and consumer trust – An analysis of current marketing strategies"
- "Between ethics and image: The influence of greenwashing on brand perception"
- "Sustainability in marketing: How companies risk trust with greenwashing"

4. Prompt for structural idea – with correction loop

First prompt:

"Give me a possible outline (max. 5 chapters) for a term paper with the working title: 'Between ethics and image: The influence of greenwashing on brand perception'. This is a theoretical literature review."

AI output (example):

1. Introduction
2. Basics of sustainability and greenwashing
3. Brand perception and consumer behaviour
4. Analysis of existing studies
5. Conclusion and critical reflection

Correction by the student – with follow-up prompt

"I notice that the proposal does not include a chapter on methodological approach. However, I plan to document the research process according to the PRISMA model. Please provide me with a revised outline with a methodology chapter in the appropriate place."

Improved prompt:

"Add a chapter to the above outline that describes my methodological approach – in particular, the systematic literature search according to the PRISMA statement. The paper should still have a maximum of 5 main chapters."

AI output (revised):

1. Introduction
2. Theoretical foundations of sustainability, greenwashing, and brand perception
3. Methodological approach: Systematic literature review according to PRISMA

4. Analysis of existing studies and results
5. Conclusion and critical reflection

Note on documentation in the thesis

The following information should be included in the methodology section or in the "Statement of Compliance":

"I used ChatGPT to structure my work. The first outline proposal did not include a methodology chapter. I therefore specifically asked for my research approach to be incorporated in accordance with PRISMA. The final outline is based on my revised prompt and was subsequently critically adapted."

The following should be documented in the paper (e.g., in the methodology section or in the "Statement of Compliance"):

Element	Documentation
Tool used	ChatGPT (GPT-4o), accessed on 06/22/2025
Purpose of use	of Topic identification, narrowing down, outline proposal
Reflection	Formulated independently, in the appendix or methodology section, output revised (see appendices)
Optional appendix	Screenshot of prompts and responses, links to prompts, etc.

Scenario 2: Theory chapter with AI support

Degree program: Business Administration

Module: Human Resource Management

Topic: Influence of transformational leadership on employee satisfaction

Type of work: Theoretical literature review

Research tools: Scite.ai, ResearchRabbit

GenAI tool: ChatGPT (with file upload function)

Transparent, iterative work process

1. Own research and preselection

The student researches relevant sources on the theory of "transformational leadership" (e.g., Bass & Avolio, 1994; Podsakoff et al., 1990, Judge & Piccolo, 2004) using Scite.ai or ResearchRabbit.

Own work: Review, preselection, and PDF upload of approx. 5–7 articles with theoretical sections

2. Prompt for content extraction from the articles

Prompt (input):

"I am writing a theory chapter on transformational leadership in the context of employee satisfaction. I have uploaded five specialist articles. Please extract key terms, concepts, and theoretical arguments from these texts that would be relevant for a theory chapter. Output them as a list with source references."

AI output (abridged):

1. **Dimensions of transformational leadership** (Bass & Avolio, 1994): idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, individual consideration

2. **Employee satisfaction as an outcome:** increasingly documented in, for example, Podsakoff et al. (1990), Judge & Piccolo (2006)

3. **Mediating roles:** trust, perceived fairness

◇ **Student comment (reflection):** "The list was helpful, but sometimes too superficial. I had to as a guide check which concepts appeared multiple times in different articles. The correct assignment was incorrect (e.g., Judge & Piccolo (2004) was incorrectly listed as (2006)."

3. Prompt for formulating a rough draft paragraph

Prompt:

"Based on the previously extracted theoretical concepts, please formulate a rough text for a chapter (approx. 400 tokens) in which the dimensions of transformational leadership are explained and their effect on employee satisfaction is discussed. Use the information from the uploaded sources and cite references in the text."

AI output (excerpt):

"Bass and Avolio (1994) define transformational leadership based on four dimensions (...). Studies such as those by Judge and Piccolo (2006) show that managers with a highly transformational style significantly increase the satisfaction of their employees. ..."

Note: The AI text contains a fictitious, incorrectly dated source ("Judge & Piccolo, 2006" instead of 2004); furthermore, the connection to "fairness" is not explained, although this is mentioned in the original articles.

4. Correction loop by the student

Guide control & correction instructions:

"Please revise the text section by: (1) correctly referring to the 2004 study in the reference to Judge & Piccolo, (2) explicitly incorporating the term 'perceived fairness' as a mediating mechanism, and (3) briefly explaining the influence of each leadership dimension (not just listing them)."

AI output (improved):

"... In addition to intellectual stimulation, which leads to the promotion of problem-solving skills, individual consideration emphasizes the value of each individual employee, which in turn strengthens perceived fairness (Podsakoff et al., 1990). Judge & Piccolo (2004) identify this fairness as a mediator between leadership style and satisfaction ..."

5. Reflection & integration into your own work

Make your own performance visible (in the methods section or "Statement of Compliance"):

"I used GenAI to extract key terms from previously researched articles. I critically reviewed the AI-generated suggestions, correcting incorrect sources, identifying conceptual gaps, and resubmitting them to the AI in a revised version. The final text section was linguistically adapted, supplemented in terms of content, and substantiated with original citations."

Additional documentation (recommended):

Element	Recommendation
Sources used	In the bibliography + appendix (PDF references) if applicable

Element	Recommendation
Prompts & correction loop	Documented in the appendix or mentioned in the methods section
AI version and access date	e.g., ChatGPT-4, accessed on 06/23/2025
Reflection on own contribution	In methodology or separate section

Scenario 3: Writing a conclusion with AI support

Degree program: Business Administration

Term paper topic: *"Between ethics and image: The influence of greenwashing on brand perception"*

Type of paper: Theoretical literature review

Objective: Reflection on the results, implications, and limitations of the paper

Transparent, iterative work process (conclusion)

1. Summary by the author (own work)

Before using GenAI, the student summarizes the most important findings of the paper in their own words—e.g., in bullet points or paragraphs:

Bullet point list (own work):

- Greenwashing can negatively affect brand image, especially among informed consumers
- Perceived authenticity is a key moderator
- Studies show inconsistent results regarding the age of the target group
- Theoretical foundation based on attribution theory and signaling theory
- Lack of empirical studies in the German market environment

2. Prompt for structural support through GenAI

Prompt (input):

"Here is a summary of my key findings (see below). Please give me a structured outline for a conclusion that covers the following elements: (1) key messages, (2) practical implications, (3) academic implications, (4) limitations, and (5) research needs."

AI output (example):

Conclusion outline:

1. Summary of key findings
2. Significance for corporate communications/marketing practice
3. Theoretical contributions to CSR and brand research
4. Limitations (e.g., focus on theory, no empirical data)
5. Recommendations for future research (e.g., target group analyses)

Students should use this outline as a guide and adapt it to their own topic if necessary.

3. Prompt for the linguistic formulation of a rough draft

Prompt:

"Based on this outline, formulate a draft text (approx. 300 tokens) for the conclusion of my paper on the influence of greenwashing on brand perception. Refer to the following results (see below). The text should be factual, argumentative, and non-judgmental."

The AI receives the above list of keywords as input.

AI output (excerpt):

"Analysis of current studies shows that greenwashing has the potential to damage brand image, especially among consumers with a strong awareness of sustainability. Attribution theory provides a suitable level of explanation for this. Companies should therefore communicate authenticity clearly and avoid presenting CSR in a superficial manner. Theoretically, the work contributes to the connection between CSR communication and brand perception..."

4. Correction loop by the student (control)

"Please revise the text to make it clear that this is a theoretical literature review. In addition, the limitations should not be generalized but should refer specifically to my approach. Shorten the text to 250 tokens."

AI output (improved):

"This literature review shows that greenwashing theoretically poses a threat to brand perception, especially among informed target groups. [...] Due to the purely literature-based approach, no empirical validation of the concepts is possible. In addition, the focus was placed on English-language literature, which limits the generalizability."

5. Reflection and documentation of your own work

Example of an entry in the methodology section or "statement of compliance":

"For the 'Conclusion' chapter, I first summarized the key findings myself. ChatGPT was used to provide me with a possible outline and initial linguistic suggestions. I revised the text several times, shortened it, and adapted its content to my work. The AI responses served exclusively as a draft template, not as directly adopted content."

Additional notes on documentation

Element	Recommendation
Use of AI	Mention in the Statement of Compliance (conclusion, outline, rough draft)
Reflection	Mention in the methods section or in a footnote
Prompts & responses	Optionally attach as an appendix
Literature	Correctly cite all sources referred to in the conclusion

Example process: Generating & conducting a literature search with GenAI support

1. Prompt for developing a search strategy

Input (prompt by student):

"I am writing a literature review on the topic of 'Psychological effects of digital leadership styles on work motivation in the home office'. Please help me develop a structured search strategy for Scite.ai and Google Scholar. Give me:

- *a) suitable search terms (including synonyms),*
- *b) combinations with Boolean operators,*
- *c) suitable filters (time period, language, etc.)."*

AI output (abridged):

- a) Keywords: "remote leadership," "digital leadership," "work motivation," "virtual teams," "psychological effects," "home office," "employee engagement"
- b) Example search string: ("digital leadership" OR "remote leadership") AND ("work motivation" OR "employee engagement") AND ("home office" OR "virtual teams")
- c) Filters: Language: English/German; Time period: from 2015; Document type: peer-reviewed articles

2. Correction loop by students

"Please expand the search strategy to include German-language search terms and integrate terms from industrial psychology (e.g., self-determination theory, motivation types)."

Expanded output (example):

Additional terms: "digital leadership," "employee motivation," "intrinsic motivation," "extrinsic motivation," "self-determination theory," "working from home"

Combined German search string: ("digital leadership" AND "working from home") AND ("intrinsic motivation" OR "self-determination theory")

3. Conducting the research

The student uses the combined strategy in several databases (e.g., Scite.ai, Google Scholar, ResearchRabbit, BASE).

Results are reviewed, excluded, evaluated, and saved.

4. Evaluation of the literature according to level of evidence (according to Wortmann)

Exemplary categorization (levels of evidence):

Source	Year	Type	Content	Level of evidence
Müller et al.	2019	Empirical (quantitative)	Correlation between leadership & motivation	AA
Schmidt et al.	2020	Meta-analysis	Comparison of digital leadership approaches	A
Braun et al.	2021	Theoretical work	Model of "virtual authority"	B
Bachelor thesis Schulz	2018	Final thesis	Exploratory on New Work & Leadership	C
Company XY	2022	blog Website	Subjective assessment of remote work	Z

5. Documentation of research in the appendix (PRISMA-compliant)

a) Inclusion & exclusion criteria (transparent):

Criterion	Inclusion	Exclusion
Year of publication	From 2015	Before 2015
Language	German, English	Other languages
Document type	Peer-reviewed, reference books	Blogs, websites, unverified sources
Content focus	digital leadership, motivation, working from home	general leadership without remote reference
Level of evidence	A to B	D to Z

b) PRISMA flow chart (tabular or graphical)

- Presentation of the number of articles found, reviewed, included, and excluded
- Supplemented by reasons for exclusions

c) Evidence map (e.g., table according to Wortmann, p. 6)

6. Reflection in the Statement of Compliance (example excerpt)

"To create my theoretical section, I used ChatGPT to develop and optimize my search strategy. The AI helped me select relevant keywords and Boolean operators. The research was conducted independently using Scite.ai and Google Scholar. The literature was evaluated using the evidence level table according to Wortmann (2023), documented in the appendix (PRISMA and Evidence Map)."