

# Checklist for Seminar Papers and Graduation Theses

## Formal requirements

### Cover page

- Title of the paper (do not use the research question)
- Full names with respective student ID numbers
- Other important details (e.g., date, location, course number, type of paper)
- Word count (excluding title page and tables of contents)

### Indexes

- Table of Contents (outline with page numbers for each numbered section) [at the beginning of the document]
- List of References (alphabetical, accurate, complete, and consistent); if applicable: Index of legal sources, if such sources are cited [at the end of the document]

*The following indexes are only necessary if the respective components are included in the thesis!*

- List of Abbreviations [at the beginning of the document]
- List of Tables [at the beginning of the document]
- List of Figures [at the beginning of the document]
- List of Interviews [at the end of the document]
- Appendix [usually at the end of the document]

### Text

- Consistent and correct citation
- Consistent labeling of all figures and tables
- Text references to figures and tables
- Logical paragraph structure

### Appendix

- Documentation of data collection instruments (guidelines, questionnaires, etc.)
- Documentation of the collected data (transcripts, interviews, other primary data, etc.)
- Declaration of authenticity (for graduation theses)

### **Check for Plagiarism (Both Direct and Indirect)**

- Have I cited all direct quotations taken from the literature correctly and included the page number of the original source in the citation?
- Have I provided source references in the text for all instances where I have quoted directly or indirectly from the literature?
- Does this paper build upon a previous paper I wrote? If so, have I paraphrased all text passages that I previously used in a prior paper and, where applicable, cited my own earlier work? (If not, the paper may be considered self-plagiarism.)

INFO: Checking the paper using plagiarism detection software (available through the respective instructors)

### **Other formalities**

- Does the length of the paper meet the specified requirements?
- Appealing and easy-to-read layout
- Justified text, page numbers on every page xxx
- Correct spelling, grammar, and punctuation?
- Quality of figures and tables (readability, citation, appropriate use of graphics)

## **Content Guidelines Content requirements**

### **Structure of the paper and “common thread”**

- Is the outline logical and well-balanced?
- Are the headings and subheadings logical and fit the content (avoid overly formal headings)
- Comprehensibility of the argumentation; preliminary conclusions
- Common thread (e.g., research questions relate to subchapters and/or aspects of the study; the background chapter relates to the research question; the data collection method reflects the research questions; the analysis and discussion relate to the research question and draw on the background chapter, etc.)

### **Literature**

- Is sufficient literature used and interpreted? Quality of the literature?

### **Preface**

- Preface/Acknowledgments (usually only for graduation theses)

### **Introduction**

- Outline of the problem; introduction to the relevance of the thesis from a scientific and/or practical perspective; justification with sources

Objective of the thesis, research question, differentiation between primary and secondary research questions if applicable

Overview of the structure and the approach taken in the thesis

### **Background and Theoretical Overview / Summary of the State of Research**

What is the current state of research?

What are the key findings on this topic in relevant literature?

### **Methodological Approach**

give reasons for the chosen research design/methodology

Description of Methods for Data Collection

Description of Methods for Data Analysis

Comprehensive Documentation of Data Collection and Analysis

Adherence to Scientific Standards and Established Methods; Use of Methodological Literature

### **Evaluation and Analysis; Discussion**

What are the results of the empirical data and analysis? (Complete evaluation)

Systematic presentation of the results

Discussion of the results (linking the empirical data to the theoretical and conceptual framework)

If applicable, recommendations for action, strategic components, conceptual considerations (especially for theses with a practical planning research question)

### **Conclusion**

Comprehensive summary of fundamentals/theory, results, and findings

Answer to the research question(s)

Critical reflection on the work

Further needs in practice and/or research

### **Additional Guidelines**

“Requirements for Academic Coursework – A Guide”- [https://www-docs.b-tu.de/fg-regionalplanung/public/Wissenschaftliches%20Arbeiten/Handreichung\\_Wiss\\_Arbeiten-BTU-Fak\\_6\\_final.pdf](https://www-docs.b-tu.de/fg-regionalplanung/public/Wissenschaftliches%20Arbeiten/Handreichung_Wiss_Arbeiten-BTU-Fak_6_final.pdf) (in german)