BTU Cottbus - Senftenberg

Chair of Macroeconomics

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Academic Writing
Guide

April 2025

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Disclaimer: Generative artificial intelligence was used to assist in the writing of this guide. A first draft was based on a German version of the guide that was translated using the software DeepL and was then refined manually by the authors. Additionally, initial versions of some sections of this guide were written by providing relevant prompts to the software ChatGPT, and then revising the results manually. This concerns sections 3), 4), 5), and 6).

1. Introduction

This guide serves as a general introduction into writing an academic paper. It is particularly aimed at students studying at the BTU and concerns different types of papers, including term papers, Bachelor theses, Master theses, etc. They all differ in terms of required scope and depth yet must all adhere to the same principal standards outlined here. The guide moreover focuses specifically on instructions for writing such a paper at the Chair of Macroeconomics and/or in courses taught by its faculty. For further, and more general, information on writing an academic paper, please refer to the respective literature listed in the bibliography (list of literature references) at the end of this document. At the Chair we have had very good experience with the German text book "Wissenschaftliches Arbeiten" by Manuel Theisen (see bibliography), but there are also various English language options available in the BTU library.

What characterizes an academic paper? In general, an academic paper combines all the major techniques of scientific work: literature review, finding a topic, developing a research question, reading and analysing academic literature, structuring your paper, academic writing, as well as proper citation, avoiding plagiarism, and preparing a correct bibliography. With such a paper a student demonstrates their ability to independently and appropriately investigate a subject or research question using various scientific techniques. Most importantly, students must demonstrate that they understand and can apply the fundamental principles of academic work. This includes:

1. **Clarity, transparency, and reproducibility** – Ensure that your writing is well-structured and easy to understand. Your arguments must be built on a clear foundation, making explicit what data or sources you rely on, how you interpret them, and what methods you apply. Scientific work must be transparent enough so that others could, in principle, reproduce your reasoning or findings by following the same approach.

2. **Evidence-based argumentation** – Support every claim you make, even if it is normative (i.e., expressing a value judgment), with solid reasoning and empirical or theoretical evidence. Avoid making unsupported statements.

3. **Original contribution** – Aim to provide new insights, whether by analysing existing information in a novel way, drawing connections between ideas, or developing your own perspective on a topic.

Fundamentally, **academic papers, and theses in particular, require a specific**

research question or problem to guide the investigation of the chosen subject. Additionally, it needs an appropriate method or procedure to uncover new results. Ultimately, a term paper or thesis can be viewed as an answer to a previously formulated question, serving as evidence supporting or contradicting a particular hypothesis. Finally, remember that form and content of a scientific paper are closely linked. The quality of the argumentation is at the heart of the assessment of every academic paper. However, formatting and spelling are also essential.

In the following, you will find guidance on how to approach writing a research paper step-by-step, including important aspects on structure, referencing, use of AI, and overall academic writing. Moreover, it contains information on formal requirement that might apply, particularly if you write a final thesis to be submitted at the Chair. Finally, the document contains various style sheets for the formatting of theses.

2. Planning a Paper

Writing a high-quality academic paper is not a task that can be rushed or cut short. Rather, it is a process that can take considerable time, depending on the complexity of the research question and your personal investment in the topic. The process outlined below should be viewed as a general guideline, not a rigid, standardised path. Typically, the process begins with an orientation and planning phase, often during the lecture period. It is beneficial to present your ideas to your supervisor regarding the topic, research question, objectives, methodology, and relevant literature, in order to receive feedback and assistance. We advise making an appointment for consultation. Depending on the scope of the paper, the members of our Chair will usually also request that you submit a brief outline or proposal. Regardless, you must **adhere to the established deadline**. Your personal timeline should also be taken into account. If, for any urgent or emergency reasons, you are unable to meet the given deadline, you should promptly inform your supervisor.

Table 1 provides an example of a potential schedule for the various phases of writing a paper. Please regard this as a recommendation only. Your individual schedule may well differ according to your own work flow.

Table 1. Example schedule for a three-month project

Process	W1	W2	W3	W4	W5	W6	W7	W8	W9	W10	W11	W12
Finding a topic, developing a broad idea	░	░										
Researching literature	░	░	░	░	░	░	░	░	░			
Reviewing literature		░	░	░	░	░	░	░	░			
Preliminary outline				░								
1st draft					░	░						
Revision							░	░				
2nd draft							░	░				
Formatting manuscript											░	
If applicable: production and publication												░

W=Week; Source: own illustration based on Theisen 2008, p. 22.

3. General Stylistic Notes

When writing a paper, **always consider your target audience**. Are they already familiar with the debate, or do they come from a different disciplinary background and require additional context? Your writing should be precisely tailored to both your topic and your readers.

Additionally, keep in mind that readers often skim texts before engaging more deeply. To make your work accessible at a glance, ensure a clear structure and well-organised presentation. Pay particular attention to:

- **Headings** – Use meaningful headings that reflect the content of each section.

- **Figures and tables** – Captions should concisely summarize key points so that essential information is immediately clear, even without reading the full text.

- **Visual elements** – Ensure that figures and tables are well-integrated and serve a clear purpose in your argument.

Your language style should be precise, scientifically accurate, and free of errors. Maintain clarity by using short, factual sentences and a straightforward yet technically appropriate vocabulary. Avoid addressing the reader directly in academic writing.

Graphics and visuals should be reproducible (i.e., still readable when printed in black and white) and not overloaded with information. Ideally, graphics should be created by the author. If scanned images are used, ensure they remain clear and legible in both digital and printed formats.

A well-structured academic paper should:

- Concisely outline and motivate the research question at hand.

- Embed the research in the academic literature, relate to real-world examples, and explain your own approach to a given problem or question.

- Justify the chosen approach and methodology clearly.

- Mark any discussion of side issues as an excursus, ensuring that they do not disrupt the main argument.

When presenting conclusions, clearly separate them from factual claims and indicate them explicitly as opinions that you are formulating based on your data analysis and/or your interpretation thereof. Your argument must be coherent and logically structured

throughout the paper.

A good way to familiarise yourself with academic writing conventions is by reading peer-reviewed journal articles. These provide good-practice examples of the expected style, structure, and level of argumentation in scholarly work.

4. Researching, Organising, and Reviewing Literature

4.1 Research

Writing an academic paper is based on an intensive study of the existing academic literature to get an understanding of what research has already been done on a particular subject area and what we already know about it. This is often called 'the state of the art'.

The best way to get started with your research on the state of the art is to research on the internet. Not only are almost all academic journals relevant to our field(s) published online, but also many research institutes publish their reports, studies, and working papers on their websites. Keep in mind that in order to be able to access most of the full versions of journal papers online, you need to access the journal websites while being logged into the university network either via WIFI at the campus or via using a VPN.

The following sites are good places to start your research.

Search engines:

- Google Scholar
- EBSCO database
- jstor
- BTU library
- AI-powered search engines focussing on academic research (see chapter 4 on usage of AI for more information)

Websites of research institutes and organizations (especially for current economic policy statements and texts), e.g.:

- ifo (Munich Institute for Economic Research)
- DIW (German Institute for Economic Research)
- Kiel Institute for the World Economy
- ZEW - Center for European Economic Research
- IWH (Halle Institute for Economic Research)
- IMF (International Monetary Fund)
- BIS (Bank for International Settlements)
- World Bank
- ECB (European Central Bank)

<u>Websites for macroeconomic data, e.g.:</u>

- German Federal Statistical Office
- International Monetary Fund
- World Bank
- OECD
- European Central Bank

The main source of literature is the university library, including its [electronic journal library](#). At their website, the BTU library provides many tutorials and information on how to use their services and how to research academic literature. When you are enrolled at the BTU, you can use most of its services for free.

In case you are looking for a book that the library currently does not provide, it might be possible to order it via the **interlibrary loan** system. In this case the BTU library needs to order the book from another library first. Consult the library website or its staff for more information on the process. Please note that ordering books via the **interlibrary loan** system takes about four weeks and hence the required literature should be ordered early enough.

A quick alternative to interlibrary loans from the university library are document delivery services from German libraries, such as Subito, which ship the required literature electronically or in print to you. However, a fee must be paid for this service.

In addition to the library, the Chair has a selection of economics literature available (mostly text books) that can be accessed by making an appointment with your lecturer.

4.2 Organise

Organising, managing, and citing a continuously growing collection of researched literature can become a demanding task. Reference management software, such as **Zotero**, **Citavi**, **EndNote**, and **Mendeley** provides invaluable assistance in this. When you are working with literature often (which will be the case for most students in the social sciences), we recommend that you familiarise yourself as early as possible with this type of software and incorporate it into your workflow. You can download such software either by searching for it on the internet, or you can draw on the selection provided by the [BTU library](#), where you will also find tutorials on how to use them.

Once set up, these tools help streamline the research and writing process, save a lot of time and ensure accuracy. In the following you find an overview of the general

benefits of using reference management software for your academic work.

Efficient organisation

One of the main advantages of using reference management software is its ability to help you organise your academic literature and other sources systematically.

- **Centralised library**: You can store all your references, PDFs, and notes in one digital location, making it easier to find and access materials when needed. This reduces the need to manage physical copies or scattered digital files.

- **Knowledge management**: You can attach full-text PDFs and other documents to their corresponding references, allowing you to read, annotate, and highlight documents directly within the software. Over time, this allows you to build your own personal library filled with relevant literature and personal notes that you can always re-use in different writing projects.

- **Search and tagging**: These tools allow you to search through your entire library quickly, as well as categorise sources using tags, keywords, or custom fields to find materials based on specific criteria.

Time-saving citation and bibliography management

Creating accurate citations and bibliographies can be time-consuming, but reference management software automates these tasks.

- **Automatic citation generation**: When writing your paper, you can insert citations directly from your reference manager, for example by using a Word-Plugin. The software will format them according to your chosen citation style (e.g., APA, MLA, Chicago) without you having to manually adjust every detail.

- **Instant bibliography creation**: Once you have inserted all your citations into your Word document, you can generate a fully formatted bibliography with just a click. It automatically adjusts based on the citation style you select.

- **Multiple citation styles**: Easily switch between different citation styles as needed (e.g., for different assignments or journals), and your references will update automatically to match the new format.

<u>Improved collaboration</u>

Many reference management tools have features designed to help you collaborate more effectively with peers or colleagues when working in a joint project.

- **Shared libraries**: You can create shared libraries where multiple users can add, organise, and discuss sources. This is especially useful for group projects, research teams, or co-authored papers.

- **Notes and annotations**: You can add notes to individual sources, which can be shared with collaborators. This helps to track thoughts, ideas, or important points related to specific references.

4.3 Review

How to write a state of the art? It is not possible to define a generally applicable minimum number of literature sources for an academicpaper. In principle, the literature review must be written in such a way that the essential findings known to date and relevant to your own work are referenced and evaluated. Usually, it is helpful to structure the existing literature you are covering according to the specific debates they are about (i.e., in regard to an academic discipline and/or a specific topic). A purely chronological presentation of previous works is generally not the best way to discuss the state of knowledge. A more integrative approach that compares and contrasts previous results is generally preferable. How many literature sources are necessary for such an overview can, of course, vary greatly depending on the topic and your own research question. Since term papers, Bachelor's, Master's and Diploma theses differ in terms of their academic ambition and scope, there are also differences in the requirements for the extent of your literature study.

What type of literature to use? When researching academic literature for your paper, it is important to understand the different types of literature you can use. In general, always use **original publications** and search for the latest editions of literature sources. Your principal sources should be academic papers that are published in peer-reviewed journals, and academic books published by renowned publishing houses. You should refrain from quoting from introductory textbooks and sources such as Wikipedia. Instead, try to find and quote the original studies on which the textbooks are based. Also refrain from quoting popular literature or encyclopaedias (especially from one particular found online!). Articles from well-known daily or business newspapers and magazines can be used, for example, to refer to current public discussions or

underline the relevance of a topic.

Below is a quick guide to help you differentiate between different types of literature.

<u>Peer-reviewed academic papers</u>

These are peer-reviewed articles, often found in academic journals or conference proceedings. They present original research, reviews, or theoretical discussions on specific topics.

- Why use them?

    - **Credibility**: Peer-reviewed; ensuring high-quality, accurate information.

    - **Current information**: Often cover the most recent research in the field.

    - **Specific focus**: Tackle narrow, specialised topics; ideal for in-depth analysis.

- Examples:

    - Research articles in journals like Quarterly Journal of Economics, Journal of Public Finance and Public Choice, or Economic Geography.

    - Papers presented at conferences and workshops.

    - Reputable publishing houses that publish such journals are for example SAGE, Elsevier, Springer, and Wiley. If in doubt, find out if the journal in question is included in the library's electronic journal library or consult your supervisor.

<u>Books</u>

Academic books such as monographs and edited volumes provide comprehensive overviews or in-depth studies of broader topics. They can be written by one or multiple authors and are often published by academic presses.

- Why use them?

    - **Thorough coverage**: Good for background information, historical context, or foundational theories.

    - **Structured learning**: Offer sometimes more organised and systematic knowledge on a subject.

How to determine whether a book is academically credible? Determining if a book is academically credible is essential for ensuring that the sources you cite in your paper are reliable and authoritative. You can refer to some key factors to help you assess a book's academic credibility:

➔ Check the author's credentials

- **Academic background**: Look at the author's qualifications. Are they an expert in the field? Do they have advanced degrees (e.g., Ph.D.) or relevant professional experience in the subject matter?

- **Institutional affiliation**: Does the author work for a reputable university or research institution? An academic affiliation with a respected institution is a good indicator of credibility.

➔ Evaluate the publisher

- **Academic presses**: Books published by well-known academic presses like *Oxford University Press*, *Cambridge University Press*, or *University of Chicago Press* are typically credible.

- **Reputable publishers**: Publishers with a strong reputation for quality publishing, such as *Wiley* or *Springer*, often produce academically credible books.

➔ Review the book's purpose

- **Scholarly intent**: Determine if the book is intended to inform or educate within an academic context, rather than to entertain or promote a particular agenda. Academic books are usually written with the purpose of contributing to a specific field or discipline.

- **Citations and references**: Check if the book includes extensive references to other credible academic works. A book that lacks citations may be less reliable academically.

➔ Look at the publication date

- **Relevance and timeliness**: Consider if the book is up-to-date, especially in rapidly changing fields. Older books might still be credible for historical perspectives, or when they introduced influential theories that shape particular debates, but may not reflect the latest research or developments.

- **Edition**: Newer editions of academic books are often revised to incorporate updated information and reflect current research trends.

➔ Examine the book's review and reception

- **Peer reviews**: Search for reviews of the book in academic journals or reputable review sites. Scholarly reviews will assess the book's quality, reliability, and contribution to the field. This can also indicate whether a book provides a significant contribution to an academic discipline.

- **Citations**: A book that is widely cited in academic papers and by experts in the field is generally a sign of its credibility.

Grey literature

Grey literature refers to materials not formally published or subjected to peer review. This includes reports, theses, working papers, government publications, or industry documents.

- Why use them?

  - **Unconventional sources**: Provides unique, niche, or preliminary data not available in traditional publications.

  - **Up-to-date**: Can provide cutting-edge or unpublished data, often from government agencies or industry bodies.

  - **Practical insights**: Can offer insights into real-world applications, government policies, or corporate practices.

- Examples:

  - Government reports, white papers, technical reports, NGO publications.

  - Theses, dissertations, working papers from universities, or policy briefs.

Please note: The guidelines above refer specifically to the academic literature you are expected to engage with in the literature review section of your thesis. However, it is absolutely acceptable to use non-academic sources—such as websites, newspapers, or popular magazines — as empirical material or data in your analysis, depending on your research question.

5. On the Use of AI and Generative Language Models

Today, there is a fast-growing variety of generative language models (e.g. ChatGPT) and related AI-powered writing assistant tools that are easily available. Particularly for written assignments, the idea to simply let these tools write your paper or thesis can be tempting. **However, you should note that we will thoroughly check your written assignments for the use of AI (and other forms of plagiarism) and if there is a high probability that significant parts of the paper were written with AI, you will fail the assignment**.

Why? This is not because we want to make your live more complicated, but because relying on AI to write your term paper is not good academic practice. It prevents you from developing critical thinking skills and engaging with sources in a meaningful way. AI-generated content is often inaccurate, lacks proper reasoning and citations, and cannot transparently show how conclusions were reached, which goes against fundamental academic standards. Additionally, it can lead to unintentional plagiarism. Most importantly, writing your own paper is a key part of the learning process, helping you build essential research and analytical skills. You can also read the guidelines for dealing with AI formulated by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG, German Research Foundation).

That being said, **there are ways how you can responsibly incorporate AI** into your work. Instead of using AI to do the work for you, use it as a tool for brainstorming, improving clarity, or checking grammar. Also, there are several tools that can help you researching literature. In the following you find a brief introduction for both aspects.

5.1 Using AI for writing

As mentioned above, you should never let an AI programme simply write your paper, nor should you let it find a research question for you nor let it write a complete review of a particular strand of literature or individual papers. In our experience, the results are most often inaccurate and without becoming familiar with the particular topics yourself, you will not be able to detect these inaccuracies. Unfortunately, as of yet there is no way around the often tedious process of learning and understanding.

However, students can use AI as a helpful tool for **brainstorming** by generating ideas, **exploring different perspectives** on a topic, or **structuring their**

arguments. AI can outline key themes or help **organise thoughts** in a logical way. Additionally, AI can **assist with language and text flow** by identifying unclear sentences, suggesting more concise wording, and **improving overall readability**. However, you should always critically evaluate AI-generated content, ensuring that ideas remain your own and, above all, that they make sense.

Importantly, if you use AI for improving your paper or thesis, include a respective statement as part of your methodology that describes and justifies your use of such tools and how they augmented instead of replaced your thinking.

5.2 Using AI for (literature) research

Besides AI-powered writing assistants, there are several AI-powered research tools available that are less problematic to use. Tools like **Inciteful**, **Research Rabbit, or Consensus** are designed to assist with discovering, organising, and analysing academic literature. They use machine learning to identify relevant sources, map citation networks, and summarise key insights, potentially making literature reviews more efficient and comprehensive.

Tools like Inciteful and Research Rabbit help visualise how academic papers are connected by showing citation networks and related research, allowing students to trace influential works and identify research gaps. Tools like Consensus use AI to extract key findings from scholarly articles, summarising complex debates and highlighting evidence-based answers to research questions.

While these tools can greatly enhance the research process, **students should always critically assess sources, verify findings, and engage directly with the literature** to ensure a deep and accurate understanding.

6. Referencing

6.1 General notes

Academic writing requires that all sources used in research are **clearly documented** and **properly cited**. Every quotation — whether direct or indirect — must be **verifiable**. Statements of fact **must always be supported by sources**. If information is derived from personal interviews or other non-traditional sources, these must also be properly referenced.

Furthermore, **lectures and lecture notes are not considered citable sources** and should not be used as references in academic work.

Correct citation is a fundamental requirement for scientific writing, ensuring **transparency, academic integrity, and the traceability of arguments**. Any violation of these principles compromises the quality of a piece of academic work fundamentally and may render it inacceptable.

6.2 On style of references

If not stated otherwise by your lecturer or supervisor, refer to the following referencing style-guide.

Citation style:

- Literal (direct) quotations should be used sparingly. When necessary, they should be as short as possible.

- Longer direct quotations should be indented and formatted as a block quote.

- Quotation marks must be used at the beginning and end of direct quotes. If changes are made, they must be indicated:

    o Bracketed additions: Indicate modifications with "[Author's note]".

    o Omissions: Use ellipses (…) to indicate missing words.

    o Emphasis: If an emphasis is original, it should be preserved. If you add emphasis yourself, you must indicate this.

    o Quotations within quotations: Use an apostrophe ('...') to mark a quote within a quote.

Referencing sources in the text:

- Direct quotes should include the exact source reference, e.g.:

- o Direct citation: *"..." (Eco 2010: 95).*

- Indirect citation/paraphrasing: *... (Eco 2010: 95).*

- Secondary citations (citing an author who is cited in another source) should be avoided and are only permitted if the original source is inaccessible.

- Foreign language sources:

  - o If you are writing in German, English-language sources do not need to be translated.

  - o For sources in other languages, a translation must be provided.

Bibliography

- Only works actually cited in the text should appear in the bibliography.

- The bibliography must contain full details of all sources, including:

  - o Books: Author, year, title, edition, place of publication, publisher.

  - o Journal articles: Author, year, title, journal name, volume, page numbers.

  - o Working papers & reports: Author(s), year, title, document type, institution.

  - o Book chapters: Author(s), year, title, editor(s), book title, publisher, page numbers.

- The list should be arranged alphabetically by the author's last name.

Example references:

- Eco, U. (2010), *Wie man eine wissenschaftliche Arbeit schreibt: Doktor-, Diplom- und Magisterarbeit in den Geistes- und Sozialwissenschaften*, 13th ed., Heidelberg: Müller.

- Brainard, W. (1967), *Uncertainty and the effectiveness of policy*, *American Economic Review* 57, 411-426.

- Borio, C. and P. Lowe (2002), *Asset prices, financial and monetary stability: exploring the nexus*, BIS Working Paper No. 114, Bank for International Settlements, Basel.

- Goodfriend, M. and R. King (1997), *The New Neoclassical Synthesis and the Role of Monetary Policy*, in: Bernanke, B. and J. Rotemberg (eds.), *NBER*

Macroeconomics Annual 12, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, pp. 231-283.

Special cases:

- Online sources: Include the date of the last retrieval and, if possible, the author and title. Example:

    o N.N. *Guidelines of the Chair of Economics for student research projects and theses*. [URL], (last accessed: DD.MM.YYYY).

- Multiple publications by the same author in one year: Differentiate using lowercase letters (Eco 2010a, Eco 2010b).

- More than three authors: Use "et al." in in-text citations (Eco et al. 2010), but list all authors in the bibliography.

- Institutional authors (e.g., government ministries): If no author is named, the institution itself serves as the author name.

- Textbooks: The most recent edition should always be used.

Most importantly, a consistent citation style must be maintained throughout the paper. While slight variations exist across different publications, the structure of references must remain uniform within a paper.

6.3 On plagiarism

Plagiarism — the uncredited use of others' intellectual property — is a **serious academic offense**. All sources must be cited **carefully and correctly** to ensure proper acknowledgment of others' work.

Plagiarism includes:

- Copying text, ideas, or data without proper attribution.

- Paraphrasing an author's work without citation.

- Using AI-generated text without acknowledgment.

- Submitting someone else's work as your own.

- Failing to provide correct source references.

See also the following regulations translated from the German versions of the university's examination regulation:

Section 20 (4) RahmenO-BA / RahmenO-MA of 12.9.2016:

"If the student attempts to influence the result of his or her examination by cheating or using unauthorized aids, if he or she participates in cheating or disrupts the proper course of the examination or if, for the purpose of deliberate deception, the intellectual property of others is infringed or published material of third parties is used without stating the sources or authorship and submitted as his or her own work (plagiarism), the examination performance in question will be graded as 'insufficient' (5.0) and the student may be prevented from continuing the examination by the respective examiner. In serious cases or in the event of repetition, the responsible examination board shall decide on the loss of the right to take the examination."

Note, that we will always thoroughly check your submitted work for plagiarism, and also use respective dedicated software like Turnitin to assist us in this check. If plagiarism is detected, you will fail the assignment. In severe cases, the case will be handed over to the examination board.

7. Scope of your Paper and Formatting

If not stated otherwise by your lecturer or supervisor, refer to the following style-guide to format your work.

The following specifications apply to **the scope of the entire thesis** (see Table 2). A deviation of + 10% and - 10% is generally permitted.

Table 2. Comparison of number of pages required

Type of thesis	Comparison of required pages – text only without figures
Seminar on economic policy	12 to 15 (2 persons 20 - 25)
Advanced Seminar Economic Policy	20 (2 persons 35)
Bachelor thesis	40
Master thesis	60
Diploma thesis	60

The number of pages refer to the text only, without cover page, table of contents, bibliography or appendix. Deviations from the above guidelines should be discussed with the responsible supervisor in good time and must be justified.

If written in German, spelling, grammar and punctuation should comply with the current DUDEN guidelines and thus the new German spelling. For the English language you can refer to the Oxford English Dictionary.

The thesis should be formatted as outlined in Table 3.

Table 3. Formatting instructions

Formatting type	Formatting
Font type and size	Standard font: Arial 11 pt Times New Roman and Calibri 12 pt
Line spacing	1.5 lines
Margins	left: 4 cm right: 3 cm top: 2 cm bottom: 2 cm
Illustrations	Caption/title below the illustration; plus reference and consecutive numbering
Tables	Label/title above the table; plus reference and consecutive numbering
Page numbers: • Cover sheet: • Contents, List of figures, tables, abbreviations and bibliography: • Text:	without Consecutive Roman numbering (I, II, III,...) Consecutive Arabic numbering (1, 2, 3,...)
Header and footer	only with sensible design

8. Structuring your Paper

The following basic structure of chapters is recommended for your paper:

1. Cover sheet *(see sample in chapter 12)*
2. Table of contents
3. List of figures *(if applicable)*
4. List of tables *(if applicable)*
5. List of abbreviations *(if applicable)*
6. List of formulas/symbols *(if applicable)*
7. Text / Main part
8. Appendix *(with index if applicable)*
9. Bibliography
10. Declaration of authorship

The list of figures and the list of tables can also be combined into a single list. Every academic paper must have a **cover page.** The layout is based on the template in chapter 12 of this guide.

In the **declaration of authorship**, the author assures that he or she has only used permitted means in the preparation of the work. Such a declaration is part of every academic paper. The Chair expressly reserves the right to check all final papers and seminar papers, as well as essays etc. with the help of **plagiarism software.** Violations of this declaration will be automatically forwarded to the responsible examination board and the student secretariat. In this context, §20 (4) RahmenO Bachelor / RahmenO Master of 12.9.2016 (§ 16 (6), 26 (1) of the RahmenO Bachelor (i.e., the examination regulation) must be observed. A sample declaration is included in the Appendix.

9. Defending your Paper

In some cases, after submitting your manuscript (for example for Bachelor's or Master's theses), you will be required to present your paper and its results in front of an examination committee and defend the arguments you are making verbally. Whether this is the case, depends on the examination regulations your particular study programme is subject to.

If you are required to give a presentation, please observe the following **requirements**:

- Choose a uniform layout and structure the presentation logically. There is literature available on how to prepare and structure a research presentation.

- If not stated otherwise, the duration of the presentation should not exceed **15 minutes** for student research projects and **20 minutes** for Bachelor's, Master's and diploma theses.

- In principle, all types of media can be used for the presentation. The Chair provides a projector, but you need to bring your own notebook.

- Your presentation is usually followed by a discussion/debate of approx. 25 minutes in which you will need to answer questions asked by the audience

- Like in your paper, make sure your presentation adheres to good academic practice, including clearly quoting every source on every slide (where applicable) and providing a coherent bibliography at the end of the presentation document.

10. Notes for Group Work

If not stated otherwise by your lecturer or supervisor, for papers co-authored as a group project, all participants in that group receive the same grade for the work submitted. However, the presentation grades and thus the overall grade may differ. In the event that a group member deliberately violates the rules of cooperation and academic work, the chair asks to be informed **in good time before** the work is submitted. Non-compliance detected **after** submission of the work, for example plagiarism, has the **same consequences** for all group members.

In the case of group work, **each member** of the group must sign the **declaration of authorship**.

11. Further Reading

German

Theisen, M. R. (2008), Wissenschaftliches Arbeiten: Techniken – Methodik – Form, 14. Aufl., München: Vahlen

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12. Appendix

12.1 Sample cover sheet for a term paper project

\<Type of Paper\>

Submitted at the

Chair of Macroeconomics

Professor Dr. Wolfram Berger

Brandenburg University of Technology Cottbus

Faculty 5

Department of Economics

\<Title\>

\<Module/seminar\>

\<Term\>

Author		Supervisor
Name:	....	\<title\> \<name\>
Matriculation number:	....	
Study program:	....	
Semester:	....	
E-Mail:	....	
Address:	....	

Cottbus, \<date of submission: DD.MM.YYYY\>

12.2 Sample cover sheet for bachelor's, master's or diploma thesis

<Bachelor thesis/ Master thesis/ Diploma thesis>

to obtain the degree

<degree according to the examination regulations>

Submitted at the

Chair of Macroeconomics

Professor Dr. Wolfram Berger

Brandenburg University of Technology Cottbus

Faculty 5

Department of Economics

<Title>

Author		Supervisor
Name:	....	<title <name>
Matriculation number:	....	
Study program:	....	
Semester:	....	
E-Mail:	....	
Address:	....	

Cottbus, <date of submission: DD.MM.YYYY>

12.3 Sample Declaration of Authorship

I, the author, declare that the present work was completed independently, without external assistance, and without the use of any resources other than those specified. All ideas taken directly or indirectly from external sources (including electronic sources) are clearly identified as such. Any sources used verbatim or in substance have been cited in accordance with the recognized standards of academic work.

This work has not been submitted in the same or a similar form, either in full or in part, for any other examination at another university. It has also not been published previously.

I consent to the work being checked for plagiarism using plagiarism detection software.

<Place, date>   <Signature>