

Formal instructions for writing scientific papers

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1 General information on scientific work

Term papers and seminar papers, Bachelor's or Master's theses are proof of your **academic** and **conceptual** expertise. It indicates whether you are able to independently develop and work on a topic in a structured manner and is therefore often regarded as the most important examination of the degree programme. Try to create something new: this can be an empirical, new result, for example, or the reference of a theoretical approach to a practical question. You can generally write your thesis in **German or English**.

1.1 Requirements for scientific work

The following areas, among others, can be assessed when awarding grades:

- Structure of the work
- Theoretical/scientific treatment of the content (e.g. conclusive argumentation, evidence instead of assertions, recognisable personal contribution)
- Literature processing (e.g. number and quality of sources)
- Topicality, degree of difficulty, degree of innovation and practical relevance
- Achievement of the defined objective of the work or results of the work
- Formal presentation and correctness (including linguistic quality)
- Other criteria that can be defined by the respective supervisor

The following regulations should make it easier for you to implement the content and **formal** aspects. Methodological and content-related aspects as well as the structure of the thesis should, however, be discussed with the **supervisor**, as other or additional requirements may arise!

1.2 Scientific writing style

The aim of your scientific paper is to answer a formulated question in a way that is understandable to the reader. This makes a scientific language style essential, which is characterised by the following aspects:

- Clear and precise formulations
- Neutral expression (no "I-forms")
- Short and complete sentences (no confusing nested sentences, no colloquial language or unnecessary filler words such as "*also, always, however, of course*"; no meaningless expressions such as "*immensely, enormously, absolutely*")
- Prefer active verbs to passive formulations (not "The students were given a questionnaire to fill out...", but "The students filled out a questionnaire...")

- Formulate theses in the participle (not "There are weaknesses in processes.", but "There may be weaknesses in processes." or "There are sometimes weaknesses in processes.")
- An accumulation of nouns should be avoided. Sentences with verbs are easier to understand and the source (speaker) of the statement is easier to recognise. (Not: *These considerations are due to the obligation to take serious steps to prevent the proliferation of nouns when writing texts*).

Note: Use of gender-sensitive language

In principle, students are NOT affected by language or writing regulations on gender-sensitive language and there is no effect on the assessment of the examination!
Nevertheless, it is recommended to use gender-sensitive language **in places necessary** and usefull to specify the meaning of a statement. You can write both genders in pairs (e.g. female and male students).

1.3 Topic identification

You can choose a topic suggested by the supervisor or approach your preferred supervisor with your own idea. Choose a topic that interests you and that you would like to work on intensively for a long time. Get in touch with your chosen supervisor (by email) with your chosen topic and a few key words about the content. Do not choose a topic that is too broad; pay particular attention to practical relevance, novelty and relevance. If you would like to write your thesis in or with a company, the company's proposed topic must be agreed with the supervisor.

Tip:

Work on **one question in depth** instead of several superficially. Your work should provide an advance in knowledge for science and enrich your own store of knowledge. Practice-oriented work in cooperation with a company and / or an empirical paper are more recommendable than a purely theoretical literature paper.

2 Structure and organisation of the scientific paper

2.1 Components of the work

A scientific paper usually consists of the following components:

- Cover sheet (see example in the appendix: topic, course if applicable, place of submission, name of author, matriculation number, supervisors, date)
- Table of contents
- List of illustrations, if applicable
- List of tables, if applicable

- List of abbreviations, if applicable
- Text part
- Bibliography (see example at the end of this document)
- Appendix, if applicable
- Statutory declaration (see example in the appendix)

2.2 Structure of the text section

A well thought-out, goal-orientated **structure and outline** is the foundation of a scientific paper and provides an overview of the content. Please agree the outline with your supervisor in as much detail as possible before submitting your thesis. This will make it much easier for you to work on the topic later on and avoid labour-intensive surprises.

Basically, the following should be taken into account when structuring:

- The number of bullet points should be proportionate to the length of the text. Too many headings break up the text unnecessarily and can impede the flow of reading. Too few headings structure the text inadequately and do not say much about the expected content. Rule of thumb: do without a subdivision for < 1/3 page of text; > 2 pages often require a further subdivision → depending on the total length of your paper.
- Sections of the same rank must also be on the same logical level in terms of content. A comparable number of pages should emphasise this. Structure points always consist of at least two units, i.e. a point must be followed by at least one other point on the same level (e.g. 2.1 → 2.2). Whether a text section should follow between the heading and subheading must be clarified with the supervisor (between headings 3. and 3.1 or between 3.2 and 3.2.1).
- The wording of all bullet points must be **concise, meaningful** and at best **understandable** on its **own** (e.g. not: "3.1 Analysis", but e.g. "3.1 Analysis of XY's IT systems"; or not "What the term sustainability means in online food retailing", but "Sustainability concept in online food retailing". Questions are **not** permitted as sections.

Tip:

Use the outlines of good doctoral theses as a guide; these are structured according to the usual scientific criteria. Discuss with your supervisors at an early stage and agree on the objectives, focus and structure of your thesis!

A problem statement at the beginning and the summary at the end of the paper should form a logical bracket in terms of content and allow the reader to quickly recognise the content of the paper and its most important results.

2.3 Problem definition or introduction

The thesis begins with Chapter 1. **Problem definition** (can also be called the introduction). Here, the significance of the topic (e.g. its topicality) should first be introduced, the problems to be addressed specifically named and the aim of the work emphasised. The introduction should also briefly present the methodology (not the process of the investigation) with which the problem is to be substantiated, discussed and the scientific question ultimately answered. However, **the results of the work must not be anticipated**. The length of the introduction or problem statement of a Bachelor's or Master's thesis should not exceed two pages; no further subdivision should be made.

2.4 Main part

The main section consists of chapters and sub-chapters that structure the content of the thesis. This includes theoretical foundations and definitions of the topic, but above all an application section in which your own empirical research is carried out or the theoretical foundations are applied to a new, practice-orientated question. Pay attention to the formulation, substantiation and justification of theses, the illustration using examples and the derivation of conclusions. Please consult your supervisor regarding the scientific and empirical approach. The quality of your academic work is essentially measured by the achievement of the objectives formulated in the problem statement. Criteria for assessment here include the degree of innovation and the independence of the content as well as the quality of the scientific quality of the content presented.

2.5 Summary and conclusion

The summary can be supplemented by additions such as "and outlook" or "and concluding remarks". The summary includes the results developed in the main section, whereby their **weight** and **critical appraisal** is more important than their completeness. The results can be presented in a different order than in the previous text, and the most important findings can be formulated in the form of numbered theses. Literal repetitions of the problem statement should be avoided. Formulations of limitations of the work or an outlook are desirable. The conclusion should be one to two pages in length.

Tip:

Allow enough time for proofreading, layout and revision of your work. Make sure you have **someone else** proofread the text for clarity, grammar and spelling.

3 Formatting, scope and binding of the work

3.1 Formatting the text

The following guidelines apply to the formatting of the text:

- The text is written with 1.5-line spacing. The font used can be Times New Roman (TNM) with font size 12 **or** Arial with font size 11.
- The page margin should be 3.5 cm on the left and 2 cm on the right, top and bottom. The text should be justified and hyphenated.
- Footnotes are written as single-spaced paragraphs, the font size is 10 for TNM and 9 for Arial. They are numbered consecutively and separated from the text by a left-aligned horizontal line.
- Larger fonts can be used for headings, whereby attention should be paid to the proportions (max. size TNM 14 **or** Arial 14). They should be emphasised in bold.
- Emphasis should be used sparingly; **bold type** is recommended. Variations in font size or typeface and CAPITALS should be avoided.
- In figures or tables, there is extensive freedom of design with regard to the typeface. However, legibility should be guaranteed.
- The number and name of the figure or table is placed below, left-aligned and in font size TNR 10 or Arial 9.
- There should be at least half a **blank line** between two paragraphs and underneath a heading.
- The page numbers in the text section, bibliography and appendix **are in Arabic** (the introduction is page 1). The remaining lists are numbered consecutively **with Roman** numerals (table of contents is page ii or II). The cover page is **not** numbered. Placement: In the header or footer on the right, TNR 12, Arial 11.

3.2 Scope of the work

The scope of the text part (without appendix) of a scientific paper at the Faculty of Business Administration is recommended as follows (exceptions are indicated by the supervisors):

- Bachelor thesis: approx. 40-60 pages
- Master's thesis: approx. 80 pages
- Seminar papers and other academic papers: approx. 12-20 pages - depending on the information provided by the supervisor

3.3 Delivery and binding of the work

The Bachelor's or Master's thesis is uploaded [to the portal for thesis forms](#) in PDF format. At the request of the supervisor, a bound copy (DIN A4 single-sided) is also required. Bound copies should be held together in a sturdy, soft binding and have a transparent film over the cover sheet.

4 Literature processing and citation guidelines

4.1 Fundamentals of literature processing

Impeccable citation is an expression of scientific diligence and honesty. Every statement that is not based on your own analysis must be cited - in extreme cases, every sentence is provided with a footnote/source reference in the text. If necessary, statements are also referenced with two or more sources in the respective citation notation. Footnotes can also be used for comments (e.g. additional content-related information that would disrupt the flow of the text; references to further reading, etc.)¹

Tip:

Literature processing is a decisive factor in the assessment of academic performance. It is expected that the relevant literature sources have been researched and processed, especially in the theoretical explanations. A negative assessment is given if large passages of text or entire chapters are taken from only one or a few cited sources. This is hardly a critical examination of the relevant literature.

The total number of sources used depends on the topic and, of course, on the intensity of the literature research. The longer the paper, the more sources should be used. As a rule of thumb, the number of different sources should roughly correspond to the number of pages. It is advisable to use several sources on a theoretical topic and not just "copy" from one source. Particularly in the case of definitions or basic principles, several authors or several literature sources should be consulted.

Only published sources (**citable**) such as books, articles etc. may be cited, i.e. no other Bachelor's or Master's theses, internal studies or lecture notes. Above all, make sure that the source is **citable** by carefully checking the quality and plausibility of the content. Foreign-language (not English) literature can also be used. Above all, it is important that the literature is up-to-date and that the latest available edition of a publication is always used. If possible, always cite the original sources.

¹ Further information can be found in the cited sources and literature suggestions in the bibliography at the end of this document.

Practice-orientated sources, internal company scripts or internet sources have their justification depending on the subject area, but should be used sparingly and with caution. www.wikipedia.de / www.google.com are neither citable nor citation-worthy sources.

See the [library](#)'s helpful information and tutorials and use the online catalogue [OPAC](#) to search for sources.

Tip:

It is advisable to carry out a comprehensive online search in the library with the support of the dedicated staff right at the start of processing. Many documents are available as full-text PDFs for download or physically.

When writing academic papers, any significant assistance from other persons or **generative artificial intelligence (gKI systems)** is generally prohibited unless this has been agreed in advance with your supervisor. Cases of doubt must be clarified with the supervisor. An exception is the creation of images with gKI systems (see chapter 5.1).

4.2 Brief references in the text section

Adopted, foreign ideas must be labelled as such.

Two variants are possible:

- a) **Citation in footnotes:** Citations are indicated by footnotes at the relevant point in the text.² Footnotes are indicated in the text by superscript numbers, they begin with a capital letter and end with a full stop.
- b) **Citation in the text:** The so-called "short reference" is placed directly after the cited text (cf. Theisen (2021), p. 174). The spelling is identical to the footnotes; the font and font size of the text are retained.

Please ask your supervisor which option you should use.

In the **short citation** according to the so-called Harvard citation style, surnames of the authors as well as the year of publication and the reference (page number) are given.

If a cited passage extends over the following page, this must be indicated by the addition "f." (following page) after the page number. If there are several subsequent pages, this should be indicated by the addition "ff." (following pages) or the corresponding pages ("pp. 122-126").³ Use a standardised spelling throughout the document in consultation with your supervisor.

² See Theisen (2021), p. 174.

³ See Ebster / Stalzer (2017), p. 129 ff.

Internet sources must be cited with the complete URL and the date of consultation if it is a direct citation from the website.⁴ If it is a download or an article with a named author, the source is cited according to the guidelines analogous to a print document. The full internet path is then given in the bibliography (see chapter 4.4).

Word's footnote function makes it easier to cite in the text; equivalents are also available in other writing programmes (e.g. LaTeX). Various tools can be used to manage literature and citations and linked to your writing programme. Use the university licence for [Citavi](#) or open source alternatives such as [Zotero](#). The library offers excellent [seminars](#) and tutorials on this.

4.3 Types of citation

Foreign ideas can be reproduced literally or analogously.

- a) **An indirect quotation** is when thoughts or statements are taken from another author without being taken verbatim. The original source is listed as a short reference in the footnote or in the text, the full reference is in the bibliography. In the short reference, the source reference begins with "Cf."⁵.
- b) A **literal (direct) quotation** is the verbatim copying of whole sentences or parts of sentences. It is begun and ended with inverted commas. The source is indicated in the footnote / in the text; it "begins after the number with the surname of the cited author without a preliminary note" (Theisen (2021), p. 169).

Literal quotations should not exceed one or two sentences and should be used very sparingly - sequences should be avoided.

In the following four cases it makes sense to quote verbatim:

- when it comes to conceptualisations or definitions,
- if the context in question itself cannot be formulated better - and above all shorter,
- in text-critical discussions, i.e. when you want to analyse and interpret an author's statements,
- in the case of literature not written in German, as a supplement to the translation, so that the reader can check whether the author has translated the text correctly.

Direct quotations require literal accuracy. Deviations from the original text should therefore be indicated directly after the deviation by bracketed additions such as "[author's note]".

⁴ Cf. www.fh-rosenheim.de/aktuelles (20.01.2024).

⁵ See e.g. Theisen (2021), p. 174. or Ebster / Stalzer (2017), p. 124ff.

Emphases in the quoted text should always be adopted; own emphases should be marked with the addition "[author's formatting]". Omissions are marked by continuous dots (with "[.]" for one omitted word and "[...]" for several). If the original source contains a spelling error, this is taken over and marked with "[sic]" directly after the erroneous word. If the original source is in English and there is no translation, the original should be made available to the reader. Especially in the case of literal quotations, the original should be quoted wherever possible.⁶

Tip:

Use quotes to support your own opinion or to draw attention to opposing positions or to critically scrutinise them. Then draw your own conclusions and contribute your own thoughts.

4.4 Bibliography

In the bibliography, all sources that were **actually** cited are listed as "**full references**". Applicable laws or judgements are not listed in the bibliography. Neither are personal communications (interviews), CCI systems used (keep a separate list in the appendix if necessary) or literature that has been read but not cited. The various sources are indented for clarity (see bibliography in the appendix). For visual reasons, the titles of the papers may be written in italics - but this is not a must.

The bibliography should include the surname, the first letter(s) of the first name(s), the full title of the publication, the volume, the edition (from the 2nd edition) and the place and year of publication. First names should either be abbreviated or written out in full, please speak to your supervisor. The publications are **listed in alphabetical** order according to the surnames of the authors or the names of the publishing institutions (e.g. Max Planck Institute). If no author can be recognised for a source (e.g. for journal articles), the abbreviation "n.A." is used and the source is sorted under "N".⁷ If several publications by one author are used, these should be sorted according to the year of publication, starting with the **earliest** publication. In the case of information published on the Internet, there is a risk that a text may be altered or no longer accessible after citation. It is therefore advisable to make a backup copy (screenshot, PDF printout) of the website and save it separately. Talk to your supervisor about how you should store the references.

The correct citation of internet sources and other types of sources in the bibliography is listed in a table below:

⁶ [The library's citation guide](#) offers further assistance.

⁷ See n.A. (2011), p. 3.

Source	Structure	Example
Monographs	Author, (year of publication): <i>Title - possibly subtitle</i> , edition [from 2nd edition of the book], place of publication, publisher.	Lutz, H. / Berg, A. (2024): <i>Die Gestaltung wissenschaftlicher Arbeiten</i> , 4th edition, Rosenheim, Springer Gabler.
eBooks	Analogue print medium, with the addition: "taken from: <u>Internet path</u> (date of last access)".	Lutz, H. / Berg, A. (2024): <i>Die Gestaltung wissenschaftlicher Arbeiten</i> , 4th ed., taken from www.derEBookVerlag.de (retrieved on 01/03/2024).
Dissertations	Citation as in the print medium, with the addition "Diss."	Müller, T. (2017): Competitive advantages through digitalisation, Diss., Berlin.
Contributions from anthologies	Author, (year of publication): Title of contribution, in: Name of editor (ed.): Title of anthology, place of publication, publisher, top and bottom of page of the contribution.	Dietrich, M. (2019): <i>Die Gestaltung wissenschaftlicher Arbeiten</i> , in: Müller, T. (ed.): <i>Geisteswissenschaften im Wandel der Zeit</i> , 2nd ed. Munich, Akademie Verlag, pp. 116-136.
Magazines and Newspaper article:	Author, (year of publication): Article title, in: journal title, volume number, issue number, top and bottom of article.	Halle, T. (2020): Databases in everyday business management, in: <i>Journal der Betriebswirtschaft</i> , H. 5, pp. 480-492.
eJournals	Analogue journal article, with the addition URL: <u>Internet path</u> (date of last access).	Halle, T. (2020): Datenbanken im betriebswirtschaftlichen Alltag, in: <i>Journal der Betriebswirtschaft</i> , H. 5, pp. 480-492, URL: www.derEJournalVerlag.de (retrieved on 01.03.2024).
Internet source	Author of the article or institution operating the website (year of publication): Website title, URL: <u>Internet path</u> , (date of last access).	TH Rosenheim (ed.) (n.d.) Faculty of Business Administration, URL: https://www.th-rosenheim.de/die-hochschule/fakultaeten/fakultaet-fuer-betriebswirtschaft/ (retrieved on 10/02/2024).
Data and Studies	Cite the original source of the data, if necessary with the addition "taken from: ..." (indication of the secondary source)	State Statistical Office (2018): Income and consumption sample, taken from: www.destatis.de (retrieved on 01/03/2019).
Further information	Special features apply to legal texts and commentaries, personal interviews, encyclopaedia entries or standards	If in doubt, speak to your supervisor or ask at the library .
Interviews	Are only cited in footnotes	¹ Interview with Thomas Botowik, First Chief Superintendent of Police and Press Spokesman for the Bavarian Federal Police, in Munich on 1 February 2024.

Laws ⁸	Are not listed	
Judgements	Are only cited in footnotes	² BFH, judgement of 02.05.2024 - I R 99/23, BB 2024, 124.

Further notes on citation (these spellings apply to short references in footnotes as well as to full references in the bibliography):

Two authors	Separation with slash	¹ Lutz H. / Berg A. (2024), p. 111.
Three or more authors	Citation of the main author with the addition "et al."	² Lutz A. et al. (2024), p 111 f.
Author has name affix	Name suffix comes after first name and has no effect on alphabetical sorting	³ Halle, T. von (2020), p. 234. ⁴ Greiz, L. Countess of (2024), p. 6.
More than one source per year by same author	Earliest (not the latest!) publication is given the suffix "a" next to the year, etc.	⁵ Berg A. (2020a), p. 17 ff. ⁶ Berg A. (2020b), p. 68.
Quote from Collective work	The author of the cited text is named first, then the author of the collective work	⁷ Dietrich M. in: Müller W. (2019), pp. 20-25.
Quoting from Secondary literature	The author of the original source is named first, then the author of the quoted text. The bibliography contains the full citation of the secondary source!	⁸ Offenbach G. (1955), quoted from: Dietrich M. (2019), p. 55.

⁸ For the correct citation style in legal academic papers, see *Byrd, B. S. (2016): Zitierfibel für Juristen, 2nd ed., Munich, C.H. Beck* (available to borrow from the TH library) and talk to your supervisor!

5 Illustrations and directories

5.1 Citing illustrations

Figures, tables, etc. are not only used to visually enhance the text, they also illustrate the facts presented or substantiate claims made. In this respect, they support the argumentation, but never replace the written text and therefore always require explanation ("As summarised in Table 4..."). Graphical representations and images are classified as **illustrations**, while structured figures or text are classified as **tables**.

In the text, the title of the figure or table is always given below the figure. It is preceded by the designation "Fig. X" or "Tab. X" with the consecutive number. This is followed by the source citation in abbreviated form as specified in chapter 4.2. The full reference is given in the bibliography. Here are some examples:

- One illustration or its content was taken 1:1 from a third-party source :
 - Short reference with possible addition "(created by author)" if the illustration has been visually modified.
 - If the image was created with a gKI system, add the addition: "created with: [URL of the gKI tool]"

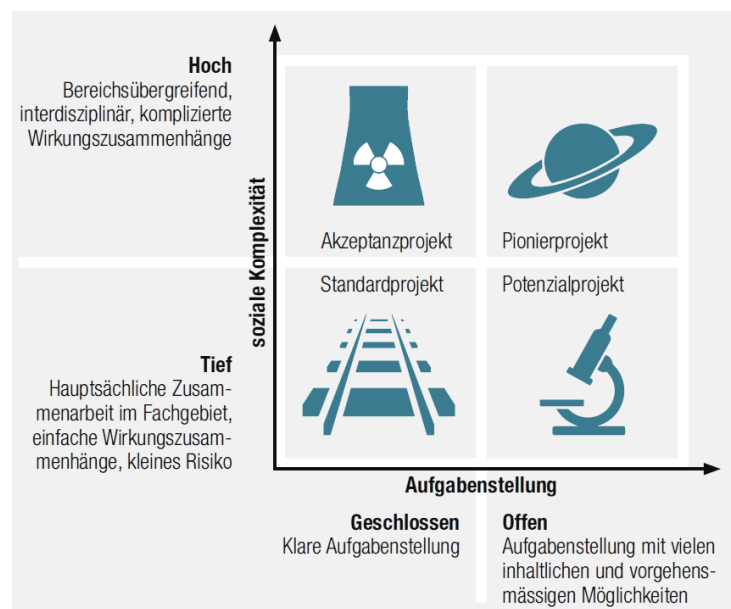


Fig. 1: The four possible project types

Source: Kuster (2019), p.5.

- The illustration or its content was largely taken from a third-party source, but the content has been modified in parts:
 - Short reference with the addition "based on ...".
 - If the image was created with a gKI system, add the supplement: "created with: [URL of the gKI tool]."

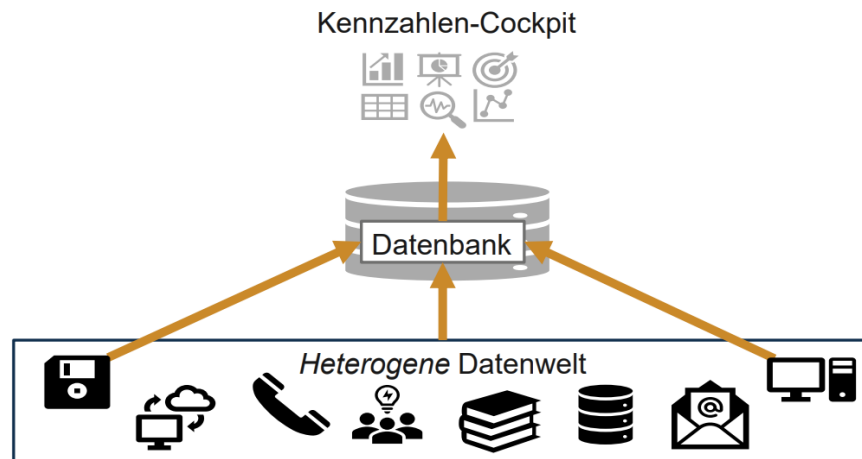


Fig. 2: The preparation of data

Source: Based on Kempster (2017), p. 145, created with: https://www.canva.com/de_de/

- The illustration was created in-house and the illustration content was not taken from a third-party source:
 - The source reference is omitted.
 - If the image was created with a gKI system, add the addition: "created with: [URL of the gKI tool]"

Fig. 3: Core business processes in the construction industry

Illustrations that do not necessarily contribute to the understanding of the text can be included in the **appendix** instead of the text section.

5.2 List of figures and tables

These lists should be placed after the table of contents and, if applicable, the list of abbreviations and before the text section. They list **the titles** of the figures and tables with their **numbering** and **page references**. As described in chapter 2.1, these are two separate lists.

Tip:

Self-created illustrations are rated higher in the assessment of your work than those taken over.

5.3 List of abbreviations

It lists all abbreviations used in the text and their meaning that are not generally understood. For example, "EU", "DNA" or "etc." do not need to be listed, as readers can be assumed to be familiar with them. Specific abbreviations such as "BW" or "FWPM", on the other hand, are written out in full when they first appear (e.g. "...was adopted by the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs (KMK) of the Länder in the Federal Republic of Germany...") and listed in alphabetical order in the list of abbreviations. Use abbreviations sensibly but sparingly.

5.4 Appendix

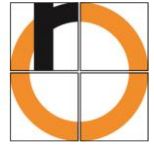
Illustrations or other documents that are part of your work but do not necessarily have to appear in the text section are integrated into an appendix. These would exceed the scope of the text section or hinder the flow of reading, but are necessary for a full understanding of your scientific treatment of the topic. For example, complete interview protocols, the questionnaires used or very large tables. Tables and graphics in the appendix are **not** listed in the respective directories. Please also list any CCI systems used here in alphabetical order.

Bibliography

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- Theisen, M. R. (2021): Wissenschaftliches Arbeiten - Erfolgreich bei Bachelor- und Masterarbeiten, 18th edition, Munich, Vahlen.

Appendix A: Title page Bachelor thesis / Master thesis

Appendix B: Statutory declaration



Title of work XY

Bachelor thesis / Master thesis

Submitted to:

**Rosenheim University of Applied Sciences
Faculty of Business Administration**

Submitted by:

**First name, surname
Matriculation number: 123456**

Supervisor:

**Name of supervisor
Name of second assessor**

Date of submission:

Date

Statutory declaration

I hereby declare in lieu of an oath that I have prepared the present work independently and without outside help. All passages that are based literally or in meaning on publications or lectures by other authors are indicated as such.

I also assure you that I have not used any literature other than that specified. This assurance also applies to all drawings, sketches, pictorial representations and the like contained in the work.

The work has not yet been submitted to any other examining authority and has not yet been published.

Place, date

Signature of student