

Guidelines for the formal design of scientific papers

Status: June 2026

1. Copies to be submitted, files, and size

The academic paper must be submitted to the chair's office by the deadline. The following guidelines apply:

	Bachelor seminar-work	Master seminar-work	Bachelor thesis	Master thesis
Copy in writing	• Spiral binding • 2 printed copies • Must include affidavit (see chapter 9)		• Simple adhesive binding • 2 printed copies • Must include affidavit (see chapter 9)	
Electronic copy	• On USB-Stick/by e-mail^a • 1 x PDF file • 1 x Word-file • 1 x PDF file anonymized (without personal data such as name, matriculation number etc.)		• On USB stick/by e-mail^a • 1 x PDF file • 1 x Word-file • 1 x PDF file anonymized (without personal data such as name, matriculation number etc.) • In case of empirical quantitative work: CSV dataset and R/Python/SPSS/STATA Code/syntax • For experiments additionally: Codebook, questionnaire, project file and proof of payment for incentives • In case of empirical qualitative work: transcripts or summaries of the interviews	
Expected scope and tolerated deviation	Max. 15 text pages ^b -10 % ^c		25 text pages ^b +/-10 % ^c	50 text pages ^b +/-10 % ^c

^aPlease coordinate with the supervisor.

^bExcludes title page, outline, and indexes, but includes figures and tables.

^cA scope outside the tolerated deviation must be coordinated with the supervisor.

If an anonymized version of the thesis is not submitted, the chair cannot guarantee that anonymization can be successfully carried out for the purpose of plagiarism comparison. Nevertheless, the chair reserves the right to check for plagiarism.

2. Language

All papers can be written in German or English. The language of the paper should be agreed upon with the supervisor beforehand.

Please use gender-appropriate language. For this purpose please use the [guidelines of the KIT](#).

3. Page format

- format: DIN A4
- side margins:
 - Top: 2,5 cm
 - Bottom: 2,0 cm
 - Left: 2,5 cm
 - Right: 2,5 cm

4. Font size, line spacing, layout, and footnotes

The font size in the text, table of contents, etc. must be 12 points. Exceptions to this are chapter and section headings, whose font sizes and type can be graduated for the purpose of illustrating the outline levels (but at least 12 points). In figures and tables, the font size must be at least 10 points.

The paper (text, table of contents, etc.) must be written in 1.5-line spacing. Leave 6 points of extra spacing before paragraphs (format paragraph spacing before: 6 pt.). One paragraph corresponds to one thought. Paragraphs are to be justified and must consist of at least two sentences.

Footnotes are unusual in an academic paper in marketing. They should only be used in justified exceptional cases (if necessary, discuss with the supervisor).

5. Table of contents and outline

The outline must be in numerical order according to the principle of graduation. It should be noted that each subdivision should have at least two bullet points. Care should be taken to ensure that the individual chapters or sections are distinct and balanced. The length of a section should reflect its contribution to answering the research questions of the paper. Indexes beyond the Table of Contents (e.g., List of Figures, List of Tables, List of Abbreviations) are not mandatory, but should be numbered consecutively in Roman numerals beginning with I, if provided. A list of abbreviations is only necessary if abbreviations are used that are not listed in the Duden dictionary. The actual text, any appendix, the bibliography, and the affidavit should be numbered using Arabic numerals.

Figure 1 shows an exemplary, simplified representation of a table of contents:

List of abbreviations.....	ii
List of figures	iii
List of tables	iv
1. Introduction.....	1
2. Theoretical Background	2
2.1. Sub-chapter	2
2.1.1. Sub-sub-chapter	2
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4. Empirical Analysis	4
5. Discussion.....	4
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Figure 1: Representation of a table of contents

6. Illustrations and tables

Figures and tables must be numbered and have a title. Numbering can either be continuous or refer to the chapter.

Examples:

Figure 3.1: Overview of Behavioral Science Theories *or*:

Figure 12: Overview of Behavioral Science Theories.

If figures and tables are adopted unchanged, the source must also be cited. It is not necessary to add "Own representation" to figures and tables developed by you. If figures and tables are reproduced in an altered form, the original source is referred to by the addition "based on".

If many empirical studies are discussed as part of the paper, it is recommended that appropriate literature tables be prepared.

Figures and tables are to be integrated into the text if they are related to the text. Their content must be referred to in the text. Extensive presentations such as questionnaires are to be placed in the appendix.

7. Citation style

Every quotation must be verifiable, foreign ideas must be identified as such. Footnotes are not used for references in the text. Instead, the source is referred to in the text. If the reproduction of thoughts refers to core contents of the cited publication, no page reference needs to be made. If reference is made to specific passages in the text, the page must also be indicated.

Example of citation style when reproducing thoughts:

A satisfied customer is very likely to choose the same supplier again (Fornell, 1992, pp. 8ff.; Herrmann, 1995, p. 238)

This procedure applies to up to three authors; for four and more, only the first author is cited with the addition "et al.".

Literal quotations are to be placed in quotation marks. Quotations in English do not have to be translated. Omissions in quotations are to be indicated by three continuous dots (...). Additions are to be enclosed in square brackets [].

Example of citation style for direct quotations:

“Such a procedure [as PCA] is preferred to the application of a confirmatory factor analysis in this stage (...)”
(Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004, p. 45).

The source citation is to be inserted at the end of the thought taken from this source.

The paper must generally be prepared in accordance with the APA guidelines (APA, 7th edition).
Deviations from these requirements are only permitted after consultation with your supervisor.

8. References

The bibliography must be arranged alphabetically and chronologically by author, i.e., if there are several works by one author, they are arranged according to the year of publication, starting with the oldest work. In the case of several works by one author from one-year, lowercase letters beginning with "a" are introduced after the year number. Journals, books, dissertations, etc. are not listed separately.

Example for the citation of books:

Hennig-Thurau, T., & Houston, M. B. (2019). Entertainment science: Data analytics and practical theory for movies, games, books, and music (1st ed.). Springer.

Example for the citation of scientific journals:

Hennig-Thurau, T., Gwinner, K. P., Walsh, G., & Gremler, D. D. (2004). Electronic word-of-mouth via consumer-opinion platforms: What motivates consumers to articulate themselves on the internet. *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, 18(1), 38–52.

Example for the citation of internet sources:

Statistisches Bundesamt (2019), Gesamtentwicklung des Außenhandels ab 1950. URL:
<https://web.archive.org/web/20190604161520/https://www.destatis.de/DE/Themen/Wirtschaft/Aussenhandel/Tabellen/gesamtentwicklungaussenhandel.pdf?blob=publicationFile&v=7> [abgerufen am 01.01.2019].

For the citation of Internet sources, the specification of a link is required. For this purpose, the link must first be archived on the page <http://archive.org/web/> to ensure permanent access. In the continuous text, Internet sources are indicated with their author and year of publication, as is the case with journals. If the author of a source is unknown, the institution to be assigned must be named as the author.

The paper must generally be prepared in accordance with the APA guidelines (APA, 7th edition).
Deviations from these requirements are only permitted after consultation with your supervisor.

9. Affidavit

The student must include and sign a written declaration in the Seminar's, Bachelor's and Master's thesis (also applies to English-language theses):

"I truthfully affirm that I have written the thesis independently, that I have indicated all sources and aids used completely and accurately, and that I have marked everything that has been taken from the work of others unchanged or with modifications, and that I have observed the KIT Statutes for Safeguarding Good Scientific Practice as amended from time to time."

Place, date

Signature

Please also include a written declaration of your use of AI services, if applicable.

10. Dealing with Plagiarism

The performance of Bachelor's, seminar and Master's theses at our chair is based on mutual trust. You undertake to complete these examinations independently and without outside help. This also includes marking adopted sentences and texts as citations. Without an indication of the origin of such material, such passages are otherwise considered plagiarism. In case of plagiarism, the chair reserves the right not to evaluate the thesis in whole or in part. By submitting your work to our chair, you acknowledge these rules and agree that it can be analyzed by means of plagiarism detection software.

11. Blocking notice

In the case of work produced in cooperation with companies, cooperation partners may require a confidentiality agreement. In this case, a blocking note can be placed in front of the work, which is oriented to the following text. In case of doubt, the cooperating company can make a different proposal. However, it must be agreed with the chair before the work on the topic is started. In addition, it is important that the chair has access to the underlying data material in connection with the correction of the thesis.

Proposal for blocking notice:

"The following work contains confidential information. Therefore, it was a condition of the work that it would not be made available to the public. In order to meet this requirement, the following blocking notice is valid: This work was prepared for internal purposes of xyz AG. Public display of this work therefore requires the prior explicit consent of xyz AG. If this is not granted, access to this work is only permitted to employees of the supervising chair and the examination secretariat. They are obliged to treat the information contained in the thesis confidentially.

12. Cover page

A Word template for the layout of the title pages can also be found on our website. The design of the title page should follow the layout shown below:



KIT
Karlsruher Institut für Technologie

Title

[In the case of theses with a German title, the title must also be given in English]

Bachelor's Seminar Thesis / Master's Seminar Thesis / Bachelor's Thesis / Master's Thesis

Submitted on

Institute for Customer Insights
Digital Marketing Research Group

Professor:

Prof. Dr. Ann-Kristin Kupfer

Supervisor:

Title and Name

Karlsruhe Institute of Technology (KIT)

Summer Semester/Winter Semester 20XY/XZ

by

Name:	First Name Last Name.
Matriculation no.:	1234567
Address:	...
Mobile:	...
E-Mail:	...

Figure 2: Illustration of the title page of a seminar paper or thesis

13. Information on the Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence

Was generative AI used at any stage of the project?

Yes ☐

No ☐

If your answer to the previous question was 'yes', please complete the form below:

Which AI models were used?

By signing this document, you confirm that you have complied with the rules on the use of generative AI set out below. You also acknowledge that, in the event of suspected unauthorised or undeclared use of generative AI, you may be asked to provide an oral assessment of the topics covered.

- ☐ I have checked the AI-generated content for potential copyright violations.
- ☐ I can fully explain any content that forms part of my submission.
- ☐ I have fully and accurately documented all instances where generative AI was used in the report.
- ☐ I understand that I am fully responsible for all the information and statements provided.

Date, Place

Signature

Handreichung zur Nutzung von generativer KI bei der Erstellung von wissenschaftlichen studentischen Arbeiten

KIT-Fakultät für Wirtschaftswissenschaften

Eingrenzung

1. Als generative künstlicher Intelligenz (KI) bezeichnen wir Verfahren, bei denen Algorithmen Inhalte erzeugen, insbesondere Texte, Abbildungen und Softwarecode. Aktuelle Beispiele sind z.B. ChatGPT im Rahmen der Texterzeugung, Dalle (OpenAI) oder Midjourney zur Erzeugung von Abbildungen und Grafiken und GPT Co-Pilot (OpenAI) für die Erzeugung von Code. Diese Handreichung bezieht sich aber auch auf alle vergleichbaren Technologien.
2. Zielgruppe dieser Handreichung sind sowohl die Wissenschaftlerinnen und Wissenschaftlern als auch die Studierenden an der KIT-Fakultät für Wirtschaftswissenschaften. Sie soll Hinweise geben, wie generative KI bei der Erstellung wissenschaftlicher studentischer Arbeiten einzusetzen ist.
3. Mit wissenschaftlichen studentischen Arbeiten sind insbesondere Seminararbeiten, Bachelorarbeiten und Masterarbeiten gemeint. Die Hinweise lassen sich aber auch auf andere Formen studentischer wissenschaftlicher Arbeit z.B. im Rahmen von Teamprojekten oder Softwareentwicklungsprojekten übertragen.
4. Diese Handreichung ersetzt dabei nie spezifische Regeln für die Erstellung solcher Arbeiten, die durch die einzelnen Lehrstühle und Institute der Fakultät aufgestellt werden. Im Zweifelsfall sollte immer der direkte Kontakt zur Betreuerin oder zum Betreuer der Arbeit gesucht werden.

Leitlinien

5. Uns leitet die Idee, dass generative KI eine wertvolle Technologie ist, die wir – wo möglich und sinnvoll – auch in der Forschung einsetzen wollen.
6. Die zentrale Herausforderung, die durch die Nutzung generativer KI entsteht, ist die Attribution von Eigenleistungen. Genau diese Eigenleistungen werden aber bewertet.
7. Um eine solche Bewertung von Eigenleistungen möglich zu machen setzen wir auf eine transparente Dokumentation der Nutzung von generativer künstlicher Intelligenz im Rahmen der Erstellung wissenschaftlicher studentischer Arbeiten.

Grundregeln

8. Wir erwarten, dass Arbeiten, bei deren Erstellung generative künstliche Intelligenz eingesetzt wurde, dies transparent dokumentieren.
9. Gleichzeitig schaffen Lehrstühle Transparenz im Betreuungsprozess darüber, welche Formen der Nutzung generativer KI akzeptiert – und welche Formen der Nutzung nicht akzeptiert sind.

10. Wird generative KI eingesetzt, ohne dass ihre Nutzung transparent dokumentiert wird, wird dies als ein Täuschungsversuch bewertet.
11. Eine transparente Dokumentation kann bei wissenschaftlichen Arbeiten in Textform eine Tabelle sein, die neben dem Literaturverzeichnis in die Arbeit integriert wird. Sie kann folgende Informationen enthalten:
- Die Textpassage oder Abbildung für deren Erstellung generative AI genutzt wurde.
 - Die Prompts, die für die Erstellung dieser Passage genutzt wurden.
 - Eine qualitative Einschätzung, wie stark anschließend durch den Studierenden noch der Output der KI editiert wurde.
- Bei durch KI erstelltem Programmcode, kann dies durch eine entsprechende Kommentierung im Code sichtbar gemacht werden.
12. Mit der Nutzung von generativer KI übernimmt die Nutzerin oder der Nutzer die Verantwortung für die erstellten Inhalte. Insbesondere werden Fehler, die durch die KI gemacht werden, als Fehler der Erstellerin oder des Erstellers der wissenschaftlichen Arbeit bewertet. Gleiches gilt für Plagiate und Urheberrechtsverletzungen.

Protocol on the use of generative artificial intelligence

* Please note that the use of generative AI for grammar correction does not need to be explicitly stated

Usage location (e.g. line in the code, text...)	Generative AI that was used	What was the AI used for? (e.g. research, visualisation...)

14. Conducting the Empirical Study

Data collection in the context of quantitative theses is carried out online as standard; any deviations are discussed with the supervisor. The Unipark platform is available to students for online data collection.

The title page of each study/questionnaire is standardized and adapted to the text below:

[Logo of the practice cooperation partner, if applicable]

betreut durch:



Information about this study

Dear Participants,

Thank you for your interest in my research.

My name is [FORENAME NAME] and this study is part of my [BACHELOR/MASTER WORK] on [TOPIC].

My research project is supported by the Digital Marketing Research Group at the Institute for Customer Insights (CIN) of the Karlsruhe Institute of Technology (KIT). [In case of practical cooperation: The thesis is conducted in cooperation with COOPERATION PARTNER].

Participation in this survey is voluntary and will take approximately [X]-[X] minutes. You can cancel the survey at any time; you will not suffer any disadvantages by cancelling or not participating.

All your information will be treated strictly confidential. The data set will be handed over to the supervising chair together with the thesis and stored there according to the applicable rules. For the presentation of the results in the context of any publications, the data of all participants will be aggregated, which means that no conclusions can be drawn from the results to individual persons. [In the case of practice collaborations: Results are also made available to the cooperation partner only in aggregated form].

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at [E-MAIL ADDRESS CANDIDATE].

Thank you very much!

[FULL NAME]