WU WIRTSCHAFTS UNIVERSITÄT WIEN VIENNA UNIVERSITY OF ECONOMICS AND BUSINESS

E&I Bachelor's Thesis Guide

Guidelines, Information, Advice

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INSTITUTE FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND INNOVATION

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Please carefully read this document before contacting one of our team members regarding your bachelor's thesis to get an overview of the important formalities.

1 Prerequisites: Who can write a bachelor's thesis at our institute?

In general, all students of the E&I specialization may apply to write a bachelor's thesis at our institute. There are, however, three prerequisites that must be fulfilled:

(1) According to the curriculum, the first prerequisite is a positive completion of the course *Academic Writing* (GWA). It gives you an overview of the choice of topic, literature and database research, development of a research question, types of scientific work (e.g. empirical, literature review etc.), selection and handling of sources (correct quotation, avoidance of plagiarism), writing a proposal and presentation and discussion of scientific work. Anyone wishing to write a bachelor's thesis at the E&I institute must know, understand and be able to apply the contents of the *Academic Writing* course.
(2) The second prerequisite is to demonstrate that your planned thesis meets the standards of the E&I Institute in terms of both topic relevance and academic quality. The evaluation is based on a research proposal (see 4.2) and a preliminary outline of the thesis. If these requirements are fulfilled, you will receive confirmation of supervision.
(3) Thirdly, E&I students are strongly advised to complete the *Core Lecture* before beginning their bachelor's thesis. Writing a thesis with us in the first semester of the E&I specialization is only possible in exceptional cases.

Depending on available resources, the E&I institute may also supervise theses of students who are not enrolled in the E&I specialization. In such cases, please contact us at: entrep-office@wu.ac.at.

2 What is a bachelor's thesis?

At the E&I institute, we approach bachelor's theses in an entrepreneurial and innovative spirit. Therefore, we offer three distinct formats:

1. **Academic Research Thesis** – a traditional scientific thesis, either empirical or conceptual.
2. **Applied Practice Thesis** – a practitioner-oriented project, such as a consulting report or business plan (including, but not limited to, collaboration with corporate partners)
3. **Video Thesis** – an innovative format combining a written paper with an explainer video.

Each format has its own advantages and challenges, but the choice ultimately lies with the student. Regardless of which option you pursue, the process, expectations, and quality standards at the E&I institute remain the same.
Good to know: All thesis formats can also be completed in pairs, i.e. two students working on their thesis *together*. In this case, the scope and requirements are increased accordingly.

The table below provides an overview of the key differences between the three thesis formats, helping you choose the option that best aligns with your interests and goals.

Table 1: Key differences between thesis formats

	Academic Research Thesis	Applied Practice Thesis	Video Thesis
Focus	Generalization of findings; contribution to academic knowledge	Solution for a specific, practice-oriented problem (e.g., consulting report, business plan)	Clear and accessible explanation of complex concepts, theories, or research findings
Relevance	Academic **and** practical relevance	Primarily practical relevance	**Didactic value:** making academic or complex content understandable to a broader audience
Standards	Strong scientific foundation, critical engagement with literature, methodological rigor	Must also meet scientific standards (clear problem statement, structured argument, correct citations), but emphasis on applicability	Requires both academic rigor in the shortened written part and pedagogical quality in the video (clarity, accuracy, added value)
Output	Scholarly paper advancing understanding of a broader phenomenon	Professional-style document with actionable insights or recommendations	A shortened written thesis **plus** an explainer video that visualizes and simplifies key aspects
Citation	Correct and consistent referencing required	Correct and consistent referencing required	Correct and consistent referencing required in the written part; sources for visual/audio material must also be acknowledged

The following chapters apply equally to all thesis formats. Any specific deviations for *Applied Practice Theses* and *Video Theses* are described separately in chapters 7 and 8.

3 Supervisor & possible topics

At the E&I Institute, we follow a *rolling admission* process – this means that you can start your bachelor's thesis at any time during the year. Your first point of contact is always one of our research and teaching assistants. They act as co-supervisors: assessing whether your topic idea is on the right track, evaluating whether your proposal and outline are sufficient for registration, and supporting you throughout the thesis process once supervision has been officially

confirmed. We recommend reaching out directly to the assistant you would like to work with, ideally including a short outline of your intended topic area and your preferred timeline.

If the contacted assistant does not have the capacity to supervise your thesis, they will check within the team to identify a suitable alternative. Should you not know whom to contact, or if you prefer to make a general request, please send an email to entrep-office@wu.ac.at.

Possible topics

Before reaching out, students should inform themselves about the (research) interests of our assistants, which are listed on the institute's website. Topics are often predefined and closely linked to our ongoing research, but we also welcome your own proposals as long as they align with the broader themes of entrepreneurship and innovation.

In all cases, topics are usually kept relatively narrow. Attempting to "explain the world" is neither feasible nor advisable, especially within 30 pages. Your co-supervisor will support you in refining your research question and developing it into a solid proposal.

4 The process: From the idea to the grade

4.1 Overview

The following figure illustrates the process of preparing and writing a bachelor's thesis at the E&I Institute. The individual phases and milestones are explained in the subsequent chapters.

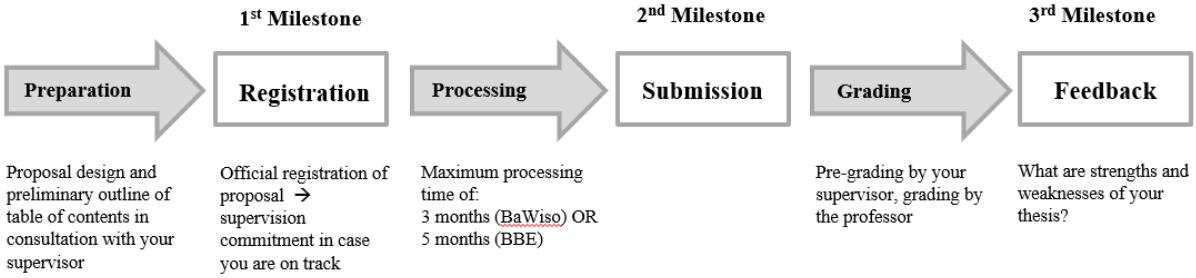

Fig. 1: Prototypical process of a bachelor's thesis at the E&I institute

4.2 Preparation phase: Research proposal

After clarifying topics and supervision, the next step is to prepare a research proposal. A template is available for guidance. In close coordination with your co-supervisor, you will refine and finalize this preliminary concept, which serves as a roadmap for both author and supervisor. The proposal should be five to eight pages in length (excluding references).

4.3 First milestone: Registration and confirmation of supervision

Once the proposal and preliminary outline meet the required standards, your co-supervisor will coordinate official registration (in LPIS). Registration marks the formal confirmation of supervision. From this point, the clock starts ticking: you have 3 (BaWiSo) or 5 (BBE) months

to complete and submit your thesis.

BBE Students need to prepare the required agreement of thesis supervision form and submit it together with their proposal (for the BBE process see https://www.wu.ac.at/en/students/my-program/bachelors-programs/business-and-economics/bachelors-thesis)

4.4 Second phase: Working on the thesis

After registration, you are expected to begin work immediately. Throughout this phase, you will remain in contact with your co-supervisor for feedback on important steps, but responsibility for progress and completion lies entirely with you. Plan your time carefully, stay focused on your research question, and make use of your supervisor's expertise when needed.

4.5 Second milestone: Submission of the thesis

Your thesis must be submitted electronically via MyWU by the deadline. There is no need to hand in a printed version. For empirical theses, the relevant datasets and code (R/SPSS) or interview transcripts must also be submitted/attached to ensure transparency and reproducibility. If you anticipate delays due to serious reasons, request an extension in writing well in advance.

4.6 Third phase: Grading

By law, your bachelor's thesis will be graded within four weeks of submission. The co-supervisor provides the initial assessment, while the supervisor is responsible for the final grade.

4.7 Third milestone: Feedback

After grading, you may arrange a feedback session with your co-supervisor. This optional meeting allows you to understand the evaluation in detail and take away valuable lessons for future academic or professional challenges.

5 What comprises a good bachelor's thesis?

In a nutshell: The way the problem statement is elaborated and how well (in terms of methodically correct, thorough and critical) the question is answered ultimately determines the quality of a bachelor's thesis. This clear line is often referred to as the *"common theme":* a very good thesis is a compelling argument. It contains nothing superfluous and should be concise.

5.1 Choosing the right method

There is no universally "better" or "worse" research method. The right choice always depends on your research question and the nature of the problem you are addressing. More complexity does not necessarily mean higher quality – what matters is methodological fit, transparency, and rigor.

- **Quantitative methods** involve collecting and analyzing numerical data, often through surveys, experiments, or statistical models. They are particularly suitable for *testing* hypotheses or identifying patterns across larger samples.
- **Qualitative methods** focus on rich, in-depth insights, for example through interviews, case studies, or thematic analysis. They are well suited for *exploring* new or complex phenomena where theory is still underdeveloped.
- **Conceptual or literature-based approaches** synthesize and *critically review* existing work. Importantly, they must go beyond a mere summary: your contribution may involve developing new models, refining existing frameworks, or formulating theories that can later be tested empirically. They can be valuable when empirical data are not available or when the goal is to clarify concepts, build frameworks, or identify gaps in research.

What matters most is that your chosen method allows you to answer your research question in a clear, transparent, and academically rigorous way.

5.2 Important components and core elements

5.2.1 A good title

The thesis's title should be descriptive and concise. Although it is not possible that it summarizes all aspects of the thesis, one should immediately know what it is going to be about. It should create a curiosity about its content. The final wording will be agreed upon as part of the registration.

> *Using the broadcast search method to identify lead users: an exploratory analysis*
>
> ➔ *Is a good title.*
>
> *First propositions about factors that influence the broadcasting search process as part of lead user identification: an exploratory analysis of six lead user projects that use the broadcasting method.*
>
> ➔ *Content is correct, but cumbersome and impractical.*

5.2.2 The four vital parts: introduction, methods, body and discussion

Introduction

The introduction sets the stage for the thesis. It provides the *motivation and background* for the topic, explains the *goals* of the work, and formulates a clear and focused *research question*. In addition, the introduction must justify the *relevance* of the question both academically and/or practically. A strong introduction establishes the "common theme" of the thesis: everything that follows should remain connected to the research question.

Methods

The methods section must clearly and transparently describe your research design, data collection, and analysis procedures. The goal is scientific reproducibility: another researcher

should be able to understand and, in principle, replicate your approach. Be explicit about choices and justify them (e.g., why a particular method, dataset, or sample).

Body
The body of the thesis contains the actual problem solving. It introduces, analyzes, and synthesizes the relevant literature and presents your own analysis. Do not simply summarize prior work – show why existing research is insufficient and how your approach addresses the gap. A well-written body maintains the "common theme," with each chapter logically building on the previous one and contributing to answering the research question.

Discussion
In the discussion, you critically reflect on your findings in relation to the research question. Analyze to what extent the question has been answered, highlight unexpected results, and consider alternative explanations. Address limitations openly and outline directions for future research. A strong discussion demonstrates self-critical awareness and shows how your results matter for theory and practice.

5.3 Some key success factors

5.3.1 Text flow and structuring: the famous „common theme"

A strong thesis is guided by a clear *common theme*. This means that every part of the text – each chapter, paragraph, sentence, and even word – should contribute directly to identifying or solving the research problem. If something does not serve this purpose, it does not belong in the thesis.

The quality of your work is judged not only by the content but also by how consistently you develop and sustain your argument. Results must answer the research question, and the literature review should support rather than distract from the argument. A well-written thesis is coherent, concise, and complete: nothing essential is missing, and nothing unnecessary is included.

Achieving this level of clarity usually requires several rounds of revision. Be prepared to cut passages if they do not fit the main argument. Although this can feel difficult, making such sacrifices strengthens the thesis and ultimately improves the grade.

5.3.2 A clear outline

A bachelor's thesis should not require more than four numbered heading levels (e.g., 4.1.2.3.); in most cases, three are sufficient. If you feel the need for more, reconsider your overall structure – too many levels usually indicate that the text consists of headings rather than coherent argumentation.

A strong outline is logical and self-explanatory. The same principles that apply to the thesis title also apply to headings: they should be clear, concise, and meaningful. Headings must guide the reader and reflect the logical flow of your argument.

Of course, the specific outline will also depend on the chosen thesis format; for example, an

Applied Practice Thesis will naturally follow a somewhat different structure than a classical Academic Research Thesis (for more information, please refer to chapter 7).

Typical pitfalls and suggested improvements:

…

2. Acquisitions and their impact

    2.1. Motives for acquisitions and their various impacts

    2.2. Target conflict: acquisition or innovation

3. Literary analysis of the impact of acquisitions on innovation

…

In this example, the first point (2.) is repeated through a sub-point (2.1.). This is illogical, because the first point should serve as the headline for the subordinating points. A second weak point is that points 2. and 3. are highly redundant, and therefore probably do not differ very much in content. As a reader you are angry about unnecessary repetitions.

A much better division (which could of course continue to improve) would be:

…

2. Background: Acquisitions

    2.1. Overview

    2.2. Motives for acquisitions

    2.3. Target conflict: acquisition or innovation

3. The impact of acquisition on innovation

…

5.2. Results of the empirical study

        5.2.1. The requirements for start-ups

5.3. Interpretation of results

…

In this structure, the question arises, why the author ever subdivided the top point 5.2. He only has one sub-point. In this respect, the title is not strictly speaking a headline. The sub-point should be eliminated.

…

3. Results of the empirical study

- 3.1. Methodology used
- 3.2. Importance of each founding motive
- 3.3. Correlation analysis between motive and success

…

Here the headline (3.) does not actually apply to all three sub-points. 3.1. is not a result, rather the approach. Either you make this into its own point, or you change the headline point to „Empirical Study".

…

5. Literature overview: establishing teams

- 5.1. Advantages of establishing teams
- 5.2. Supplementation through complementary skills
- 5.3. Problems of cooperation with engineers and economists

…

This illustrates a hierarchy problem. The author presents different aspects at the same level. For example, 5.2. is clearly a sub-point of 5.1. Also missing is the logical counterpart to the advantages, namely the disadvantages. A much better division would be:

…

5. Establishing teams

- 5.1. Advantages of establishing teams
  - 5.1.1. Supplementation through complementary skills
  - 5.1.2. Larger social networks
- 5.2. Disadvantages of establishing teams
  - 5.2.1. Different language of engineers and economists

…

5.3.3 A clear writing style

A good thesis is clear and precise. Obviously, the writing style also contributes to this. The ability to express yourself can be learned – make yourself aware of which texts seem clear to you and which do not, and what distinguishes them. Practice it. There is good literature on this subject. Some short rules below:

Scientific writing does not mean incomprehensible writing. Formulate short sentences and use a clear, simple language. Someone that writes complicated usually thinks complicated. Remember what the philosopher Karl Popper said: "If you cannot say something simply and clearly, say nothing and go back to work, until you can say it clearly."

> *Writing is a process. No sentence that you have written must remain that way. On the contrary - the writer Heinrich von Kleist praised "the gradual formulation of ideas" when writing.*
>
> *Do not force the reader to read a sentence three times. This happens when you spice up your text with insertions and subordinate clauses. Rule of thumb: An insertion must be less than three seconds long. Otherwise, the reader forgets the thoughts of the main clause, which drowns out information. For comparison: "The judge denied, after he had pronounced the sentence against the accused, the defense lawyer, by not saying goodbye, any respect." Would be clearer: "The judge denied the defense lawyer any respect. After he had pronounced the sentence against the accused, he did not say goodbye to him"*
>
> *Distinguish between foreign and technical words. Many foreign words can be replaced with their English counterpart. Unlike foreign words, technical terms belong in a scientific text.*
>
> *Be active. Scientific texts often suffer from becoming depersonalized. Use the personal pronoun "I" when you give your opinion, or call other authors by name. Do not write your sentences with a passive subject. Active formulations promote thinking.*
>
> *Who, how, what? "The behavior of Homo economics must be considered carefully in order to draw conclusions about the effects of the lack of information." Huh? Who here has what, how, where and why? Ask yourself these questions to avoid errors in your wording.*
>
> *Distrust adjectives. They can often be replaced by a noun. A literary work is a book, positive developments are gains and critical statements are criticisms.*

Sometimes a simple test helps: Give the thesis to your parents or a friend without a business background and ask if they *really* understand the text or whether there are sentences that are not yet entirely clear. Also ask if the work is structured clearly, whether the central arguments are clear, and whether it is fun to read.

Again: It is not enough to write a thesis that only has good content – quality means being able to communicate the content. By the way, this applies not only to bachelor's theses.

5.3.4 Some tips on time management

Writing a thesis is complex and often more time-consuming than expected. Plan your milestones carefully, build in buffers, and leave enough time for revisions and feedback. Aim to finish a full draft at least three weeks before the deadline – this gives you the chance to improve quality and avoid last-minute stress. Rushed, overnight work almost always results in errors and lower grades.

6 Formal guidelines

The following formal requirements are "suggested requirements", so you have some margin of discretion. Please use these responsibly.

6.1 Formal structure of the thesis

A bachelor's thesis can be written in either German or English (for BBE students, it has to be written in English). The normal range is 30-35 pages (excluding reference list and appendix) for BaWiSo students and 35-40 pages for BBE students (given the higher number of ECTS allocated to the thesis).

The thesis typically includes the following parts (applicable to all formats):

- Cover page (available for download on the WU website)
- Abstract
- Table of Contents
- List of Figures and Tables
- Main Body of the Thesis
- Reference List
- Appendix
- List of Aids

6.2 Formatting the text

The thesis is one-sided, 1.5 line spacing. The font is Times New Roman, size 12, and the text alignment should be full justification. The margins should be 2.54 cm all around. All pages of the text should be numbered with Arabic numerals.

Paragraphs make the text much easier to read. It is important to make sure that paragraphs tie together coherent thoughts. Figures, tables, charts and key words greatly help readers to navigate through the document. Particularly complicated and detailed issues can briefly be summarized in this way. So do not be stingy - but do not overdo it. Figures, graphs, tables etc. are to be numbered chronologically and given a description. Figure captions are below figures, table captions above the tables.

6.3 Citations in scientific work

6.3.1 Why cite and to what extent?

A scientific thesis builds on existing knowledge. Ignoring prior literature means failing to make a genuine contribution. Careful literature research and consistent referencing are therefore essential. The WU Library regularly offers courses on literature research, which we strongly recommend.

There is no fixed minimum number of references, but a broad and solid literature base is necessary for a good thesis. Quality and relevance matter more than quantity, yet as a rule of thumb, around 50 academic sources are common for a bachelor's thesis; 20 sources are certainly insufficient. Empirical theses may require fewer references than conceptual ones. A list of quality peer-reviewed journals can be found in the VHB-Teilratings.

All use of others' intellectual material – verbatim or paraphrased – must be cited correctly, following the citation guidelines provided below. Proper referencing makes it clear which ideas are your own and which are drawn from other sources, and it ensures that readers can locate the material.

Plagiarism is a serious offense. At WU, all theses are automatically checked with plagiarism detection software when submitted via MyWU. For details, see the official WU Guidelines Plagiarism.

6.3.2 Note on the use of generative AI

At E&I, we encourage students to make use of modern tools, including generative AI, as part of their research and writing process. When applied responsibly, such tools can support literature research, improve writing clarity, or help structure arguments. Examples include Perplexity for research support or DeepL Write for language refinement.

However, responsibility for the final thesis always rests with the author. Any use of AI tools must be transparently documented in the List of Aids, specifying which tools were used and for what purpose. The decisive factor is not whether AI tools are employed, but whether they are used thoughtfully and in a way that upholds academic integrity.

6.4 Presentation of sources

6.4.1 Body of the thesis

In general, citations for E&I bachelor's thesis are to be based on the APA (American Psychological Association: https://apastyle.apa.org/) guidelines, Version 7 (the most current version).

References in the body of the thesis are to be done by displaying the source in parentheses directly following the quoted or paraphrased text. The period is placed *after* the reference.

If you cite more than one publication in parentheses, they are to be listed in alphabetical order and separated by a semicolon. Use "e.g.," if you want to give examples, but not a complete list.

All references in the body of the thesis include the author's name, year, and – if you use a direct quote – the exact page numbers. When there are more than two authors, only the first is listed and then appended "et al.".

The following are examples of in-text citations:

> The success of the lead-user method in generating innovative ideas for companies has already been empirically documented (Lilien et al., 2002; Olson & Bakke, 2001; Urban & von Hippel, 1988).
>
> Research indicates that customization based on expressed preferences enhances consumers' willingness to pay, purchase intention, and attitudes toward the product (e.g., Franke et al., 2009; Raimondo et al., 2013).
>
> A recent study by Krause and Franke (2024) shows that consumers abandon customization because their valence follows a U-shaped curve during the process.
>
> And as we know, "entrepreneurship is about transforming the current status and creating something new (…)" (Frese & Gielnik, 2023, p. 158).

References for tables, figures, diagrams, etc., are placed directly below the object, preceded by the word "source" (or "sources"). To avoid any misunderstandings, any special notes to the

figures in tables, diagrams, etc., are to be labeled with small letters (a, b, c, etc.) directly in the table or figure and referenced in the footnote.

When you create a figure yourself, you need to identify the figure as such (source: own rendering). If you take the basic outlines of a figure, but make changes or additions, you must also note this:

Source: Own rendering based on Homburg and Krohmer (2003)

6.4.2 Reference list

Overview of how to cite different sources:

– *Journal article*

- Surname of the author (without any title) followed by a comma
- First name(s) of the author (abbreviated)
- Year in parentheses, followed by a period
- Title followed by a period
- Journal name in italic, followed by a comma
- Volume number in italic and the issue number in parentheses (without a space before it), followed by a comma, the page number, and a period
- DOI

Krause, F., & Franke, F. (2024). Understanding consumer self-design abandonment: A dynamic perspective. *Journal of Marketing*, *88*(2), 79–98. https://doi.org/10.1177/00222429231183977
Franke, N., Keinz, P., Steher, C. J. (2009). Testing the value of customization: When do customers really prefer products tailored to their preferences? *Journal of Marketing*, *73*(5), 103–121. https://doi.org/10.1509/jmkg.73.5.103
Horvath, D., Keith, N., Klamar, A., & Frese, M. (2023). How to induce an error management climate: Experimental evidence from newly formed teams. *Journal of Business and Psychology, 38*(4), 763–775. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10869-022-09835-x

– *Quoting books*

- Surname of the author (without any title) followed by a comma
- First name(s) of the author (abbreviated)
- Year in parentheses followed by a period (If there is nothing to indicate the year of publication, this must be identified as "n.d." [= undated].)
- Title of book in italic (subtitles can be omitted)
- Edition of the book in parentheses, followed by a period (not required for the first ed.)
- Publisher followed by a period

- DOI (if available)

> Jackson, L. M. (2019). *The psychology of prejudice: From attitudes to social action* (2nd ed.). American Psychological Association. https://doi.org/10.1037/0000168-000

– *Quoting book chapters*

Edited books are collations of chapters written by different authors. To reference a single chapter, a different format is needed.

- Surname of the author (without any title) followed by a comma
- First name(s) of the author (abbreviated)
- Year in parentheses followed by a period (see above)
- Chapter title followed by a period
- "In" Name of the editors (in this case, however, with the abbreviated first names before the surname) with the suffix "(Ed. or Eds.)" followed by a comma
- Title in italic followed by the page range in parentheses and a period
- Publisher followed by a period

> Aron, L., Botella, M., & Lubart, T. (2019). Culinary arts: Talent and their development. In R. F. Subotnik, P. Olszewski-Kubilius, & F. C. Worrell (Eds.), *The psychology of high performance: Developing human potential into domain-specific talent* (pp. 345–359). American Psychological Association. https://doi.org/10.1037/0000120-016

If you use numerous works of an author with the same publication year, distinguish the citations by adding a small letter at the end of the year (e.g., 1981a, 1981b).

> WTO (1981a)
>
> WTO (1981b)

– *Quoting from URL (Publications on the World Wide Web)*

See https://apastyle.apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines/references/examples/webpage-website-references

For other types of sources (film, song, …) and more information on how to cite in your bachelor's thesis, please refer to the official APA citation guide https://apastyle.apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines/references/examples

6.4.3 Literature management software

We recommend using a literature management software to handle citations while writing your thesis. Such a software not only increases efficiency but also ensures correct referencing in your thesis. Common literature management software programs are:

- Mendeley
- Zotero
- EndNote
- Citavi

For more information about how to use a literature management software you can refer to Fit4Research (https://learn.wu.ac.at/open/fit4research/index).

7 Applied Practice Thesis Format

E&I students can also choose to write their bachelor's thesis in the form of an **Applied Practice Thesis**, which is structured similarly to a consulting report. The goal is to analyze a specific practical problem and to derive actionable recommendations or implications.

This thesis format differs from an *Academic Research Thesis* in two key ways:

- It places greater emphasis on **problem analysis and solution development** rather than theoretical generalization.
- It typically includes **strategic recommendations or implications** that are directly relevant for practice.

The table of contents may be structured as follows (approx. 30 pages in total):

1. **Introduction** (approx. 3–4 pages)
   1.1. Problem statement and project context
   1.2. Goals and objectives of the project
   1.3. Relevance (e.g., for practice, industry, or entrepreneurship)
2. **Methods** (approx. 5–6 pages)
   2.1. Description and justification of the chosen methodological approach
   2.2. Data collection and analysis (e.g., interviews, benchmarking, case studies, market research)
3. **Results** (approx. 10–12 pages)
   3.1. Presentation and interpretation of findings
   3.2. Identification of key issues and opportunities
4. **Strategic Recommendations / Implications / Business Plan** (approx. 8–9 pages)
   4.1. Actionable recommendations for the organization or target group
   4.2. Broader implications (e.g., for entrepreneurs, managers, or policymakers)

Like all thesis formats, Applied Practice Theses must follow academic standards: arguments must be logically structured, sources must be cited correctly, and the work must be transparent and reproducible.
Topics for Applied Practice Theses are usually derived from real-world challenges in organizations or industries. They may be developed in collaboration with corporate partners, but they must always retain academic rigor.

8 Video Thesis Format: A written document and an explainer video

E&I students can write their bachelor's theses in an innovative format that includes a written document and an explainer video. The video thesis primarily focuses on the development of **didactic material** that explains complex concepts in a clear and accessible way.

The written document is different from an *Academic Research Thesis* in two ways:

- It does not include the usual discussion and conclusion parts
- It includes:
    - A video script: A chronological run-down of scenes (dialogue that is to appear in the video)
    - A video storyboard: A graphic representation of how the video will unfold, shot by shot.

The table of contents may be structured as follows:

1. **Introduction (approx. 1-2 pages)**
   1.1. Presentation of the topic and the research question
   1.2. Presentation of its relevance (e.g. for research, teaching, or practice)
2. **Literature review (approx. 5-7 pages)**
   2.1. Current state of research
   2.2. Key insights
      - Describe particularly relevant topic blocks more intensively
      - Refer to and highlight findings from the latest literature
3. **Video concept (approx. 10 pages)**
   3.1. Background information
      - Which topic blocks will be featured in the video?
      - What is the choice based on?
   3.2. Video script
   3.3. Video storyboard

The explainer video is an efficient combination of visual cues (storyboard based) and audio explanation (video-script based) that conveys key information on a phenomenon from the Core Lecture, taught by Professor Franke in the E&I specialization.

The video script and storyboard prepared by the student should be approved by the supervisor before the student proceeds with the creation of the video. Important tips and video requirements are documented in a corresponding explainer video guideline. Besides the guideline, the students who decide to write in this format receive a proposal template, and E&I branded opening and closing video template, accompanied by the E&I jingle.

The choice of topic is up to the student and is eligible for this format as long as it addresses an element (theory, method, tool, framework, etc.) of the Core Lecture. Thereby, students help future E&I students when learning, and they also gain visibility as an E&I expert.

For more details on this thesis format, please contact Caroline Fabian (caroline.fabian@wu.ac.at).

9 FAQ

Do I need to find a topic on my own?
No. Our website usually lists available topics, and assistants often have suggestions as well. Of course, you are also welcome to approach an assistant with your own ideas.

How many times must I revise the proposal before receiving supervision approval?
Writing a scientific thesis is an iterative process. Proposals and outlines are usually revised several times. Approval does not depend on the number of revisions, but on whether you demonstrate the ability to identify a problem and structure a solution, laying the foundation for a high-quality thesis.

Proposal and application – why these hurdles?
Our goal is to give you the best chance to succeed. The application process minimizes misunderstandings and ensures you are on the right track from the beginning.

Can I hand in my thesis for pre-correction before final submission?
No. You are fully responsible for deciding when your thesis is finished. We support you in all important steps and decisions, but the final responsibility is yours.

Is it true that only empirical theses can receive an "Excellent"?
No. The grade "Excellent" is awarded for excellent work – whether theoretical or empirical. That said, some students find it easier to demonstrate their own contribution in empirical work.

How often do I have to report to my (co-)supervisor?
That is up to you. Typically, there is closer contact at the beginning, followed by less frequent check-ins as the process progresses.

Will I receive feedback on my thesis?
Yes. After assessment, you can schedule a feedback session with your co-supervisor to discuss strengths and weaknesses and take away valuable lessons for future work.