

Information regarding

MASTER THESIS SUPERVISION

at the Institute for Higher Education Management (IHM)

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Important information on this guide:

This supervision guide has been created in accordance with the supervision standards of the Department of Strategy and Innovation at WU Wien. Hence, duplications and similarities of rules, norms and useful tips within the department may occur.

This guide is based on the following department guides:

- Institute for Entrepreneurship and Innovation: E&I Master Thesis Guide
- Guidelines for Writing a Master Thesis at the Institute for Strategy, Technology and Organization
- Information regarding Master Thesis Supervision at the Institute for Organization Design (IOD)

Purpose of this guide

The aim of this guide is to provide all the necessary information collected for students who are interested in writing their master's thesis at the Institute for Higher Education Management.

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

1 Prerequisites for writing a master's thesis at IHM

All students pursuing a Master's degree at WU are invited to write a master's thesis at our Institute. However, depending on our capacity, preference will be given to students enrolled in the Strategy, Innovation, and Management Control (SIMC) Master's program and the Master in International Management (CEMS).

In addition, there are some prerequisites that must be fulfilled:

- (1) The first prerequisite is the successful completion of the course "Master's thesis seminar".
- (2) The second prerequisite is that you convince us that the planned thesis will meet the standards of the Institute for Higher Education Management both thematically and qualitatively. The basis for a decision if these standards are met is a research proposal (see 4.1.) and a preliminary structure of the thesis. If this is the case, you will receive a confirmation for supervision.

Information on administrative aspects regarding the process of writing a master thesis at WU are available at <https://www.wu.ac.at/en/students/my-program/masters-student-guide/masters-thesis/>.

2 What is a master's thesis?

You are required to identify a practically and theoretically interesting research gap, formulate a research question, and with the help of relevant literature – and in most cases an empirical study, arrive at a solution. What does this mean exactly? What is an appropriate problem statement?

We want to clarify some potential misunderstandings:

- A master's thesis is not a project report. Statements in a project report are more or less exclusively related to a particular case, at a particular point in time, in a given situation. In a master's thesis you are required to be able to generalize your findings.
- A master's thesis is neither an individual experience, nor a personal opinion. The fundamental characteristic of a thesis is that it is unbiased in nature.

- A master's thesis is not a textbook. Textbooks are used to enable an interested reader to get started in a new subject, and aimed at transferring knowledge in an explanatory manner. A master thesis should of course be comprehensible to read, but it offers not just an overview or summary of existing literature; it goes beyond that: it identifies and solves a specific problem.

So what is a master's thesis?

- A master's thesis identifies a general problem. A problem is "general" when it refers not only to an individual case. "How should company XY set the price for the innovation Z?" corresponds to a singular problem. "What are the determinants of price setting in product innovation?" is a general question.
- A master's thesis identifies a relevant problem. A research question is relevant if it (1) has not been sufficiently answered by existing research, and (2) the answer is important and interesting.
- A master's thesis contains the solution to the problem (at least to some extent). This is achieved, for example, through the testing of theoretical hypotheses or the development of theory by means of empirical data. Therefore, a quantitative or an exploratory empirical study are possible approaches.

A thorough and successful development of the research question is crucial for the quality of the thesis.

The way the problem statement is elaborated and how well the question is answered determines the quality of a master's thesis. This clear line is often referred to as the "common theme": a very good thesis has a compelling argument. It contains nothing superfluous and should be concise. The **usual range is 40-60 pages** (excluding bibliography and annexes).

3 Supervisor/ Co-Supervisor

Your points of contact are Univ. Prof. Dr. Barbara Sporn and the research and teaching assistants. Prof. Sporn serves the role of main supervisor and when necessary, a research and teaching assistant may be assigned as co-supervisor.

You should start searching for a supervisor early enough, since our capacities to supervise a master's thesis can be scarce on short notice. Just write a short email in which you explain your interest in writing your master's thesis and shortly explain the topic of your interest. The topics are pre-determined in some way and are based on the areas of focus of the Institute for Higher Education Management. The co-supervisors often have topic suggestions that you can adopt or that you can develop further. These are usually aspects in which the assistants have a high interest due to their own research.

Of course we are also open to your own topics but they must be in line with the areas of expertise of our Institute. In all instances the topics are typically kept relatively narrow. "Explaining the

world" usually does not work, especially not if it is to take place on 40-60 pages. Your (co-)supervisor will assist in narrowing your research question, and help you develop the proposed topic into a proposal. This phase may take some time, so start early enough.

Working on the problem statement with two or several students is possible, and is especially useful when there is a (large-scale) empirical study. However, the individual workload must be clearly identifiable and separated from each other to facilitate the assessment of your thesis.

4 The process: From the idea to the grade

4.1 Preparation phase: First contact with the supervisor and the creation of a proposal

If you meet the requirements (see chapter 1) and are interested in a master's thesis supervised by our Institute, please contact Univ. Prof. Dr. Barbara Sporn or one of our teaching and research assistants. Ask yourself what topics you are interested in or get informed about topic suggestions by your supervisor.

In coordination with your supervisor, you will narrow down your topic and develop a proposal. At this stage you should focus on the master's thesis, meaning you should not attend too many other courses.

What is a research proposal?

A proposal is a preliminary concept note of your research, which will serve as a guide for you and your supervisor. A research proposal ensures that there are no misunderstandings between the student and the supervisor, that the research question is answerable and relevant, and that the student is generally on the right track. The proposal consists of **five to seven pages** (excluding references) and includes:

- Cover page with the name of the student, student ID and contact details
- Title. As part of the registration, the title of the thesis will be made formally binding.
- Background, problem definition, goal setting: The theoretical and/or practical background will be briefly presented. You also briefly summarize the current state of research and explain what you want to achieve with your thesis.
- Research gap and research question: What specific research question do you want to answer and why is it relevant from a practical and theoretical point of view?
- Approach and methodology: You describe how you will proceed to answer the research question and why this approach is suitable. You could also shortly mention any expected results.
- Structure of the thesis: Give an overview of what chapters will be covered in the thesis. Here you should clearly characterize the "common theme".
- Table of contents (1-2 pages): All of your considerations should be summarized in an outline.

- **Time Plan:** In order to plan your master's thesis it is important to have a plan about when to do what. Therefore, we request to include a time plan into the proposal that outlines the milestones of your master's thesis and by when they are to be achieved.
- **References:** State the table of references.

First milestone: Registration and acceptance of supervision

All master theses are registered officially. Registration serves as confirmation of supervision. Your supervisor(s) decide(s) if the proposal has met the necessary criteria and coordinate(s) the registration appointment date. After registration, you will have **six months to complete your thesis**.

4.2 Second phase: The process to solving the problem statement

Following the confirmation of supervision and registration of your thesis, we strongly recommend you to begin working on your topic immediately. During the working phase, you will stay in contact with your supervisor in order to keep him/her involved in any important decisions. Use his/her expertise when it comes to steps such as planning and conducting a survey, analyzing interviews, searching for secondary data, etc.

Responsibility for completion lies with you. You decide when the work is finished or whether some things need to be amended or supplemented. Your supervisor does not make a pre-correction for you. You decide alone and independently whether your work is ready to be submitted. We strongly suggest that you look for someone to proof read your work - especially in regard to spelling, grammar and formalities, as well as content. Get feedback from non-specialist people on whether the thesis is structured in a clear and understandable way.

Second milestone: Submission of the master's thesis

Submit the master's thesis by the deadline, both electronically and in hard copy (bound) to your supervisor. For the printed thesis, the cover sheet of the master's thesis needs to be completed, signed, and placed with the thesis (available for download from [the WU website](https://www.wu.ac.at)). Please note that one hard copy of your master's thesis must also be handed in to the Examinations Office when you pick up your graduation documents.

For further information on how to upload your thesis on myWU please have a look at the following guidelines - <https://learn.wu.ac.at/open/guide/abschlussarbeiten>.

Should you foresee that you cannot comply with the deadline for a serious reason, you must submit a written request for extension to your supervisor in a timely manner (normally at least one month in advance). Note that your supervisor will not grade the thesis prior to the final submission.

4.3 Third phase: Assessment of the master's thesis

By law, the assessment of the master's thesis needs to take place within two months of submission. However, we will make sure to assess your work as promptly as possible.

Third milestone: Feedback

After the thesis has been graded, you can make an appointment with your supervisor for a feedback session. We want to ensure that you understand the details of the assessment so that it may benefit you as much as possible in future, similar challenges.

5 Role of the supervisor

From the above explanations, the role of the supervisor should be clear. He/She has the function of an advisor that helps and provides support for your thesis. However, you should not forget that the accomplishment itself lies with you and you have full responsibility.

Understanding this is very important because it has a number of practical implications. For example, it means that the input of the supervisor is an opportunity, not an obligation. You should not follow a suggestion without understanding its importance. Misunderstandings are always possible, but keep in mind that you bear the responsibility when it comes to the final version of your paper.

Let us emphasize, however, that you will not be left alone. We will help you get the most of this experience and will be glad if you achieve a good or very good thesis.

6 What comprises a good master's thesis?

6.1 Important components and core elements

6.1.1 A good title

The title of your thesis 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.

6.1.2 The three vital parts: introduction, body and discussion

The **introduction** has a central function in the thesis. It serves three purposes:

- First, the objective of the thesis is stated. The underlying problem statement should be clear, and you develop a research question. The rest of the thesis will refer back to this part. A common beginner's mistake is that the actual thesis deviates from the research question, or in the worst case has nothing to do with it anymore. The "common theme" begins in the introduction.
- Secondly, the relevance of the research question is justified. This is obvious, but often forgotten. Sometimes, one reads of a "definition" of the topic. This is misleading, since definitions are statements of facts that do not require further justification.
- Third, the approach to problem solving is explained. The reader is offered a first overview of concepts, methods and results of the thesis. How does the author approach the topic? How do the individual chapters build on each other? What is the result of the thesis? The preview is thus a conceptual overview, a brief description of the methods used and a very brief summary of the key findings and conclusions.

The **body** contains the actual problem solving. It also introduces, analyzes and synthesizes the existing literature. Reviewed academic works are not always on the exact same topic, but can also be related in other ways, for example, originate from analogous fields or involve more general statements. This means the statement that one cannot find any literature on the topic only points to the fact that no thorough literature and database search was carried out. Based on discussion about the scientific work, you should show exactly why this is not sufficient to answer the problem statement contained in your thesis. It is therefore necessary to point out the limitations of previous research.

Based on these limitations, the contributions that your thesis makes can now be presented. What kind of support does your thesis offer to overcome these limitations? It may be useful to show on the one hand what your work accomplishes, and on the other hand what it does not address.

Depending on your research question and the current state of the literature on your topic, the theoretical section may consist of propositions or hypotheses. Subsequently, in the body you will describe the empirical background of your study and the methods that were used. A thorough explanation of data collection, sampling and data analysis approaches are of utmost importance. Finally, this section closes with a presentation of the results from your empirical analyses.

In the concluding **discussion** you should analyze to what extent the research question was answered, what alternative explanations there may be (especially in empirical studies), what additional questions emerged and what issues remain open and could be handled in future research. A self-critical analysis is important and there is no shame, if not all questions have been answered.

6.1.3 Figures, tables, and charts

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. Make use of graphical illustrations to present your findings, but do not forget to explain what they show.

6.2 Some key success factors

6.2.1 Text flow and structuring: the famous „common theme“

Structure is a very important element of a good thesis. Do you understand the thesis immediately? Can you find your way around? The reader wants to be guided through the thesis and not have to put all the pieces together him/herself. A good thesis is characterized by a clear theme and a compelling argument. This is known as the "common theme", which we discussed earlier. In a thesis that has a clear common theme, the results are answers to the research question(s), the analysis of the literature supports the argument and has no unessential parts - in short, the thesis is well-rounded, complete and contains nothing unnecessary.

It is a lot of work to get a thesis to this point. In no case, one will succeed right away. A thesis usually requires several rounds of revisions. Here, critical feedback from someone who is not involved in the thesis is important to get an external perspective.

6.2.2 A clear outline

Make use of headings to structure your thesis. A maximum of four numbered heading levels (e.g. section 4.1.2.3.) should be sufficient. An outline needs to be logical and self-explanatory.

6.2.3 Avoiding digressions

One should always focus on the fundamentals, namely the topic of the thesis. This means that for every chapter, every paragraph, every sentence and even every word, you have to ask yourself one critical question: Does it contribute to problem identification and/or problem solution?

Passages of text that deviate from the common theme, even if they are interesting and well written, will make the thesis worse. It will be necessary to revise the work several times and you will most likely have to remove some passages that you have put a lot of work into and that you may be proud of. While this is unfortunate, you will have to make the sacrifice or face the consequences, i.e. the risk of having a lower grade.

6.2.4 A clear writing style

A good thesis is clear and precise. 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.

Sometimes a simple test helps: Give the thesis to your parents or a friend without business background and ask if they really understand the text or whether there are sentences that are not yet entirely clear.

6.2.5 Anticipated technical problems

We strongly recommend to define headings, figures, tables, etc. as appropriate format templates and to insert cross-references to pages, figures, tables etc. using the functions provided for this purpose. This will save you a lot of time. We also recommend to print the master's thesis several days before the deadline and read it on hard paper. Pay attention to formatting, spacing and grammar.

6.2.6 Some tips on time management

Writing a research paper is a complex task. Particularly problematic is that the complexity is often underestimated. What initially seems simple can become very difficult and time consuming when the time comes to write the thesis.

This is one more reason to plan the time required for the individual steps and chapters (use of milestones). This way it becomes evident whether your pace is sufficient to complete the work within the given time frame. When scheduling, please give yourself a buffer, as experience shows that writing and revising often take more time than originally estimated.

6.3 Empirical studies

6.3.1 What are some differences between empirical and conceptual theses?

Working empirically generally requires more work. It asks for the acquisition of specific skills (with regard to qualitative and quantitative methods of collecting and analyzing data) in addition to a

good overview about the relevant literature. On the other hand, working empirically has some major advantages. It gives you more freedom in choosing a research question, as most questions call for empirical work to be answered properly. Furthermore, writing a well-crafted empirical thesis can be easier than writing a very good conceptual thesis. For conceptual pieces of research, the thoughts expressed and ideas presented need to be extremely sharp and creative to bring novel contributions to the literature. Just summarizing existing literature would not be sufficient.

Especially in empirical studies, an "Explanation of the world" will not be possible. You should therefore formulate the problem so that you can thoroughly and comprehensively examine it. If the topic is too big and wide, the work is almost inevitably trite and shallow. Ideal would be a "narrow" topic that you can analyze thoroughly and in-depth.

6.3.2 Different types of empirical work

You should first ask yourself whether you want your research to be exploratory (usually smaller in scale) or hypothesis-testing (larger, quantitative). Exploratory is, in contrast to widespread opinion among students, not inferior or "less empirical" than hypothesis-testing work.

You are not always free to choose between an exploratory or a hypothesis-testing thesis. A topic that has not been researched much will usually first require exploration. Hypotheses should be developed through the use of literature and empirical exploration. Hypothesis-testing theses thus usually require prior exploratory work. An exploratory master's thesis can be just as good, and provide the basis for a hypothesis-testing thesis.

6.3.3 Importance of documentation

It is very important to document the procedure accurately. When conducting empirical research, there is often no ideal solution and you must make compromises due to practical reasons. The researcher almost always, through personal decisions, affects the results (through questions in the interview, analysis, interpretation, etc.) - this is perfectly normal and legitimate. However, it is essential that all actions, all ambiguities, all interventions etc. are disclosed and explained, so that the reader can understand this.

6.3.4 Data collection and processing

For quantitative work, it is often tempting to use every available statistic. However, writing an empirical work is not a competition of data. It is not about using as many procedures as possible, but rather using the correct ones. The basic rule is that you should always consider what the evaluation of data contributes in terms of answering the research question(s).

When presenting results (i.e., empirical findings), make use of tables and graphs. In the text you should explain the key points (e.g. average results, differences, trends, etc.), and something that is often forgotten, interpret your findings. Interpretation means that you try to describe what this result means in terms of the research questions, whether the results surprise you, how this has an effect on the theory, etc.

6.3.5 Interviews

Interviews are recorded and later (with information about interviewee and date) transcribed. This way you can make a meaningful reference to statements made by the interviewee in your thesis (with reference to the appendix, interviewee, and page). Confidentiality is essential. No personal data should be made available to third parties.

Do not make the mistake of underestimating the demands of qualitative interviews. They vary greatly from normal everyday conversations. Be sure to familiarize yourself with the relevant methods. A wealth of books on research methods can be found at the WU library. Ask your supervisor if you need more guidance.

6.3.6 Ethical dilemmas

Clear ethical principles are important, particularly in empirical work. A guiding rule is that you must not harm third parties, and must not abuse their trust. If you have promised respondents, for example, that after completing your investigation you will send them a brief summary of your findings, then you should do so. Personal data from interviews should not be disclosed to third parties. Should you have any doubts regarding any ethical considerations, seek guidance from your supervisor.

7 Formal guidelines

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

7.1 Structure and outline of thesis

A master’s thesis is usually written in English and includes the following parts:

- Cover sheet (available for download on our website)
- Title page
- Table of contents
- Figures and tables
- The main body of your thesis
- Bibliography
- Appendix (e.g. interview transcripts or survey data)

7.2 Formatting the text

The thesis should be one-sided, with 1.5 line spacing. The font is Times New Roman, size 12, and the text alignment should be full justification. The top page margin is 2 cm and the bottom margin 3 cm. The left margin should be held at 3 cm, and the right at 2 cm. 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, graphs, tables etc. are to be numbered chronologically and given a description.

7.3 Citations in scientific work

7.3.1 Why cite and to what extent?

A scientific work builds on existing knowledge. Those who ignore the existing literature will not make a contribution to research. Therefore, the literature research and the reference to existing literature are of major importance. The WU library offers special courses in literature research on a regular basis. It is advisable to take advantage of this service.

The necessary number of references cited is a much-debated topic. It is not possible to specify a "minimum number". A relatively large literature base is not only advisable, but necessary for a good thesis. It is important to note, however, that it is not the quantity that is important, but rather the quality of the sources and how well they are applied. As a rule of thumb, between 50 and 80 sources is usually the norm for a master's thesis.

When citing, the citation guideline listed below must be followed. Any use of someone else's intellectual material in a scientific work must be accurately cited, or otherwise be considered plagiarism. This rule will allow the reader of the thesis to determine whether the ideas presented by the author are his/her own, or if they originated elsewhere. It should be easy to locate and review the used citations.

Plagiarism is not a petty offense and it is as easily found as it is created. At WU, as well as at the Institute, special software is used, which automatically compares the submitted work with all possible sources. For more information, see: [Plagiarism - Courses, Exams & Written Papers - Master's Student Guide](#).

Also, you are supposed to upload your master's thesis to myWU, which will automatically run a plagiarism check over your final submission.

7.3.2 Verbatim quotations

Verbatim reproductions are to be placed in double quotes. Quotations within a quotation are marked with single quotes. Footnotes belonging to a quoted source are not incorporated. Long quotations (two or more lines) can also be shown by indentation and narrower font, but longer quotations are to be avoided if possible and replaced with brief summaries.

Secondary quotes are quotes from the writings of an author A, which are not cited in the original text of the author A, but from a secondary source (author B). The golden rule is that all citations should be quoted from the original source, i.e. be checked in the original. This is necessary to make sense of and understand the context of the quote and whether a secondary source was even quoted correctly. If - in exceptional cases - the original source cannot be retrieved, this must be indicated in the citation (B cited in A).

7.3.3 Paraphrasing

Paraphrasing someone else's thoughts or expressions also requires correct citation. In this case, "c.f." (compare) can be added to the citation. Likewise, always make sure that the corresponding page number(s) are indicated.

7.3.4 Statistical tables, figures and diagrams

Figures are only of scientific value if they are verifiable. All figures are therefore provided with the source data. Even well known figures must be cited. As it is with verbatim quotations and paraphrasing of text, tables and figures do not only need to be cited if the contents were reproduced 1:1, but also if they were simplified, supplemented, or modified.

7.4 Presentation of sources

7.4.1 Body of the thesis

References in the body of the thesis are to be done directly in the text (Harvard style).

Harvard style displays the source in brackets directly following the quoted or paraphrased text. If you cite more than one publication in brackets, they are to be listed in alphabetical order and separated by a semicolon. The author's name and the year are usually not separated by a comma, except in publications with three authors, where the names are each separated by a comma. When there are more than three authors, only the first is listed and then appended "et al."

All references in the body of the thesis include the author's name, year, and – if you use a direct quote – the exact page number(s).

Only the bibliography includes the detailed description of the title, publisher, location, etc.

Harvard-style:

The success of the lead-user method in generating innovative ideas for companies has already been empirically documented (Lilien et al. 2002; Urban and von Hippel 1988; Olson and Bakke 2001).

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 to make changes or additions, you must also note this.

Source: Own rendering based on Homburg and Krohmer

Further information: <https://www.mendeley.com/guides/harvard-citation-guide>

7.5 Bibliography

Generally, citation is based on the APA (<https://apastyle.apa.org/>) guidelines.

Overview of how to cite different sources:

- Quoting books
 - Surname of the author (without any title)
 - First name(s) of the author (either written out or abbreviated)
 - Year (The year of the book is on the title page or on the back of the title page. If there is nothing to indicate the year of publication, this must be identified as "n.d." [= undated].)
 - Title of book (subtitles can be omitted)
 - Edition of the book (not required for the first edition)
 - Location of publication of the book. The location and the name of the publisher must be separated by a colon.
 - Publisher

Gillis, Tom S. (1997). *Guts & Borrowed Money*, Austin: Bard Press

- 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)
- First name(s) of the author (either written out or abbreviated)
- Year (see above)
- Chapter title
- Name of the editors with the suffix "(ed.)"
- Title with the suffix (ed., page range)
- Location of publication (see above)
- Name of the publisher (see above)

Troy, B.N. (2015). APA citation rules. In S.T., Williams (Ed.). *A guide to citation rules* (2nd ed., pp. 50-95). New York, NY: Publishers.

- Quoting essays from journals, periodicals, etc.
 - Surname of the author (without any title)
 - First name(s) of author (either written out or abbreviated)
 - Year
 - Title of the article
 - Name of the publisher (see above)
 - Edition of the journal, if more than one edition has been published
 - Page number (see above)

Mitchell, J.A. (2017). Citation: Why is it so important. *Mendeley Journal* 67(2), 81-95.

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)

References to publications on the World Wide Web are cited separately in the bibliography. The year corresponds to the last review by the author.

- Surname of the author (without any title)
- First name(s) of author (either written out or abbreviated)
- Year
- Title
- Retrieved from URL on (Date)

Mitchell, J.A. (2017, May 21). How and when to reference. Retrieved from <https://www.howand-whentoreference.com> on August, 10th 2020.

For other types of sources (film, song) and more information on how to cite in your master's thesis please refer to the official APA citation guide <https://www.mendeley.com/guides/apa-citation-guide>.

7.5.1 Literature Management Software

We recommend to use 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 tools are:

- Mendeley
- Zotero
- EndNote
- Citavi

For more information about how to use a literature management software you can refer to Fit4Research (<https://library.wu.ac.at/bib/fit4research/index.php/en/fit4research-english/>)

7.6 Gender-fair language

Helpful tips for using gender-neutral language in your thesis can be found at:

https://www.wu.ac.at/fileadmin/wu/h/structure/about/publications/aktuelle_Brosch%C3%BCren/fair_und_inklusiv.pdf

7.7. The Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) Tools for Your Thesis

Your bachelor's thesis should be your original work. Misusing text generated by AI tools, such as ChatGPT, Grammarly, Bard, or others, is not considered original work. It is considered academic misconduct under our policy, leading to serious disciplinary actions. The automated plagiarism check of your thesis will return a probability score for AI generated text. In cases where there is a lack of documentation and transparency, we will conduct an additional interview. While the core content of your thesis should be your own creation, you are allowed to use AI-based tools for grammar/spelling checks. However, you are not allowed to use AI-based software to generate new text for your thesis, for example, by using prompts like "write a paragraph about my topic" or "make this chapter longer." If you choose to use AI-based tools, please ensure that you provide a detailed overview in the appendix, including your prompts and the responses from the text generation software that you used to generate your thesis. To assist you with this, we provided a reporting text template below.

Text Template for Reporting the Use of AI Tools:

Acknowledgment of Artificial Intelligence Tools Used:

For purposes of grammar and spelling checks, I used the following tools:

- Grammarly (<https://www.grammarly.com>)
- Chat-GPT v.3.5 (<https://chat.openai.com/>)
- Bing (<https://www.bing.com>)

I used the following prompts:

- "Check for errors in my writing"
- "Correct for grammar, spelling and comma mistakes."

I used the output to help revise my writing in the following segments of my thesis:

- 1.1. Introduction
- 2.3. Sampling
- 3.4.2. Results Study 1
4. Discussion