



**Guidelines for  
drafting a bachelor's thesis  
at the Department of Marketing**

Vienna, 30. June 2021

## 1 Who can write their bachelor's thesis with us?

In principle, all students at WU Vienna are welcome to write their bachelor's thesis at the Department of Marketing or one of its institutes. In light of the available supervising capacities, we will prioritize students who have been accepted to one of the Department's specializations (SBWLs) and/or whose proposal convinces us that their thesis will satisfy our requirements with regard to both topic and quality. Unfortunately, we are unable to guarantee supervision of a bachelor's thesis even if you are a student of our specializations.

To qualify to write and submit your bachelor's thesis you need to have successfully completed the introductory and orientation phase (STEOP), passed the Business Administration courses of the CBK and the PI "Statistics" as well as attended the course "Academic Research Techniques." You may already start writing your bachelor's thesis while taking the course "Academic Research Techniques." We recommend that you complete this course at the Department of Marketing (although this is not mandatory). If you are interested in empirical research, we recommend that you take the course "Research Methods" (course II or III, depending on your SBWL) before you start working on your thesis.

## 2 What will the process of writing your bachelor's thesis be like?

The steps you will take from finding a topic to submitting your thesis for grading are depicted in Figure 1 and detailed below.

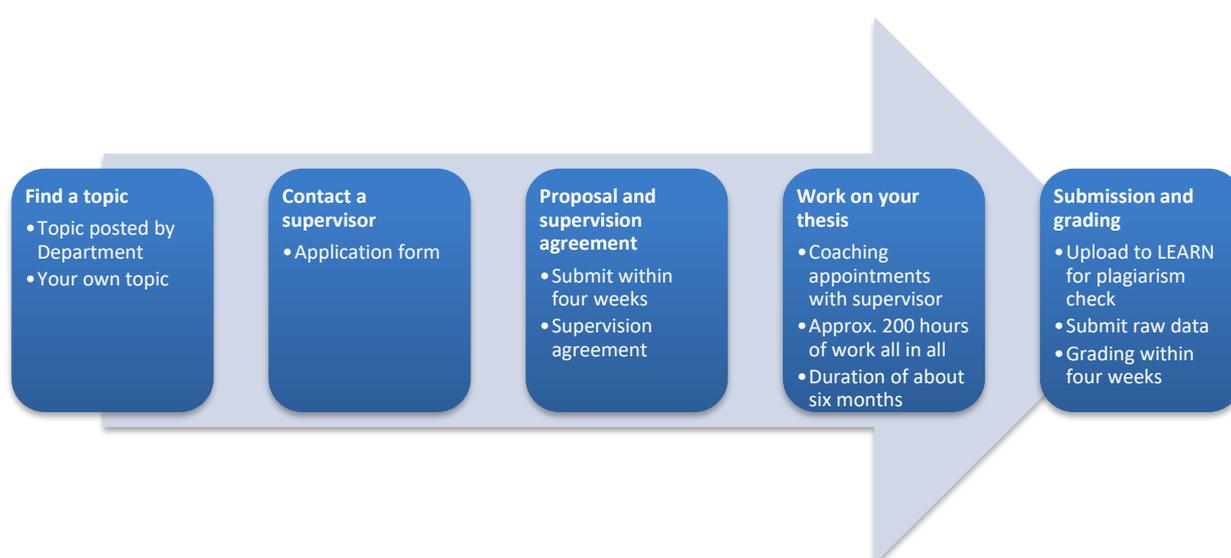


Figure 1: The process of writing a bachelor's thesis

## 2.1 Finding a topic

If you are interested in writing a bachelor's thesis at the Department of Marketing and fulfil the formal requirements, look for a topic that you are interested in and that you would like to work on intensively. A potential topic for a bachelor's thesis should align with the key research areas of the Department. As detailed below, it is possible to apply for a posted topic (items 1-3) or propose a topic of your own choice (item 4):

1. Some institutes at the Department provide a list of available topics for bachelor's theses on their websites. These topics are closely related to the personal research interests of the institutes' employees or arise from practical collaborations. Their supervision is prioritized depending on the available capacities.
2. Check the "News" on the websites of our Department's institutes. Some institutes publish currently available topics on their websites.
3. In case there are available topics for which we are urgently looking for students to work on them, we will send an email to the students of our specializations.
4. Other than that, feel free to approach us with your own suggestions for topics. As we take supervising our students' theses very seriously, we insist on a clear link to our current research and teaching contents (see contact).

To get to the individual institutes' websites, please click on the following links:

- [Digital Marketing & Behavioral Insights](#)
- [Interactive Marketing & Social Media](#)
- [International Marketing Management](#)
- [Marketing & Consumer Research](#)
- [Marketing Management](#)
- [Retailing & Data Science](#)
- [Service Marketing & Tourism](#)

It is also possible for several students to collaborate on a topic. This might make sense or become necessary if a given project includes a (large) empirical survey. Please keep in mind, however, that the supervisor must be able to identify and individually grade the work of all students involved. In practice this means that every student submits their own thesis on a separate (sub-) research question. The theses may, however, deal with the same framework topic or be based on the same data set. The individual theses are then coordinated with and by the supervisor.

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## 2.2 Contacting a potential supervisor

Once you have found an available topic that fits your interests or have come up with a first draft of ideas,

- contact the person named in connection with the available topic (potential supervisor) per email. Please attach the completed application form when doing so.
- If you choose your own topic, please do some research on who will be the most suitable advisor in this field and whose interests or research methods have the biggest overlap with your research idea prior to contacting a potential supervisor. To find out as much, consult the Department's staff websites or WU's research database [FIDES](#). There you will find information on the employees' key research areas and interests. After that, contact the most suitable supervisor via email and attach your completed application form. Please do not send a mass mail to all or several employees of the Department!

Within several days following your official application, you will receive either a letter of rejection (due to a lack of content-related fit or lacking capacities) or a request to draft and submit a proposal.

## 2.3 Proposal and supervision agreement

If you have received a positive reply to your application, work on a proposal for your bachelor's thesis independently. This proposal must be submitted to your potential supervisor within four weeks. Based on it, he or she will either agree or refuse to supervise your thesis.

Your proposal should consist of about 2-4 pages of text (excluding literature and any appendix consisting of tables, figures, etc.) and outline the cornerstones of your thesis. It will serve as a first basis for discussion to both you and your supervisor and (possibly in an amended version) as a guideline later on. This will help make sure that you are on the right track and the topic can be dealt with in the scheduled time frame.

The proposal should, in particular, touch on the following points:

- Working title of the proposed thesis
- A short description of the problem (What is the problem at hand? To whom might it be interesting or relevant and why?)

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- A short summary of a preliminary literature review on the topic (What does the literature on marketing say about this problem? What do we already know, or, more importantly, what don't we know?)
  - The research question and goal of the thesis based on the problem outlined before and the research gap identified
  - A suggestion regarding methodology (What is the research design? How could it be [empirically] implemented, i.e., which method could be used to answer the research question?)
  - A short introduction of project partners, if applicable (Is a corporate partner required in order to complete the thesis?)
  - If possible, a short outline of expected results and a brief statement on their impact on marketing theory or practice
  - A preliminary table of contents
  - A rough schedule (Which steps will be completed by what time?)
  - If possible, an overview of the literature you have found but not yet read
  - A preliminary bibliography (literature cited in the proposal only)

If the proposal conforms to the Department's quality requirements, a supervision agreement will be concluded and your bachelor's thesis will be officially registered. You will then automatically be notified of the confirmation via your WUnet account.

## **2.4 Working on your thesis**

We want to support you in the process of writing your bachelor's thesis as best as possible. This is why we offer one-on-one supervision appointments while you are completing your thesis. It is up to you to contact your supervisor to make an appointment. In order to guarantee a fair allocation of supervision capacity for all students, please consider the following milestones for individual appointments for orientation:

- kick-off meeting to discuss the proposal,
- discussion of the literature and hypotheses,
- preparation of the study and data assessment.

Please prepare for these meetings thoroughly to make sure that the appointments with your supervisor will be efficient and effective. We also expect you to send your supervisor a brief summary of the meeting per email the day after your appointment, at the latest.

Other than that, you can also contact your supervisor per email. Please keep in mind that it is an essential component of your bachelor's thesis to write an academic paper independently. We therefore expect you to look for solutions yourself (e.g. in the literature) before contacting your supervisor. Relying too much on your supervisor could signal a lack of independence and therefore have a negative impact on how the latter is assessed.

All in all, you should strive to finish your bachelor's thesis in a timely manner. Ideally, it will take you no longer than six months (from the time your thesis was officially registered).

In addition, we will provide you with a style sheet including further notes on how to draft your thesis.

For your bachelor's thesis in the "Business, Economics and Social Sciences" degree program, you will be awarded 8 ECTS credits. The process of writing your bachelor's thesis will take up approximately 200 work hours, i.e., 25 full-time work days. In the "Business and Economics" degree program, you will receive 10 ECTS credits, which means that the workload is bigger (approx. 250 work hours).

## **2.5 Submission and grading**

When you are finished writing your bachelor's thesis, send the Word document of the final version to your supervisor via email. Include all material that will help your supervisor assess the quality of your work. This might be data sets, study materials, and notes on data evaluation.

When your supervisor has cleared your thesis, upload the final version including the cover page (see [forms](#)), which contains the declaration of authorship, to LEARN. Please be aware that you cannot change this version once it has been uploaded. Following submission to LEARN, your thesis will undergo a plagiarism check. As soon as the submission process has been completed, the thesis and the results of the plagiarism check are made available to your supervisor for evaluation.

Your supervisor has four weeks to complete his or her evaluation. Usually, supervisors at our Department finish grading sooner than that. Please keep in mind, however, that the Examinations Office will need several weeks to issue your certificate after your thesis has been graded.

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### 3 Structure and content

The structure of your thesis depends on the type of thesis you are writing. Below you will find the structure of three different types of theses (A to C).

The first pages are the same for all types:

Cover page (including declaration of authorship)

Cover page (individually designed)

Preface/acknowledgement (optional)

Abstract

Table of contents

Table of figures

List of tables

A. Empirical thesis:

1. Introduction
2. Theoretical and conceptual foundations
3. Methodology
4. Results
5. Discussion of results

B. Literature review:

1. Introduction
2. Theoretical background of the review
3. Methodology
4. Results (review as such)
5. Discussion of results

C. Case study:

1. Introduction
2. Methodology
3. Alternatives (theory-led)
4. Analysis of alternatives
5. Discussion

The last pages are the same for all types:

Bibliography

Appendix

You will find information on the thesis' formatting requirements, citation guidelines, and literature review in the Department's style sheet.