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## Guidelines for Writing a Master's Thesis

### I. Preparation for the Master's Thesis

#### 1. Choice of Topic

Topics can be chosen from all areas of Macroeconomics, Political Economy/Public Choice, International Finance, European Integration, and Socio-Economics. Empirical research in other fields is also welcome. The Master's thesis is 'the crowning glory' of your scientific education and should be grounded in a high degree of interest in the topic. Consequently, I expect that students should develop an idea about what they are interested in. If you are interested in writing your Master's thesis in one of these areas, please schedule an appointment with me, preferably during my office hours, and bring along one or more ideas and, if possible, a rough outline of your planned study. Only under exceptional circumstances, I am willing to assign you a topic. After making sure that your proposal is a suitable project for a Master's thesis, the thesis topic can be registered with the Examination Office.

#### 2. Issuance of the Topic

Following the formalities of the curriculum, the chair of the Examination Board determines the advisor, issues the topic on behalf of the advisor, and, as a general rule, chooses the second advisor. In order to avoid delays with respect to the preferred starting date, the registration of the thesis (the request for issuance of the topic) must take place at least 2 weeks prior to the preferred starting date at the Examination Office.

### **3. Duration**

For the MSc Economics and Institutions, the duration is scheduled to be 5 months and for the MA in Economic Change in the Arab Region it is 4 months. Under special circumstances, the chair of the Examination Board may extend this period by a maximum of 4 weeks. An (additional) extension due to illness, accident, disability, or special family circumstances is generally possible.

### **4. Length of thesis**

I do not consider it a great academic achievement to fill as many pages as possible in a given time span. Or, as Goethe once said: 'I do not have enough time to write a short letter, therefore I send a long one.' The maximum thesis length I find acceptable is 60 pages and this should include more or less everything. In *exceptional* cases additional information may be put into an appendix outside this page limit.

### **5. Language**

For the MSc in Economics and Institutions and the MA in Economic Change in the Arab Region, the Master's thesis must be written in English.

### **6. Submission**

The Master's thesis must be submitted within the deadline in two bounded (paperback) versions and additionally in an electronic version to the Examination Office.

## **II. Basic Style and Formatting Rules**

### **Title page of the Master Thesis**

The title page of the Master thesis should contain the following information:

- Name of the examiner
- Thesis topic
- Name, address, email, and matriculation number of the author
- Name of the programme and # of semesters at the time of submission

### **Format of the Master Thesis**

#### **2.1 Line Spacing**

Line spacing in the main text is 1.5; in footnotes and in figure and table sources single spaced 1.0.

## **2.2 Font Type**

Recommended font types are Arial, Calibri or Times New Roman. Font size should be 12pt for Calibri and Times New Roman and 11pt for Arial in the main text, and 10pt respectively 9pt in footnotes as well as figure and table sources. Paragraphs must be justified.

## **2.3 Number of Pages / Length of the Thesis**

Including the bibliography as well as figures and tables, the Master thesis in the MSc programme in Economics and Institutions must not include more than 60 pages and in the MA programme in Economic Change in the Arab Region not more than 50 pages. The title page, the table of contents, and, as far as concerned, the list of abbreviations, tables, figures, and symbols do not count.

## **2.4 Page Format**

The margin is formatted as follows:

- Left margin: 2.5 cm
- Right margin: 2.5 cm
- Top margin: 2.5 cm
- Bottom margin: 2.0 cm

Pages have to be numbered consecutively.

## **2.5 Structure: Chapters and Subchapters**

The main text must have a decadal structure (e.g. 1., 1.1, etc.). Single subchapters, for example using 1.1 without 1.2, are not appropriate.

## **2.6 Index of Figures, Tables etc.**

The thesis must be accompanied by a table of contents. If your thesis contains figures and tables, an index of figures and tables, in order of their appearance, should be included. If necessary, a list of abbreviations (all abbreviations used in the text and in the bibliography) should also be included. All indexes and lists include the pages where the respective figure etc. appear in the text. In addition, a table of symbols (list of all used symbols such as  $Y = \text{GDP}$  etc.) might be necessary. Pages containing indexes and lists must be numbered with roman numbers (I,II,III). A mathematical annex is numbered with Arabian numbers (1,2,3). The bibliography is the concluding part of the Master thesis.

## **2.7 Equations**

Equations are to be numbered consecutively, e.g.:

$$\text{MPL} = F(K,L+1) - F(K,L) \tag{1}$$

## 2.8 Figures and Tables

Figures and tables have to be numbered consecutively and must be assigned a title and a source, e.g.:

Above the figure: Figure. 2: Development of Indicators for indebtedness.

Below the figure: Source: World Bank (1999, 9), with the source specified in the list of references.

## 2.9 Footnotes

As a general rule, footnotes should be placed on the same page as the respective text they belong to. They have to be numbered consecutively.

### 2.9.1 Quotations in the Main Text

Whenever you directly or indirectly quote sources from literature, these references must be indicated right in the text and right after the quote in short form by using the following scheme: (last name of author and year of publication, exact page(s)).

Example for an indirect quote:

*In den frühen 1970er Jahren wurden die geschätzten Geldnachfragefunktionen in Großbritannien und den USA zunehmend instabil (Howells and Bain 2008, 270).*

The indication of the exact source must be repeated each time, within reasonable limits, when the respective source is used. Direct quotes must be additionally marked by employing quotation marks (inverted commas).

Example for a direct quote:

*'However, in the early 1970s the demand for money function began to show signs of instability in both the UK and the USA' (Howells and Bain 2008, 270).*

### 2.9.2 List of References

In the list of references, all references used in the writing of the thesis must be listed in alphabetical order of the authors' last name. This includes books and related publications, contributions to collective volumes, articles in scientific and non-scientific journals and newspapers as well as dissertations and Master's theses. Sources from the internet must be accompanied by the exact link and the date of download.

There are many different possible citation formats. You are free to choose your preferred style. The chosen citation style must be consistent throughout the entire document. The following example can be used as a reference for one possible citation format.

**For books and independent publications, e.g.:**

Copeland, L. (2008). *Exchange Rates and International Finance*, 5. ed., Harlow: Pearson.

**For articles/contributions to collective volumes, e.g.:**

Levich, R.M. (1985). Empirical Studies of Exchange Rates: Price Behavior, Rate Determination and Market Efficiency, in: R.W. Jones and P.B. Kenen (eds.), *Handbook of International Economics, Vol. II, International Monetary Economics and Finance*, North-Holland: Amsterdam, 979-1040.

**For journals articles, e.g.:**

Rogoff, K. (1996). The Purchasing Power Parity Puzzle, *Journal of Economic Literature* 34, 647-688.

**For unpublished work, e.g.:**

Mustermann, J. (1999). Die Kritik an den Anpassungsprogrammen von IWF und Weltbank, *mimeo*, Philipps-Universität: Marburg.

**Additional Hints:**

- If there are more than three authors, in the main text just list the first author and add 'et al', e.g. Jones et al. (1999). The bibliography must contain the full names of all authors.
- If there is no apparent author, the reference starts with naming the organisation (EBRD) that published the document or with naming the source (The Economist).
- If more than one source of the same author is cited, all cited sources are to be sorted according to their year of publication. The oldest work will be listed first. If two or more sources are by the same author and of the same year, add small letters to the publication year to distinguish between the sources, e.g., Frey, B. (1990a), Frey, B. (1990b), etc.
- More useful hints can be found, for instance, in Booth, W.C., Williams, J.M., and Colomb, G.G. (1995): *The Craft of Research (Chicago Guides to Writing, Editing, & Publishing)*, 1<sup>st</sup> ed., University of Chicago Press.
- Bailey, Stephen (2006): *Academic Writing: A Handbook for International Students*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Taylor & Francis.

**III. Some Advice for your Literature Research**

In the preparation of a Master's thesis, it is helpful to make use of the 'Journal of Economic Literature' to search for relevant sources. JEL is a journal that systematically catalogues articles from relevant international economics journals. This data base is available under the name 'ECONLIT' in the online sources of the faculty library (see its webpage). In addition, there are other online data bases with respect to economic and socio-economic literature (WISO, SSCI). Another source for literature research is ECONIS, the online data base of the Central Library for Business and Economics of the Kiel Institute for World Economy. ECONIS

is available online at: <http://www.zbw.eu/kataloge/econis.htm>. Current and past discussion papers can be downloaded from EconPapers at <http://econpapers.repec.org> and SSRN [www.ssrn.com](http://www.ssrn.com).

Please note that the online data bases of the faculty library also include economics data sources that contain macroeconomic and financial data on most countries in the world.

#### **IV. Scientific Integrity**

An important basic of scientific research is a thorough and honest recognition of other people's work. Due to the easy availability of information through the library and in particular the internet, one may feel tempted into using ideas of other authors and present them as one's own. Therefore, remember to consistently cite your sources. Otherwise, I have to assume a deliberate attempt of deception and will fail your thesis. Moreover, the submission of a Master's thesis written by a third person or institution under your name is also considered to be an attempt of deception and will be assigned the corresponding grade.

Together with the Master's thesis, a declaration of authorship (in German) has to be put at the end of your paper and signed by you. Stick exactly to the following example (**word-by-word**). Please be sure that you have fully understood the declaration before you sign it. It says the following: By signing, you declare that you wrote the thesis on your own and listed the relevant sources that you used. Furthermore, you indicate that you correctly named all parts of the thesis where you made use of ideas and thoughts of others including those obtained from the internet. You also acknowledge that by violating these conditions, you will fail the thesis.

#### **Declaration of Authorship**

„Ich versichere durch eigenhändige Unterschrift, dass ich die Arbeit selbstständig und ohne Benutzung anderer als der angegebenen Hilfsmittel angefertigt habe. Alle Stellen, die wörtlich oder sinngemäß aus Veröffentlichungen (auch aus dem Internet) entnommen sind, habe ich als solche kenntlich gemacht. Ich weiß, dass bei Abgabe einer falschen Versicherung die Arbeit als mit 'nicht ausreichend' (1 Bewertungspunkt gemäß § 16 Abs. 2 *Allgemeine Bestimmungen*, Note 5, ECTS-Grade F) bewertet gilt.“