

Philipps-Universität Marburg, Finance and Banking Research Group

Formal Instructions for preparing written essays

at the Finance and Banking Research Group

1 External Form of the Essay

1.1 Basics

Essay main text: 1.5 Line-Spacing, Font Arial or Calibri size 11, or Times New Roman size 12. Footnotes font size 9 or 10, footnotes and long quotations can also be written in 1 line spacing. Margins should be 2.5 cm right and 2.5 cm left.

The general structure of the essay should be as follows:

Cover Page
Table of Contents
List of Abbreviations
List of Symbols
List of Figures
List of Tables
Main Text:
Introduction
Research Design
Data
Empirical Results
Conclusion
Appendix
List of References
Statutory Declaration

If no abbreviations, symbols, figures or tables are needed, the respective lists are no longer required.

The same applies to the Appendix.

1.2 Specific Instructions

a) Cover page

The cover page should contain:

1. Title (Topic of your essay)
2. Type of essay (Bachelor Thesis, Master Thesis, Bachelor Seminar, Master Seminar)
3. Submitted to (Name of Examiner/Supervisor)

4. Date of submission

5. Your First and Last Name, Address, Semester of study, Major, Study Program, E-Mail address

b) **Chapter numbering:** Arabic numbers, example

1

2

2.1

2.1.1

2.1.2

2.1.2.1

2.1.2.2

2.2

3

etc.

For the table of contents, make sure that for every numbered chapter the page number where it starts is listed.

- c) **List of abbreviations** is necessary. In the main text only official abbreviations are allowed (those that are defined in a common English dictionary) so as not to adversely affect the readability and understandability of the essay. List of abbreviations should be sorted alphabetically. Common abbreviations such as “e.g.” do not need to be explained.
- d) **List of symbols** should include all symbols that are used in the main text of the essay. You should also ensure that symbols are used uniformly to mean the same thing, i.e., do not use many symbols to indicate the same thing.
- e) **Lists of tables and figures** are necessary only when tables and figures exist in the essay. Tables and figures should be numbered continuously and not based on chapter numbers.
- f) **Page numbering** should be done using Arabic numbers with page 1 starting on the first main text page (Introduction) until the very end of the essay. The table of contents and other lists at the beginning of the essay (before the introduction) should be numbered using roman numerals.

2 Length of the Essay

Maximum pages of the essay depend on the essay type:

- Bachelor seminar: 3 pages
- Master seminar: 12 pages
- Bachelor thesis: 20 pages
- Master thesis: 40 pages

The maximum page limit refers to the main text. It does not include cover page, table of contents, lists, appendix or statutory declaration.

It is not allowed to manipulate the length of the essay by modifying the size of figures or tables to an extent they become too small to read or too large that the extra size does not offer any meaningful addition. Similarly do not add or reduce space between paragraphs to manipulate the length of the essay.

There is no minimum number of pages for the essay. However, if you realize that your essay is far below the maximum page limit you should contact your supervisor to ensure you are not missing any important parts of the essay.

3 References

3.1 Quotation instructions

3.1.1 Basics

Every idea, statement, or thought that you take from an external source must be cited. If the idea or thought you are citing is not only in a sentence or two, but covers a number of pages, you must make that clear within the citation itself.

All sources are to be cited including unpublished works and those not available in databases or stores. There are two methods of quotation: rough or literal (word-for-word):

a) Literal quotation

Only in the following four cases are you allowed to use literal quotation:

1. If it is not possible to rephrase the idea you want to express in a shorter or better way than it already is.
2. If it is a definition of a term.
3. If the aim is to comment about a statement of another author, you must literally quote that author's statement to be able to interpret/comment/express your opinion.
4. If the original text is in a foreign language, you should include the original text quoted literally so that any reader can check if your roughly quoted translation is similar to the original literally quoted foreign language.

b) Rough quotation

Rough quotation is meant to paraphrase the ideas of another author, but not the exact words that author used. It should be indicated using a footnote marker at the end of the idea being quoted, with a respective indication of the reference at the end of the page where the footnote marker exists. If a footnote marker is at the end of sentence, this indicates that only this sentence comes from the given source. If more than one sentence is meant, then this should be clearly shown.

3.1.2 Specific Instructions [See German Version for Examples for the following points in red]

- a) Recitation
- b) Footnotes
- c) Text Footnotes
- d) References

3.2 List of References

3.2.1 Basics

- a) Books

- b) Journals
- c) Collected works
- d) Online sources

3.2.2 *Specific Instructions*

- a) More than one publisher
- b) Without author/without year/without publisher

3.3 Number of Sources to be used while preparing the Essay

At our research group we do not require and minimum number of references or sources to be used in the preparation of the essay. Your grade will not be affected by the number of sources you use. A long list of references (so called “name dropping”) will not give you any bonuses or advantages. The only relevant and important aspect is that any and all ideas taken from external sources are properly cited.