

THESIS GUIDELINES

valid for BPO VWL, valid for MPO Econ, valid for ECS*

last updated: 23.07.2026

In case of doubt, the provisions of the relevant Examination Regulations apply.

The following rules and regulations apply to the preparation of the Bachelor's/Master's thesis:

Processing Time

The **maximum processing time** allowed for the completion of the thesis is **two months** (Bachelor's programs in *Volkswirtschaftslehre* and *Wirtschaftswissenschaften*), **four months** (Master's program in Economics), and **five months** (Bachelor's program in Economics and Computer Science).

Upon a justified request or in the case of documented illness, an **extension of up to two weeks** (Bachelor's programs in Economics and Business Administration), **up to four weeks** (Master's program in Economics), or **up to six weeks** (Bachelor's program in Economics and Computer Science) may be granted. In the case of illness, a request for an extension and a medical certificate describing the symptoms must be submitted by email. Diagnoses or medical findings do not need to be disclosed, although providing such information may facilitate the review process. If you require an extension, you must contact the Examinations Office **without undue delay**. Please note that extensions will not be granted for self-inflicted computer-related problems, such as the loss of text or data resulting from inadequate data backup procedures.

In legal terms, "without undue delay" means acting without culpable delay. Any changes or relevant information must therefore be reported to the Examinations Office as soon as reasonably possible.

Scope

The **Bachelor's thesis** in *Volkswirtschaftslehre* or *Wirtschaftswissenschaften* must comprise a **minimum of 20 and a maximum of 25** A4 pages, including graphs, figures, formulas, and similar content. **The table of contents, appendices, and references are not included in this page count.**

The **Bachelor's thesis** in *Economics and Computer Science* must comprise a **minimum of 20 and a maximum of 50** A4 pages, including graphs, figures, formulas, and similar content. **The table of contents, appendices, and references are not included in this page count.**

* Bachelor Examination Regulations for the study programs *Volkswirtschaftslehre* and *Wirtschaftswissenschaften* (BPO *Volkswirtschaftslehre* 2016 and 2024), Master Examination Regulations for the study program Economics, Bachelor Examination Regulations for the study program Economics and Computer Science.

This English translation was prepared with the assistance of ChatGPT (OpenAI) and reviewed by the Examination Office.

The **Master's thesis** in Economics may **not exceed 40** A4 pages, including graphs, figures, formulas, and similar content. **The table of contents, appendices, and references are not included in this page count.**

If the thesis exceeds 25 pages (Bachelor's thesis in *Volkswirtschaftslehre* or *Wirtschaftswissenschaften*), 40 pages (Master's thesis in Economics), or 50 pages (Bachelor's thesis in Economics and Computer Science), only the first 25, 40, or 50 pages, respectively, will be considered for assessment. Any pages beyond these limits will be disregarded and will not be taken into account in the grading process. **No exceptions to this rule may be granted, including by the supervisor.**

Page layout, formatting requirements and citation style:

Use A4 paper.

Please use the LaTeX or Microsoft Word template by Dr. Holger Gerhardt (on our website).

If you would like to use a different program, these are the specifications for the default layout in detail:

- **Left and right margins:** Combined total of 6.5 cm (e.g., 2.5 cm on the left and 4.0 cm on the right to allow space for comments and corrections).
- **Top and bottom margins:** Combined total of 5.6 cm (e.g., 2.8 cm each).
- **Main text:** Line spacing of 19.5 pt. With the margins specified above, this results in exactly 35 lines of text per page. Font size: 11 pt when using Times New Roman (10 pt when using Palatino Linotype).
- **Table of contents and block quotations:** Line spacing of 15 pt.
- **Tables, figure and table captions, and references:** Line spacing of 15 pt; font size 10 pt (9 pt when using Palatino).
- **Footnotes and notes to tables and figures:** Line spacing of 13.5 pt; font size 9 pt (8 pt when using Palatino).
- **Level 1 headings:** Spacing of 39 pt before and 19.5 pt after; line spacing of 19.5 pt; font size 14 pt (13.5 pt when using Palatino); bold.
- **Level 2 headings:** Spacing of 19.5 pt before and 19.5 pt after; line spacing of 19.5 pt; font size 12 pt (11 pt when using Palatino); bold.
- **Level 3 headings:** Spacing of 9.75 pt before and 9.75 pt after; line spacing of 19.5 pt; font size 11 pt (10 pt when using Palatino); bold.
- **Level 4 headings:** Spacing of 9.75 pt before and 0 pt after; line spacing of 19.5 pt; font size 11 pt (10 pt when using Palatino); not bold. (Level 4 headings should be avoided whenever possible; three levels of headings should generally be sufficient.)
- **Heading numbering:** Headings should be numbered in the format "1" (Level 1), "1.2" (Level 2), "1.2.3" (Level 3), and "1.2.3.4" (Level 4).

Deviations from these guidelines are permitted, provided that they do not increase the amount of text per page and that your supervisor approves.

Required components

The thesis must consist of:

- a title page,
- a table of contents,
- the main body of the text,
- a list of references,
- an appendix, where applicable, and
- a signed declaration.

The appendix should contain supporting material and detailed analyses (for example, source code or instructions used in experiments). Please consult your supervisor to determine whether an appendix is required.

Acknowledgements and dedications must **not** be included in the thesis.

All pages except the title page and the table of contents must be numbered consecutively using Arabic numerals. Page numbering begins with page 1 on the first page of the main text following the table of contents and any other preliminary lists. Roman numerals may be used for the front matter (title page and lists).

Title page

A sample title page can be found at the end of this information sheet. Please have the title page printed on the front cover of the bound thesis.

Table of Contents

The table of contents must list all chapters and subchapters of the thesis together with the corresponding page numbers on which they begin. The chapter and section titles in the table of contents must correspond exactly to the headings used in the text.

List of references

A list of all sources and materials used in the preparation of the thesis must be included. The use of the Chicago Manual of Style citation format is recommended. This citation style is available in Zotero and BibLaTeX and is described in detail in the Chicago Manual of Style Citation Guide.

Use of AI

The use of artificial intelligence (AI) tools is generally prohibited unless explicitly authorized by the supervisor. If there is reason to suspect that AI tools have been used without prior approval, formal proceedings concerning a suspected attempt to deceive may be initiated.

Where the use of AI tools is permitted, the scope and manner of their use must be agreed upon in advance with the supervisor. The thesis must nevertheless demonstrate a substantial degree of independent academic work. Any approved use of AI tools must be disclosed in accordance with the arrangements made with the supervisor.

For further guidance regarding formal requirements, please consult your supervisor.

Written declaration

On the last separate page of the thesis, include the following declaration, dated and signed in the original:

I hereby affirm that I have written the above thesis independently and have used no sources or aids other than those indicated; that the submitted work has not previously been submitted for examination at any other university; and that it has not been published, either in whole or in part. I have clearly indicated all direct quotations and passages paraphrased from other works as such.

Violations of this declaration may be considered an attempt at deception.

Subsequent changes to the wording of the thesis title

It is possible to amend the wording of the thesis title after registration, but **only up to five days before the submission deadline at the latest**. Any change to the title must be approved by the supervisor and communicated to the Examinations Office by the supervisor via email. Once the title change has been processed, the updated title will be visible in your BASIS student account.

Any title change made after this deadline will not be taken into account for the preparation of official records and will not affect the thesis title shown on the degree certificate.

Submission

The thesis must be submitted on time in **electronic form**. A PDF version of the thesis must be sent by email to vwlp@uni-bonn.de.

At the same time, and by the same submission deadline, **one original hard-copy version** must be submitted. This copy must bear an **original handwritten signature** (no scans and no electronic signatures), be printed single-sided, and be **professionally bound** (ring binders or report covers are not accepted). The hard copy may be submitted in person during office hours, deposited in the internal mailbox, or sent by post. Postal submission by registered mail with proof of delivery to the mailbox is recommended (*“Einwurfeinschreiben”*); registered mail requiring acknowledgment of receipt should not be used (do not use *“Einschreiben Rückschein”*). Please note that the postmark date is relevant for determining timely submission. Insufficiently stamped mail or items requiring collection from customs cannot be accepted.

If the submission deadline is missed, the thesis will be graded as “fail” (5.0).

Once a thesis has been submitted to the Examinations Office, it may no longer be withdrawn.

Additional information

University seals and logos must not be used in the thesis.

Once the final grade for the thesis has been determined, it will be available in your BASIS student account. The Examinations Office does not intervene in the grading process and cannot expedite the grading of theses by examiners.

If you wish to have your thesis published by the department library, you must submit a second bound copy of the thesis.

Sample title page of the thesis

[Title] [Bachelor's Thesis / Master's Thesis] presented to the Department of Economics at the Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität Bonn in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of [please select as appropriate] Bachelor of Science (B.Sc.) in Volkswirtschaftslehre or Economics and Computer Science or Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) in the Double Major programs <i>Wirtschaftswissenschaften/??? (Fächer im Zwei-Fach-Modell)</i> or Master of Science (M.Sc.) in Economics Supervisor: [name of supervisor] Submitted in [month and year] by: [first and last name] Matriculation number: [number]
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If you write your thesis in German, please use the German title page (see the German style guide).