

Guidelines for Writing a Master's Thesis

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Basics

Objective of the thesis:

The objective of writing a Master's thesis is to approach the research frontier by understanding, explaining, contextualizing, replicating and extending a relevant research paper.

The topic is either provided by the JP of QIEE or based on a student's suggestion.

General:

- Language: English (default); German (possible)
- Length: 60 pages for the main text (in suggested format)
- Processing time: 6 months
- Presentation ca. 6 weeks before submission deadline (20min)

→ For additional general information, refer to the [Squiwi information page](#).

Formatting:

- Line spacing: 1.5
- Font size: 12pt in Times New Romans (or equivalent)
- Footnotes: font size 10pt with single line spacing
- Justification: fully justified text (block text).
- Margins: 2.5cm on all sides
- Page numbers: begin numbering the main text using Arabic numerals

Structure of the Thesis:

- Title page
(incl.: title, supervisor, submission date, name, student ID, address, email)
- Abstract & Keywords
- Table of Contents
- List of Figures
- List of Tables
- List of Abbreviations (if applicable)
- Main Text
(introduction, core chapters, conclusions)
- Appendix (if applicable)
- References (Literature cited)
- [“Declaration of Independent Work” \(in German\)](#)

Submission (to the examination office & per mail to supervisor):

- 2 standard storage media (USB key)
- Digital version of thesis (as pdf file).
- Replication package
- Printed(!) & digitally: [“Declaration of Independent Work” \(in German\)](#)

Citation rules

All direct and indirect quotes must be properly referenced.

Citation style:

Different citation styles are common, such as the Chicago style (author-date), which can be selected but must be followed consistently throughout the work.

Examples:

- Article: [Levinson \(2016\)](#)
- Book chapter: [Head and Mayer \(2014\)](#)
- Book: [Copeland and Taylor \(2003\)](#)
- Working paper: [Shapiro \(2023\)](#)

References:

Copeland, B. R. and M. S. Taylor (2003). *Trade and the Environment. Theory and Evidence*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Head, K. and T. Mayer (2014). Gravity Equations: Workhorse, Toolkit, and Cookbook. In G. Gopinath, E. Helpman, and K. Rogoff (Eds.), *Handbook of International Economics* (4 ed.), Volume 4, Chapter 3, pp. 131–195. North Holland.

Levinson, A. (2016). How Much Energy Do Building Energy Codes Save? Evidence from California Houses. *American Economic Review* 106(10), 2867–94.

Shapiro, J. S. (2023). Institutions, Comparative Advantage, and the Environment. *NBER Working Paper 31768*.

Tips for the literature review

→ Explore citation chains: “cited by”, e.g., in [Google Scholar](#)

→ Relevant academic journals for research in the fields of international and environmental economics.

General interest:

- American Economic Review (AER)
- Econometrica (EcTa)
- Quarterly Journal of Economics (QJE)
- Review of Economic Studies (REStud)
- Journal of Political Economy (JPE)
- American Economic Journal: EP / Applied Economics / Microeconomics / Macroeconomics
- Journal of the European Economic Association (JEEA)
- Review of Economics and Statistics (REStat)
- Journal of Economic Perspectives (JEP)
- European Economic Review (EER)
- Journal of Economic Literature (JEL)
- Annual Review of Economics
- International Economic Review (IER)
- (NBER working paper series)
- ...

International economics:

- Journal of International Economics (JIE)
- Canadian Journal of Economics (CJE)
- Review of International Economics (RoIE)
- ...

Environmental economics:

- Journal of the Association of Environmental and Resource Economists (JAERE)
- Journal of Environmental Economics and Management (JEEM)
- Environmental and Resource Economics (ERE)
- Review of Environmental Economics and Policy (REEP)
- Ecological Economics
- ...