

Information on the Registration for and Completion of a Master's Thesis in the Degree Course International Business

Last amended: December 2022

I Registration for a master's thesis

1 Application for approval to complete a master's thesis

Application for approval to complete a master's thesis and to the colloquium takes place with the thesis application form (available at: http://www.th-koeln.de/en/academics/international-business-master--forms-and-regulations_5814.php). Complete this form and submit it by email to the Office of Student and Examination Services (studium-suedstadt@th-koeln.de).

The application form must be signed beforehand by both examiners.

The handling time for the application is ca. 2 weeks. If your request is approved, you will be registered for your Master's thesis in PSSO. You will receive a confirmation by email as well as additional information on how to submit your thesis and your disenrollment.

2 Returning/Withdrawing from the topic

Students may withdraw from a topic of their master's thesis only once and may only do so within the first two weeks of the assigned time frame (writing period), without stating their reason for doing so. Another topic will have to be selected for the new application.

If a student undertakes a second attempt to write a master's thesis, the student is only permitted to withdraw from the thesis if he/she did not do so during the writing of his/her first master's thesis.

3 Changing the topic

If, during the processing time of the thesis, it turns out that an editorial change to the topic is necessary, then please fill out a formless request and submit it via your first examiner to the Chairman of the examination board.

4 The fixed writing period and extension of this period for submitting the thesis

The fixed period for processing and submitting the master's thesis is 15 weeks; or 19 weeks for master's theses covering empirical, experimental or mathematical topics, respectively.

The fixed period can, in exceptional cases, be extended upon written application, by up to two weeks if special reasons have been recited and these are verified through submission of documents, evidence, certificates or attestations.

Two copies of the application should be submitted together with the approval application form to the Chairman of the examination board after the first examiner has added his/her comments. These comments are not necessary in the case of illness; it is sufficient to simply submit the attestation.

5 Change of address

Please inform the examination office immediately about any change of address.

6 Barring the master's thesis

If a master's thesis should be barred then this should be marked clearly, in large letters, on the first (empty) page of all three copies.

A master's thesis can be barred in exceptional cases if it contains confidential data. Copying and publication of a barred master's thesis, also just extracts from it, are not permitted without express permission from the author. A barred master's thesis will only be made available to the examiners and to the members of the examination board.

7 Submission of the master's thesis

The master's thesis should be submitted to the examination office in good time (see Article 188 of the German Civil Code).

If the master's thesis cannot be submitted during the opening hours of the examination office, then please place it in an envelope with the following address details

Technische Hochschule Köln
Studierenden- und Prüfungsservice, Frau Wermuth
Gustav-Heinemann-Ufer 54
50968 Köln

printed on it in the post box used to track whether items are submitted within the time limit. These post box is located in front of the main entrance at Claudiusstraße 1 and are emptied regularly.

If the thesis is submitted by post (by registered post) then the date stamp from the Post Office must, at the latest, show the last date for submitting the master's thesis.

If the last date for submitting the master's thesis lands on a Saturday, Sunday or a holiday, then the next working day applies instead of the day specified.

Students have to submit three copies (printed versions) and one electronic version (PDF document) of the master's thesis.

Please do not forget to sign all three copies.

8 Keeping the master's thesis in safe keeping

A copy of the master's thesis will be kept in safe keeping for five years. It can then be handed over to the author upon request.

9 Further information

Further information on organizational/administrative details can be obtained from the examinations regulations for the master's program in International Business (particularly in chapters 4 and 5).

II Completion of the master's thesis

1 The aim, contents and scope of the master's thesis

1.1 The aim of the master's thesis

The work done to complete a master's thesis is intended to demonstrate that the examinee is, within the given limited time period, self-sufficiently capable of completing a practise-oriented task within his specialist area, both concerning the specialist details involved and in the interdisciplinary connections to scientific and practical methods used in that specialist area.

The formal rules for undertaking scientific work should be taken as the basis. Details about these can be found under point II 3.

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1.2 The contents of the master's thesis

1.2.1 Pure work with the literature

In the case of pure work with the literature it is necessary to assess the literature sources used with a critical eye and to add one's own comments and views.

It is not the goal to produce a catalogue of unchecked schools of thoughts but rather to weigh these sources, which allows one to recognise the thesis writer's own contribution and the critical engagement of the author with the topic.

1.2.2 Case studies

In the case of a master's thesis which refers to argumentation arising from case studies, one must ensure that the theoretical basis and the case are placed in relation to each other. The case study is thus referred to as confirmation or as contrary evidence to the theoretical explanations.

1.2.3 Empirical investigations

If one's own empirical investigation is undertaken, it is recommended to precisely discuss aim and scope of the investigation with the supervising professor.

Perceptions about empirical investigations as they are often promoted to the student from people practising in the field (e.g., companies) often go beyond that which is achievable within the framework of a master's thesis and are more suitable for commission work, for example a market research institute or a consulting firm.

1.2.4 Supervision

It is very important that students consult with his supervisor regarding the three points mentioned above if any problems should arise.

You should make intensive use of this offer and consult for supervision and support.

Do not be concerned that using this service and consulting the supervising professor will have any negative effect on your master's thesis. On the contrary: the better you are informed, the more sure-footed you can be in your argumentation.

1.3 Scope of the master's thesis

The main part of the master's thesis is not to exceed eighty pages.

2 Subdivision/structure of the master's thesis

The subdivision/structure chosen should give a clear indication of the reasoning and the sequence of argumentation used. It is highly recommended to immediately create the subdivision of the work involved after making the application to do the master's thesis. This subdivision can be adjusted (extended or reduced) after it has been discussed with the supervisor. One should, however, ensure that the topic of the work is retained even if major adjustments have to be undertaken.

The registered topic for the work can only be altered in exceptional circumstances, see Point I 3.

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The following schemes for subdivision are common:

- a numerical subdivision (see this document as an example)
- an alpha-numeric subdivision, e.g.:

- A. Procedure/project planning
 - I. Object of the planning
 - II. Cost planning
 - III. Control planning
 - IV. Scheduling and key dates
- B. Preparations
 - I. The place of work
 - 1. Use of the library
 - a) Opening times
 - α) Work days
 - β) Sundays and public holidays
 - b) Lending periods
 - 2. ...
 - II. ...

Please note that each sub-point must be followed by a sub-point of the same hierarchical stage before one can move on to the next point (e.g., there should at least be 1.1.2 after 1.1.1, before moving to point 1.2). One should avoid having too many subdivisions and sub-points, respectively. It usually becomes increasingly confusing after the fifth level of subdivision.

The subdivision only refers to the main part of the master's thesis. The table of contents, annexes or similar contents are no subdivision points.

3 Quotations and bibliographical references

3.1 How to use quotations

The short reference quotation method is recommended, using a footnote and a literature reference (see Point II 3.2).

Text passages which are quoted in full, word for word, should be clearly marked in the text in inverted commas. Contents which are reproduced in a paraphrased form are formulated as indirect speech (for example: Theisen is of the opinion that ... or for example: some take the view that...).

The footnote contains the name of the author of a book, the title or the summary keyword and the page number as the short reference.

An example: ² Theisen, Wissenschaftliches Arbeiten, p. 133

In the case of a short reference to an article in a newspaper/periodical, one quotes the name of the author, the short designation for the newspaper/periodical, the year of publication or the volume number and the page number.

An example: ³ Theisen, NJW 2002, p. 877

In the case of a text passage reproduced in a paraphrased form, the footnote begins with "see also." (compare) or "S." (See).

An example: ² See also Theisen, ...

A quote should be taken from the primary source wherever possible and not from a secondary source.

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3.2 Bibliography

All sources used are listed in the bibliography in alphabetic order (of the author's name). If only the keyword is used in the footnotes instead of the title then the keyword should also be made known in the bibliography.

Quotations from books can be made as follows:

Name, first name(s), title – sub-title, volume, number of the edition, location(s) where the publication appeared: publishing company(ies), year(s) of publication.

An example:

Mayer, Elmar; Liessmann, Konrad; Mertens, Hans Werner: Kostenrechnung – Grundwissen für den Controllerdienst, 7th Edition, Stuttgart: Schäffer-Poeschel, 1997.

One does not mention more than three authors, locations etc. The first person is simply supplemented with "et al - amongst others".

If the work just has a publisher but there is no mention of an author then this piece of information is placed where the author would be mentioned together with the affix "(publisher)".

If both the publishers and the authors of the book are mentioned then the author is quoted after the title of the book followed by the words "published by name, first name(s)". One then proceeds after this as usual.

An example:

Scharfenkamp, Norbert: Organisatorische Gestaltung und wirtschaftlicher Erfolg: Organizational slack als Ergebnis und Einflussfaktor der formalen Organisationsstruktur, published by Staehle, Wolfgang H., Berlin, New York: de Gruyter, 1987.

If the part quoted from in a book is from a dissertation then the information "(at the same time diss. location of the university, year of promotion)", appears after the date of publication.

An example:

Vatteroth, Hans-Christian: PPS und computergestützte Personalarbeit - Die Integrationsmöglichkeiten von Produktionsplanungs- und -steuerungssystemen, Arbeitszeiterfassungs- und Personalinformationssystemen, Köln: Datakontext Verlag, 1993, (at the same time diss. Köln, 1993).

Articles from newspapers/periodicals are quoted in the bibliography as follows:

Name, first name(s): title of the article, in: name of the newspaper/periodical, year of publication, volume or magazine number, possibly also a date, the first and last pages.

An example:

Friedl, Katja: Beamter bei der Feuerwehr, in: Uni Magazin, 23 (1999), 4, p. 33 - 36.

If an article is quoted from an omnibus, a commemorative publication or a concise dictionary then the title in the bibliography is shown as follows:

Name, first name(s): title of the article, in: name, first name(s) (publisher): title – sub-title, volume, number of the edition, location(s) where the publication appeared: publisher(s), year(s) of publication, first and last pages.

An example:

Bloch, Willi: Arbeitsbewertung, in: Gaugler, Eduard (publisher): Handwörterbuch des Personalwesens, Stuttgart: Poeschel Verlag, 1975, p. 142-160.

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If there is no page number given but only a column or margin number then the first and last column or margin number is quoted appropriately.

The status and the delivery number are also quoted if a quote is from a loose-leaf edition. Without this information it is impossible to understand what exactly served as a quotation. The quotation is otherwise made in the same way as for those from omnibuses:

Name, first name(s): title of the article, in: name, first name(s) (publisher): title – sub-title, volume, number of the edition, location(s) where the publication appeared: publisher(s), year(s) of publication.

An example:

Schelle, Heinz: Die Lehre vom Projektmanagement - Entwicklung und Stand, in:

Schelle, Heinz u.a. (Hrsg.): Projekte erfolgreich managen, situation in May 1999 (12th delivery), Köln: TÜV Rheinland Verlag, 1994.

There are some special points to be considered when quoting from documents found on the internet. The fact that pages on a website are constantly changing means that one must always mention the date of finding the document. It is also necessary to give the full internet address, author, title of the document and the date it was created.

Correct quoting of an internet title is as follows:

Name, first name of the author. "Title" <full internet address> (date of finding the document).

An example:

Schelle, Heinz, o. Datum. "Dasa-Casa soll schnell an die Börse"

<<http://www.manager-magazin.de/news/artikel/fs/0,1153,28798,00.html>>

(25.06.1999)

Note: The decision concerning whether the Internet document is reproduced word for word in the annex or attached on a computer data storage medium (a diskette/CD) should be agreed upon, case by case, with both examiners.

4 Further formal criteria

4.1 Language

The Master's thesis is to be written in English.

4.2 Format of the text

The master's thesis should be written on just one side of a DIN A4 sheet using the usual fonts (Times New Roman 12, Arial 11 or an equivalent) and using 1.5 line line spacing. Captions for pictures/figures and tables etc. are written on one line. This also applies to footnotes; a smaller font should be used there (e.g. Times New Roman 10). An empty line should also be inserted between the heading, picture/figure and table etc. and the actual text.

Pictures/figures and tables belong in the text. They should be numbered and given a title. They are never intended to replace text but are just an alternative presentation form; they must be referred to in the body of the text. Extensive tables should be presented in the form of an annex.

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4.3 Abbreviations

When first using an abbreviation, the term being abbreviated should be written first followed by the abbreviation in brackets.

4.4 Side margins

The margin on the left should be 5 to 7 cm and on the right at least 1 cm for the whole master's thesis; the margin at the bottom should be at least 1 cm. The upper margin is 1.5 to 2.5 cm up to the page number and then a further 1 to 1.5 cm from the page number to the beginning of the text.

4.5 Page numbering

The sheets are numbered consecutively beginning with the title page. The page number is placed right in the middle of the upper sheet margin. Reference to the following page at the end of a sheet is superfluous. The cover sheet does not contain any reference to the number of pages. The numbering ends at the beginning of the annex.

4.6 Declaration

The declaration to be made (before the blank final page) is:

I guarantee that the work I am submitting here has been written by myself. I have suitably marked all texts which have been quoted, either word for word or in a paraphrased form, from the published or unpublished work of others.

All sources and aids which I used for this work are listed. The work has not been submitted with the same contents or with any significant parts of this work to any other examination authorities.

The declaration must be signed (on all three copies) and be furnished with information about the place and date of signing.

4.7 The sequence of presentation of the pages

The master's thesis should be assembled together in the following sequence: cover board, blank first sheet, title page (see the sample shown on the last page of this document), table of contents, list of figures, list of tables, list of abbreviations and symbols used, text sheets for the actual master's degree work, bibliography, glossary, annex, declaration (see Point II 4.6), blank final sheet, cover board.

Tables of figures, lists of tables, list of symbols and abbreviations used are only needed if figures etc. were used in the text. A glossary is only needed if it appears meaningful to have one in the specific case.

4.8 External form of the master's thesis

The master's thesis must be stapled and put between carton covers or bound.

Three copies must be submitted.

5 Further information

Further information about scientific work is given during the main points advise week during the lecture "Methods and techniques used for scientific work".

Technische Hochschule Köln

Faculty of Business, Economics and Law

Master's Thesis
(a 15 weeks work)

to obtain
the degree
Master of Arts
in the master's program in International Business

“Title of the master's thesis“

First examiner:	Prof. Dr. Gudrun Muster
Second examiner:	Prof. Elmar Muster
submitted on:	24. Februar 1999
by the candidate:	Franziska Fleißig
resident at:	50678 Köln Claudiusstr. 1
Matriculation No.:	011 000 007
Telephone No.:	0221/222222

** also add the e-mail address if necessary*