

**Guidelines for writing term papers**

for the courses in African history that can currently be attended as part of the following degree programs in history in accordance with the study and examination regulations:

*BA Combined Subject Africa in the World, BA European History, MA History - Histoire, MA Global History, Teacher Training in History, BA African Culture and Society, MA African Culture and Society*

# Guidelines on the structure and external form of the work

## Page format

The basic format is DIN A4 (the standard format for all word processing programs in Europe), but with the change that a correction margin of 3.5 cm must be set on the right. The line spacing should be set to 1.5. The font type is Times New Roman, font size 12 pt, footnotes in 10 pt and with line spacing 1.0. Pages must be numbered.

## Title page

Each term paper requires a title page, which includes the title, research question, name, course, matriculation number, submission date and the name of the lecturer. You can find an exemplary title page under this link.

## Formalities

The length of the term paper depends on the specifications in the study and examination regulations or in the module handbook of your degree program or also on the specifications of the lecturer. **In most cases**, the required length of term papers is 12 pages; longer term papers are usually written in the Master's degree programs. To find out the exact length required for your module and degree program, check your study and examination regulations again or ask your lecturer. For clarity and better readability, the text should be set in justified text.

Attach a signed declaration of independence at the end of the term paper:

“I confirm that I have written this thesis independently and have not used any sources or aids other than those stated. Literally reproduced text passages, including individual sentences and parts thereof, are marked as quotations.”

## 1.3. Structure

A term paper is normally divided into three parts: Introduction, main body and conclusion. At the beginning, the title page, the table of contents and at the end the bibliography are inserted. For details of the individual sections, see below.

# Literature research

## General information

An own literature research on the topic is always required. The type and scope of the bibliography is determined by the thesis, with 8 to 10 titles (e.g. 2-3 books, or parts of books, and 3-5 essays) serving as a guideline. Here, however, it also depends on - which requirements are set by the lecturer, - to what extent the topic of the thesis requires a more or less detailed literature research, - in which semester the thesis is written (the more advanced, the more extensive the literature.

## Internet sources

## Nowadays, it is hard to imagine academic research without internet sources. However, due to the often unclear authorship, the extremely varying quality of the texts and the often limited availability, there are particular problems here that call for a differentiated critique of the sources. There is no problem with scientific online journals, with texts already published and accessible on the Internet or with primary data such as the latest figures from organizations (WHO, UN, World Bank, etc.). Otherwise, however, reference should only be made to homepages where this is obvious for reasons of content (e.g. questions relating to the Internet). Even if the Internet seems to offer a quick way to find information, reference works and encyclopaedias often offer a better quality introduction.

# Task of a term paper

Writing a term paper is not about simply presenting or describing a topic. Instead, the topic is discussed from the perspective of a research question. The research question thus serves as the “central theme” for the entire term paper.

Accordingly, the research question should also be reflected in the structure, i.e. the outline of the entire term paper, as its purpose is to pursue this question purposefully.

It also determines the standard for what can be omitted, as it is irrelevant to the question.

## Possible outlines

Possible structuring principles are, for example

- chronological (e.g. following a historical sequence) - systematic (a subject area is subdivided into various similar (!!) aspects)

- inductive (the argument is based on a general insight, the train of thought develops from the individual/concrete to the general/abstract)

- deductive (a general thesis is presented and then discussed on the basis of a specific case)

- comparative (examples are set against each other and then discussed comparatively)

The choice of outline model essentially depends on the topic of the paper and the research question.

## Language

Of course, you must ensure that you adopt a perspective that is appropriate to the course of study, i.e. in this case a historical perspective. Be aware of the danger of allowing yourself to be taken in too much by non-scientific or non-scientific normative jargon, especially when using non-academic sources (films, newspaper articles, advertising spots, etc.).

Academic writing requires a special language that not only differs significantly from everyday language, but also has its own terminology depending on the subject. The

Mastering the specialist language of history and its vocabulary is one of the aims of the degree course and therefore one of the skills that should be demonstrated in the production of written work. There is a misconception that academic language should necessarily be as complicated and saturated with foreign words as possible. Instead, good academic language is characterized by a compromise between the complexity required to present the subject matter and the greatest possible comprehensibility. The technical language of history contains many technical terms, which you should also use. Just make sure that you understand the meaning and use of such technical or foreign terms.

# The introduction

The introduction does not simply summarize some thoughts that are somehow related to the topic of the work, but has the immensely important task of preparing the reading of the work in terms of content. This can be done in very different ways, for example using a “hook” such as a quote or a historical event.

→ Avoid clichés! In principle, however, the introduction should fulfill the following requirements

1. the introduction **introduces the topic** that the paper deals with.

2. it **formulates the research question.**

3. it **justifies the question** by demonstrating its relevance. Of course, the question can be relevant in very different ways; as a rule, however, it will relate to a more general scientific problem.

- The introduction addresses **important contexts** for an understanding of the research question (which may then be elaborated on in the main body). The W-questions provide orientation here: Who? - How? - Where? - When? - What? - and above all always: Why? Also, only contexts that are relevant to the question are included!

- The introduction outlines the **structure of the paper** and **justifies it in relation to the research question.** In this way, you can ask yourself once again how stringent this structure really is in relation to the research question.

# The main part

As already mentioned, the main part of the thesis consists of several parts, which may be divided into themselves, which build on each other in terms of content and systematically prepare a topic - the central theme is provided by the research question (see above).

The structure follows the argumentative structure of the paper as described in the introduction. The aim is an argumentative discussion and answer to the research question. To this end, presentation, analysis and interpretation alternate. Opinions of other authors are to be excluded and critically discussed.

# The conclusion

## Tasks

The conclusion essentially has four tasks:

1. it briefly (!) summarizes the known results

2. secondly, it relates them once again explicitly to the actual research question

3. thirdly, it then comes to a conclusion

4. which he then **discusses appropriately.**

5. the whole thing can, if the content lends itself to it,

6. 5. be concluded with an outlook or further historical contexts.

The conclusion is therefore both about arriving at a result and asking about the significance of this result. Questions that can be asked for this are, for example: “To what extent is the reader smarter after this reading than before? What are the relevant consequences of the knowledge gained for the situation, the people affected, the problem, etc.”

To do this, you can, for example, imagine a person from outside the field who you want to convince of the relevance of your paper.

# Quote

Statements that refer literally or indirectly to the texts of other authors must be substantiated.

- In the case of **literal quotation**, this is done on the one hand by quotation marks, and on the other handby the reference, i.e. the directly following source citation. Together with the bibliography, this indication of the corresponding place in the original text serves to enable a reader to look up the original text.

→ Example: He had, according to the accusation, “not adequately substantiated his quotations” (Richter 2006: 123).

- In the case of **indirect quotation**, the quotation is only substantiated by the source reference. **The source reference is placed after the statement to which it refers!** Because the location of a source reference determines which part of the text is actually an indirect quotation and which part is attributable to the author himself, references are **not(!)** placed at the end of the sentence!

→ Example: When citing quotations in academic texts, the location of the source is of central importance, even if this is occasionally not sufficiently taken into account (Richter 2007: 45).

*versus*

*→ When citing quotations in academic texts, the location of the source is of central importance, even if this is occasionally not sufficiently taken into account (Richter 2007: 45).*

*Difference: In the first sentence, the evidence is used to support the statement of the main sentence - i.e. that the location of the source is of central importance for citations - while in the second sentence, the fact that this is occasionally not sufficiently taken into account is supported by a reference to Richter 2007, p. 45.*

* *Citations are not there to obey academic rules or to meet the requirements of a term paper, even if correct citation is one of the requirements of academic work and therefore also the writing of term papers.*
* *Citations should only be made if this makes sense or is necessary for reasons of content, e.g.*
* *To justify the relevance of the topic, to cite positions or theses of other academics or to prove the origin of data, etc.*
* *Accordingly, a term paper should not consist of too many citations. After all, the focus should be on your own discussion of the topic.*
* *You should understand the content of the chosen quotation and not hide behind the assumed meaning*
* *Foreign-language quotations should be translated into your own language and explained and discussed.*

# Bibliography

The bibliography concludes the work. It contains all the titles referred to in the work! referred to in the paper. It must be uniformly formatted!

## Mandatory information:

* + - - Surname and first name (or initials) of the author,
    - - Year of publication,
    - - Title,

then add:

- for monographs: place of publication and publisher, possibly the series,

- for articles from journals: Name of the journal, year, volume, page number of the article (from

- to),

- for articles from anthologies: Name(s) of the editor(s), title of the anthology, place and publisher, page number of the article (from - to)

# Plagiarism

Plagiarism, i.e. attempted fraud, includes

- copying texts or text modules from the Internet without making this clear

- quoting verbatim and indirectly without proper identification

- the analogous reproduction of content, theses or arguments from sources without a corresponding reference (e.g. by footnote)

→ No certificate can be issued for such work or may lead to exmatriculation under certain circumstances. **Be aware that such copies are easily noticed in the correction and that the chair has software that searches the Internet for corresponding parallels.**

**→ Good luck with writing your term paper!**

**Appendix:**

**1. cover sheet**

**2. attach affidavit with signature, place, date at the end of the term paper**

Sources:

Term Paper Guide Ethnology University of Bayreuth:

https://www.ethnologie.uni-bayreuth.de/pool/dokumente/Studium/leitfaden-hausarbeiten\_2016.pdf (15.06.2020)

Term paper guideline history department University of Trier:

https://www.uni-trier.de/fileadmin/fb3/GES/Hausarbeit\_GeschWiss\_Juli\_2017.pdf (15.06.2020)



University Bayreuth

… Faculty

Chair for ….…………

Lecturer: …….

Seminar: ………………………………………….

**Title**

Presented by ………………………. Submission date: ……

E-Mail-Address: ……………………

Matrikelnumber: ……………………

Study program ……………………..

….. Semester

Declaration in lieu of an oath

I hereby declare in lieu of an oath that I have written this thesis independently, have not yet submitted it in whole or in part for examination and have not used any aids other than those specified.

I have identified all passages in the thesis that are taken from other works in terms of wording or meaning by citing the source. This also applies to drawings, sketches, pictorial representations and the like as well as to sources from the Internet.

I am aware that any infringement of this rule will be regarded as an attempt to deceive and will result in the work being graded as “insufficient”.

I am aware that my thesis can be sent and saved in electronic form for plagiarism checking.

Place; Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_