



Structure of a seminar paper

Structure

- **Title page:** Never use the university logo!
- **Table of contents:** Here the page numbers start with page 1
- **Introduction:**
 - Introduction to the topic
 - Relevance and delimitation of the topic
 - Question/objective of the work
 - (Procedure/methodology: for empirical work)
 - 'Plan'/formulated chapter overview
- **Main part:** Present the topic in several chapters
 - Definition of terms
 - Refer to the topic
 - Set out and justify theses
 - Own position: commentary, interpretation
 - Chapter structure: establish links between the chapters and to the research question
- **Conclusion:**
 - Summarise
 - Link to introduction
 - Outlook: further questions
- Bibliography
- Declaration of authenticity

Page layout: Setting up the page

Margins

Keep - generous - margins, especially in the manuscript version. This will make it easier for the reviewer to make their own notes in the margins. Please also note that 0.5 to 1.0 centimetres are required for the binding of the left margin. The following can serve as a guideline: left margin 3.0 cm; right margin 2.5 cm; top and bottom margins also 2.5 cm each.

Line length

A line should not contain more than 70 characters, including punctuation and spaces. This guideline ensures good legibility from a typographical point of view.





Line spacing

As a rule: 1.5. If your text contains longer, indented quotations, you can consider using a line spacing of 1.0 within the indentation. Automatic hyphenation is also recommended.

Paragraph or indent

Paragraphs can be separated in two ways: Indentation or spacing. Either keep an indent of approx. 4 mm at the beginning of a new paragraph or use a blank line. However, you can also use both options, which is becoming increasingly common in academic papers. This means that indents are used to mark sections, whereas paragraphs are marked by a blank line.

Ragged margin or justification

Excessive and uneven spacing between the words on a line makes it difficult to read. Typographers refer to this as *grey value*. The advantage of ragged margins is that the spaces between the words are always the same size. On the other hand, the end of the line is uneven, especially with unfavourable line breaks. With justification, the opposite is true: an even *grey value* at the end of the line contrasts with irregular spaces between the words, which can sometimes be very large. For the manuscript version, it is usually sufficient to use justification. For a seminar paper, however, justification is required.

Page layout: Setting up the text

Font selection

For a longer text with wide lines, it makes sense to choose a font with serifs (end strokes) and a difference in stroke width. The serifs help the eye with line guidance and line returns. The difference in stroke width, on the other hand, leads to clearer word images, which in turn makes reading much easier. Sans serif fonts, on the other hand, are ideal for texts with narrow lines of up to 40 characters. It is also possible to combine two fonts in one text even a serif and a sans serif font. However, they should harmonise aesthetically. An easily legible font such as Times New Roman or Arial should therefore be used in a term paper.





Font size

A font size of 11 or 12 is suitable for continuous text - depending on the font. A larger font size of 12 is common for Times New Roman and a smaller font size of 11 for Arial. A larger font size can be used for headings, but this should then be used consistently.

Highlighting in the text

To emphasise individual words or passages in the text, they are usually set in *italics*. Other options such as **bold print** or underlining are not recommended, as they either appear too intrusive or are perceived as remnants from the era of the mechanical typewriter.

Type characters

Distinguish carefully between the hyphen (the typographical term is *divis*) and the dash, which is used for parentheses and paragraphs within a sentence. The latter is always set in two spaces, but can also be used in conjunction with a punctuation mark. Make sure that inverted commas are used correctly and consistently. The following are permitted in German: ‘ ... ’ and: ‘ ... ’; but not mixed in one text.

