

# Guideline for Bachelor Theses at the UAS BFI Vienna

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## Scope and entry into force

This guideline applies to all bachelor programmes as well as university programmes for continuing education leading to a bachelor degree according to § 9 Universities of Applied Sciences Act/FHG at the UAS BFI Vienna. For degree programmes and university programmes carried out jointly with other universities, the Academic Council may make deviating regulations in agreement with the provider.

1. The guideline comes into force on 1 September 2023. Students who have already agreed on or have been assigned a bachelor thesis topic on the day of entry into force are excluded from this regulation. In UAS bachelor degree programmes, **one or at least two bachelor theses** have to be drafted related to specific courses the students attend (pursuant to. **§ 3 para 2 no 6 FHG**). The present guideline appoints, unless stated otherwise, the framework for drafting one or two bachelor theses within a bachelor programme. If the related specifications diverge from the present guideline (e.g. deadlines, formal requirements such as text length, grading criteria, grading form, adaptations of bachelor exams, etc.), they are to be communicated in writing to the students, the lecturers concerned, and the head of the Academic Council, and are to be documented within the degree programme. This also applies to the case of two differently weighted bachelor theses (e.g. “minor” and “major” bachelor theses in different semesters).
2. This guideline for drafting bachelor theses **summarises the (minimum) standards valid for all degree programmes of the UAS BFI Vienna**. In addition, there may be degree programme-related regulations that take into account the specifics of the respective bachelor programmes and have to be in accordance with the present guideline.
3. **The bachelor thesis(es) is/are written within the framework of seminars or project seminars. The objective of the bachelor thesis(es) is for students to produce and present an independent written work from at least one of the available subject areas of the respective degree programme in accordance with professional field-related and scientific standards, drawing on the knowledge accumulated during the degree programme.** A bachelor thesis answers one or more research questions. The written elaborations are high in terms of the scientific level of ambition (research question, hypothesis formation, scope of material, etc.) and scope, but in any case less complex than those of a master thesis. Textbook-like treatments of topics, which are too broad but less in-depth, should be avoided.
4. Bachelor theses must always be written in German **or English**.
5. The **time frame for writing the bachelor thesis(es)** is usually one semester. If only one bachelor thesis is written, the duration may be extended to two semesters with a corresponding increase in the scope and/or depth of the thesis. The corresponding specifications are communicated to the students, the lecturers concerned and the Academic Council (Academic Director).

6. The **research questions for bachelor theses** are agreed upon between the student and the seminar leader no later than at the beginning of the seminar when possible. If students propose their own topics, these can be taken into account if they are compatible with the **general topic** of the seminar (in line with the research focus of the UAS BFI Vienna or the respective degree programme) and the seminar leader accepts the proposed topic.
7. With regard to the assessment of the bachelor thesis, please refer to the assessment form for the bachelor seminar.
8. **Joint work on a topic** by up to three students is permissible **on application to the degree programme director** if the performance of the individual students can be assessed separately and the workload per student corresponds to that of an individual paper (§ 19 para 1 FHG).
9. As a rule, the **body part** (introduction, main part, conclusion) of each bachelor thesis should comprise approx. 6,000 to 8,000 words per student. With regard to deviating regulations on the scope, please refer to points 1 and 2.
10. In a bachelor thesis, the internationally recognised citation regulations of the respective subject area or the specifics of the respective degree programme are to be applied. Furthermore, the current "**Guidelines for Good Scientific Practice (GSP)**" of the Austrian Agency for Research Integrity (see OeAWI-website) must be observed. Additionally, the "[Guidelines for Gender and Diversity Sensitive Language and Image Use - for Students, Lecturers and Staff of the UAS BFI Vienna](#)" must also be observed.
11. With regard to the **research proposal**, please refer to the corresponding template on the e-learning platform.
12. The contents of the bachelor thesis(es) have to be presented by the author(s) during the seminar. The presentation of the bachelor thesis usually lasts 15 to max. 20 minutes. Following the presentation, the author of the bachelor thesis must answer questions from the seminar leader and the other seminar participants ("**defence**" of the bachelor thesis). If the student has not submitted a positively assessed bachelor thesis, the specific regulations of the degree programme for resits may provide for the omission of the presentation and the defence of the thesis by means of a discussion. In such cases, the degree programme director decides on the weighting of the seminar parts.
13. The bachelor thesis/s is/are submitted on the university's e-learning platform as a Word document and (unblocked) PDF file. The **submission** of the bachelor thesis is understood to be the approvable thesis (no preliminary version!).

14. The submitted bachelor thesis must then be subjected to a routine **electronic plagiarism check** by the seminar leader. **In addition to this electronic check, the supervisor must carry out a plagiarism check on the content. In the case of justified plagiarism, the bachelor thesis is to be declared invalid;** the rules for negatively assessed bachelor theses apply. The incident must be reported to the Academic Director, who will then issue a warning to the student. In case of repeated plagiarism, the student will be automatically expelled from the programme.
- In case of justified suspicion of plagiarism, ghostwriting (including also e.g. texts/passages generated automatically by artificial intelligence) or other violations of good scientific practice, the UAS BFI Vienna reserves the right to summon the student to the ombudsman's office for the safeguarding of good scientific practice at the UAS BFI Vienna.
15. The **assessment of the bachelor thesis (on the basis of the final version)** by the seminar leader must take place within a maximum of three weeks after timely receipt of the thesis. The plagiarism and ghostwriting checks must be documented. Only if there is no suspicion of plagiarism or ghostwriting (including also e.g. texts/passages created automatically by artificial intelligence) can the formal and content-related assessment of the thesis be undertaken on the basis of the assessment form for bachelor theses.
16. If the student fails to meet the agreed deadline without giving a valid reason (e.g. protracted serious illness, serious accident with protracted consequences, birth of a child, etc.), the first attempt is forfeited. For the **2nd submission deadline**, the bachelor thesis must be submitted up to four weeks after the announcement of the assessment result of the 1st deadline/attempt. If this paper also shows considerable shortcomings (see detailed criteria in the assessment form for the bachelor seminar or thesis), the paper is **to be assessed negatively**. After a negative assessment, the seminar leader will send special correction instructions to the student. If the student also fails to meet this deadline for revision without giving important reasons, or if the paper again shows considerable shortcomings, it will again be assessed negatively and submitted to the board of examiners (= 3rd and final submission deadline/attempt).
- For the third submission deadline to a board of examiners, the seminar leader sends essential revision instructions to the student together with the negative evaluation. These changes must be made within up to four weeks after the second submission deadline, whereby the student has at least 14 days to submit these corrections. This bachelor thesis, which is now submitted for the last time, is examined by a board of examiners. The board is nominated by the degree programme director and usually consists of three persons: the seminar leader and a lecturer from the subject area of the seminar (= second examiner) as well as the degree programme director or a person delegated by the degree programme director. The seminar leader and the second examiner shall draw up an independent assessment report. If the three members of the board of examiners do not reach a unanimous assessment, the chair of the board shall make the final decision. All content and formal criteria must be met for a positive grade. If a decision made by the board is negative, the studies cannot be continued if a repetition of an academic year has already been claimed.

17. The assessment of the bachelor seminar is based on an analysis grid (form Assessment of bachelor seminar including bachelor thesis). A total of **100 points** can be achieved. At the attempt before a board of examiners, only the bachelor thesis is assessed according to formal and content-related criteria; any other points acquired (research proposal, presentation and defence, participation and performance) are not relevant. The assessment results from the application of the general grading system to the number of points achieved by the student, whereby content-related and formal minimum criteria must be fulfilled. The content of the bachelor thesis is only assessed if the formal criteria are met in an approvable manner (see assessment form). Furthermore, the electronic and content-related plagiarism checks must have shown that there is no plagiarism or ghostwriting (including also e.g. texts/passages generated automatically by artificial intelligence) or any other violations of good scientific practice.
18. The **criteria** for assessment as well as their weighting (analysis grid) will be announced to the students at the beginning of the seminar via the university's e-learning platform.
19. The bachelor thesis **signed** by the student is to be submitted by the seminar leader together with the completed assessment report to the programme coordination no later than 2 weeks after the specified submission deadline and/or, if explicitly stipulated by the respective degree programme, to be uploaded electronically as a PDF to the corresponding university's e-learning platform.
20. Students who **spend the semester in which the bachelor thesis/es have to be written abroad** can submit the bachelor thesis in two ways:
- **The thesis is written in the course of an equivalent seminar abroad.** This must be approved by the degree programme director. The thesis and the assessment by the foreign supervisor are submitted to the degree programme director and then reviewed. As a rule, the assessment of the paper abroad serves as a guideline for the assessment of the bachelor seminar.
  - If it is not possible to write a bachelor thesis abroad under the supervision of the local lecturer, a seminar topic is agreed between the degree programme director and the student abroad and the **student is "supervised remotely"**.
- In both cases, **the assessment of the paper can be extrapolated to the seminar.**