

Seminar Paper Guidelines

In German: <https://www.klassische-archaeologie.uni-mainz.de/files/2021/11/Merkblatt-Hausarbeiten.pdf>

The goal of a seminar research paper is to make an original, clear argument that draws on evidence, engaging deeply within the seminar topic. It needs to demonstrate the formulation of a research question, the gathering of appropriate evidence relevant to the topic, the analysis of evidence, and the construction of an argument that answers the research question.

The paper should be clear, logical, and structured. It should include an introduction that sets out the argument, a main body that includes evidence and analysis, and a conclusion that synthesizes the work, develops the argument fully, and demonstrates its importance. A research paper takes time, planning and effort! Even (especially) the best scholars write and edit multiple drafts.

Considerations for success (and grading):

- Depth of research: demonstration of a thorough understanding of the topic and mastery of primary and secondary sources
- Clarity and consistency: both in argument (common thread throughout, logical connections between parts) and language (style of writing, tenses, citation)
- Originality: concepts and writing are entirely the work of the paper's author, all quotations and ideas taken from other sources are appropriately cited
- Referencing and citation: in-depth consultation of references, consistent and thorough use of citations throughout

Formatting:

- Font: Times New Roman 12 point, Arial 11 point
- Spacing: 1.2-1.5 line spacing
- Margins: 2 cm left, 3.5 cm right (not more!)
- Text: Aligned left or block text
- Numbering: include page numbers

Length:

- Bachelor: 10-12 pages of continuous text, not including cover page/table of contents, bibliography, or illustrations
- Master: 15-20 pages of continuous text, not including cover page/table of contents, bibliography, or illustrations

Paper Structure

Table of Contents:

- Presents an overview of the structure of the paper (think of this as the outline)
- Contains the section headings and the page numbers of the respective sections
- Subsections can be included with graduated numbering (ex. 1, 1.1, 1.1.1, 1.2 ...)
- NB: If using Microsoft Word, the program can automatically create a table of contents if the Style headings are used (In the “References” section, select Table of Contents, Automatic Table)

Introduction:

- What is the research question, what will be investigated in this paper?
- Why does this question matter?
 - *Goal: To explain the research question and the relevance of the topic*
- How will the question be investigated?
 - *Goal: To give a brief background on the subject and the approach it*
 - This should not be the table of contents in complete sentences, but rather a brief look into the topic and the methods that the paper will use.
- What is the basis for this research?
 - *Goal: To introduce the sources, what evidence is available as well as the limitations on the evidence and the approach*

Main Body:

- The main body of the paper presents the research question, the sources, and the analysis in detail.
- It should follow a clear and logical structure, all working towards answering the central research question.
- It is essential to present a variety of evidence and analysis (the research opinions of other scholars) and these should be clearly identified and well-cited.
- The evidence (whether facts or the opinions of another author) should then be critically discussed in light of the paper’s research question. It is not enough to simply present the ideas and work of others!
- Each section of the main body should be linked to the next with a mini-conclusion that summarizes the ideas and sets up the next step in the argument. These transitions are key to keeping the thread of the idea clear.

Conclusions:

- What has this paper demonstrated? What progress has been made?
- WHY does it matter?
- Include a concise summary of the evidence, analysis, and results
- Formulate and state a conclusion that answers the research question, based on the evidence presented, or assert that the research question cannot be answered, should be reframed, and give strong reasons why.
- Set the work into a larger context: how does it contribute to the field, what further work could be done

All three sections of the paper should link together and coordinate – without being repetitive!

Citations:

- All research MUST be appropriately cited
- Use the Author-Date system (Nachweissystem I) either in parentheses or in footnotes, with a full bibliography at the end
 - Author-Date in Paper: Last Name, Year (ex. Breeze, 2012; Breeze, 2014a; Breeze 2014b)
 - Bibliography: Breeze, D.J. (ed.) 2012. *The First Souvenirs Enamelled Vessels from Hadrian's Wall* (Kendal). Breeze, D.J. 2014a. Hadrian's Wall: a history of archaeological thought (Kendal, Cumbria). Breeze, D.J. 2014b. "Two Roman Britains," *Archaeological Journal* 171, 97–110.

Check the Klassische Archäologie Guidelines: <https://www.klassische-archaeologie.uni-mainz.de/files/2021/11/Merkblatt-Zitierweise.pdf>

Illustrations:

- Images should clarify essential aspects of the paper
- They can be compiled at the end of the document or included within the main text (but the text must still meet the length requirements when the illustrations are removed).
- Each should be numbered (ex. Fig. 1, Fig. 2), referenced directly in the paper text, and provided with an explanatory caption under the image.
- A separate list should provide the figure number, the caption, and the image credit.
- Image credit should reference a specific author as far as possible (ie if the image is taken from a publication, the author and page number should be included, if from the web, the author and the website).