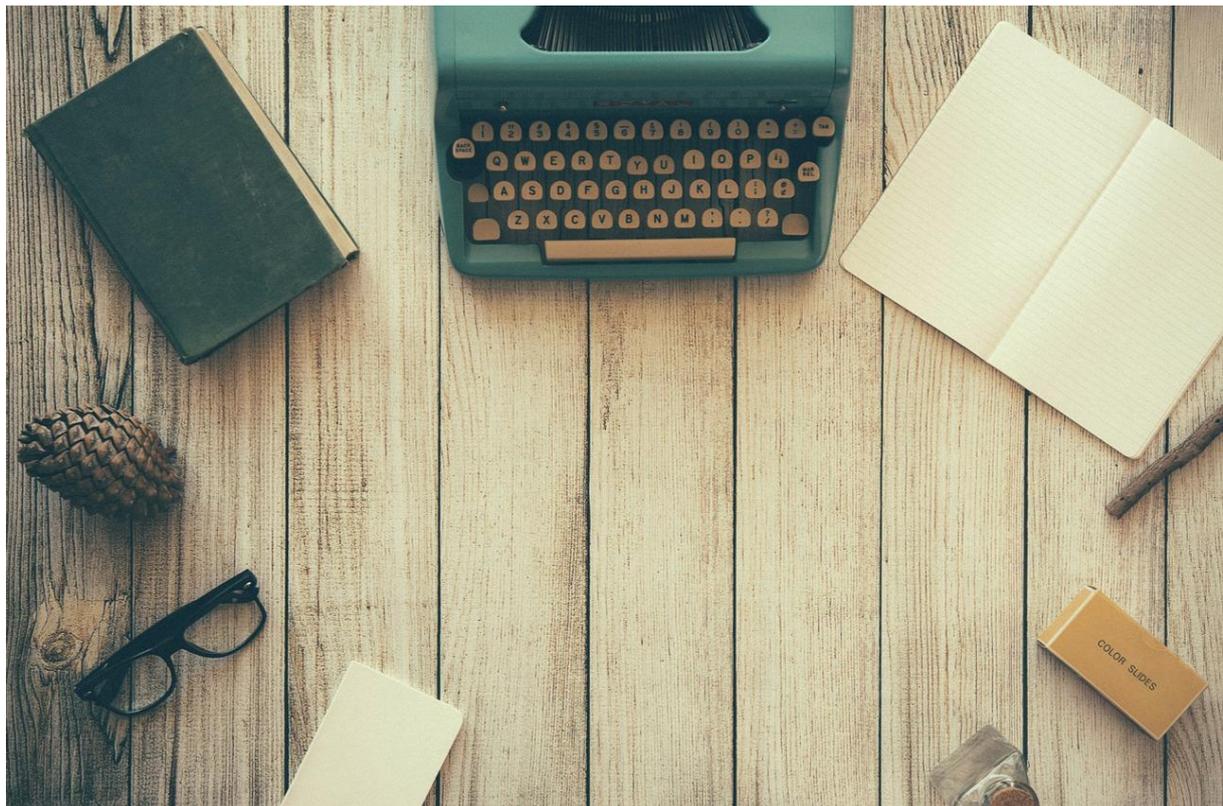

Guidelines for Term Papers, BA Theses and MA Theses in British Cultural Studies



Contents

- 1. The Purpose of Academic Writing 1
- 2. Topic Restriction and Research..... 1
- 3. Planning and Structuring Your Writing 2
- 4. Quotations and References 3
- 5. Spelling, Formatting and Layout Guidelines 3
- 6. Submission 5
- 7. Works Cited..... 6
- 8. Further Reading 6
- 9. Sample Title Page..... 7

1. The Purpose of Academic Writing

The primary purpose of academic writing consists in understanding and applying the diverse **theories and research methods of Cultural Studies**. It also allows you to expand your analytical, research and presentation skills.

Your academic writing should reflect your **awareness** not only **of the discipline** of Cultural Studies, but also of your **readership**. Therefore, address a **specific question/topic**, carry out **extensive research**, and develop an **original argument from evidence**. In order to convince your readers, make sure that your paper is **well-structured** and conforms to the **formal requirements** illustrated below. Moreover, adopt an appropriate **writing style**, apply the technical **vocabulary** and adhere to all the **principles for citing** secondary sources.

The following guidelines give a general overview of the most significant principles for written assignments in the field of British Cultural Studies, but they are not exhaustive and we recommend students to consult their instructors before submitting their texts.

2. Topic Restriction and Research

Focus

Bear in mind that academic texts do not merely accumulate information, but combine facts, ideas and observations into an overall **argument**. Before you start collecting secondary sources or creating an outline for your paper, you should **formulate a precise question** that you are able to answer satisfactorily within the given time and with the resources available to you. Our website offers a **selection of important topics from Cultural Studies** which you can use as a starting point for your own research.

Strategic Research

The quality of your academic writing considerably depends on your selection of relevant **primary and secondary sources**. While the former may include a wide range of cultural texts (written, visual or audio-visual) and constitute the main object of your analysis, the latter refers to all existing academic accounts examining this topic (cf. Stokes 32). Avoid using secondary sources whose form and content does not meet the general requirements of academic research. Therefore,

- select your sources carefully,
- be a purposeful reader,
- take notes, and
- keep full records of the sources from which you gathered information, e.g. by using reference management software such as [Citavi](#) (the University Library regularly offers [workshops](#) on how to use this software).

Your secondary sources should include:

- monographs
- articles from anthologies
- articles from academic journals
- online resources.

For a **bachelor's thesis** or a '**wissenschaftliche Arbeit**' (**Grundschule**), you have to use at least **15 secondary** sources, whereas you will need **30 secondary sources for a master's thesis** or '**wissenschaftliche Arbeit**' (**Mittelschule/Gymnasium**). When writing a research project for a seminar, ask your instructor how many secondary sources they expect you to use.

Checklist for Your Project Design (Stokes 36)

1. Does your research question make sense?
2. Is the project feasible? (Can you do it in the time available?)
3. Do you have access to your primary material?
4. Can you locate sufficient appropriate secondary sources?
5. Have you discussed your idea with your supervisor?
6. Is your question original?
7. Does your question build on previous research?

3. Planning and Structuring Your Writing

After having collected appropriate materials for your assignment, you should organise your ideas and match the information you collected to headings and subheadings that will form the outline of your final text.

Like every effective presentation, an academic text consists of a clear beginning (introduction), middle (main body) and end (conclusion). Each of these has a specific function for the overall text:

- The **introduction** explains and contextualises your research interest and, furthermore, presents the methodology you are going to apply and finishes with your thesis statement (i.e. your paper's main idea/claim summarised in one or two sentences) and an outline of the main body. As you design your introduction, consider the following questions: *What is the topic? Why is it relevant for Cultural Studies? How will this topic be examined? What primary sources will be used? How will the main body be structured?*
- The **main body** develops your argument with the help of evidence and reasoning. It should start with a brief historical/theoretical contextualisation of your topic, i.e. a summary of existing research with regard to your own research question. Its most important element is the detailed analysis of your primary sources (cf. Stokes 34).
- In your **conclusion**, you summarise and weigh up the evidence provided in the main body, come to a concluding statement, and – if possible – point out related discussion questions or further studies.

Your paper should furthermore include: **i) a title page, ii) a table of contents, iii) a list of illustrations** (if necessary), **iv) a complete list of works cited** and **v) a signed [plagiarism disclaimer](#)**.

4. [Quotations and References](#)

Quotations and reference fulfil three important functions in academic texts: they help “[t]o avoid the charge of **plagiarism**, [. . .] give more authority to your writing, [. . .]” and they ensure that “[t]he reader can find the original source by using the reference section” (Bailey 73).

If you fail to acknowledge that you integrated another person’s ideas into your text, we have to reject your work and you will not pass the assessment. Therefore, it is vital to keep a full record of all your sources, distinguish between primary and secondary sources and conform to the **citation rules of the [Modern Language Association \(MLA Handbook, 8th edition\)](#)**.

The two following style sheets have been created by Peter Tasic for the module “Anglistische Schlüsselqualifikationen” and give a brief overview of the two basic citation conventions. A more extensive version of these style sheets is available as a brochure at Printy’s copy shop (Ritterstraße 5). Before you submit your paper, ask your instructor/supervisor which convention they prefer.

- [Author-Title Style Sheet](#)
- [Author-Date Style Sheet](#)

5. [Spelling, Formatting and Layout Guidelines](#)

Spelling	Either use British or American English, but use it consistently . Adjust your word processor’s default language accordingly. Before submitting your paper, check it again for spelling mistakes and grammatical correctness.
Length	The number of pages depends on the type of paper you are writing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • essay (“Hausarbeit”) = 10 ‘norm’ pages of running text • bachelor’s thesis = 30-40 ‘norm’ pages of running text • master’s thesis = 50-60 ‘norm’ pages of running text • wissenschaftliche Arbeit (teacher trainee programme): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Grundschule: 40 pages ○ Mittelschule/Sonderpädagogik: 40-50 pages ○ Gymnasium: 50-60 pages
Contents	Arrange your paper as follows: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Title Page 2. Table of Contents 3. List of Illustrations (if required) 4. Main Text 5. List of Works Cited 6. Plagiarism Disclaimer

Title Page	<p>The title page should include the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TOP LEFT: Universität Leipzig, Institut für Anglistik, module and seminar title, name of instructor, semester (font size 11 or 12) • CENTRED: title and date of submission (font size 20 or 22, bold) • BOTTOM RIGHT: your name, student ID, number of terms, study programme, email address (font size 11 or 12) <p>Please note, that the format is slightly different for teacher trainees. Follow the instructions provided by the ZLS.</p>
Headings	<p>Chapter headings should be numbered, printed in bold and in font size 14. Subheadings should also be printed in bold, but in font size 12.</p>
Formatting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use 80-gram DIN A4 white paper printed on one side in black ink • margins: TOP 2.5 cm, LEFT 2.5 cm, RIGHT 2.5 cm, BOTTOM 2.0 cm • spacing: 1.5 • pagination in footer • use Times New Roman (size 12), Arial or Calibri (size 11) • justify the text (Blocksatz) • indent the first line of a new paragraph (1.5 cm)
Quotes	<p>If a quote is longer than four lines in prose or three lines in verse: justify the quote (Blocksatz), indent it (1.5cm) and drop the quotation marks. Keep the spacing.</p> <p>Any changes or omissions you make in direct quotations should be marked with square brackets, e.g.</p> <p><i>Giving references “avoid[s] the charge of plagiarism [. . .] [and] can give more authority to your writing” (Bailey 72).</i></p>
Footnotes, Endnotes	<p>Notes may be placed either at the bottom of the page (footnotes) or at the end of the essay (endnotes). They are usually numbered consecutively throughout the essay and printed in font size 10.</p>
Literaturverzeichnis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • divide your list into primary and secondary sources • use the conventions of the MLA (8th edition) • your sources should be ordered alphabetically and printed in font size 11 or 12 (do not use bullet points) • if an entry is longer than one line, indent all lines from the second line onwards (1.5 cm) • if you quote several texts from one author written in the same year, make the following distinction: 2000a, 2000b

6. Submission

Essays/Term Papers

Submit **one copy of your printed text by placing it in the mailbox (“pigeon hole”) of your instructor** in the Department of British Studies (opening hours: Monday – Friday, 7am – 9pm). Fasten the pages of your paper with a paperclip or a punched pocket. Refrain from submitting term papers in plastic folders. Please ask your individual instructors whether they would like to have digital copies as well. (See further instructions in the [examination regulations](#).)

BA Theses and MA Theses

Hand in **two printed and bound copies as well as two digital copies (CDs)** at the [examination office](#) during their office hours.

Wissenschaftliche Arbeit (Teacher Trainees)

Submit **one printed and bound copy as well as one digital copy (e.g. CD)** of your thesis **to the LaSuB** during their office hours and **two printed and bound copies as well as two digital copies (e.g. CDs) to your supervisors**. See further instructions in the examination regulations for [teacher training programmes](#).

We strongly recommend you to meet your instructors after your papers have been marked. Thus, you can get individual feedback on your work.

7. Works Cited

Bailey, Stephen. *Academic Writing. A Practical Guide for Students*. RoutledgeFalmer, 2004.

Stokes, Jane. *How to Do Media & Cultural Studies*. SAGE, 2009.

8. Further Reading

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Bailey, Stephen. *Academic Writing: A Handbook for International Students*. Routledge, 2011.

Day, Trevor. *Success in Academic Writing*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2013.

Esselborn-Krumbiegel, Helga. *Von der Idee zum Text: Eine Anleitung zum wissenschaftlichen Schreiben*. Schöningh, 2014.

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Swales, John M., and Christine B. Feak. *Academic Writing for Graduate Students: Essential Tasks and Skills*. University of Michigan Press, 2004.

Taylor, Gordon. *A Student's Writing Guide: How to Plan and Write Successful Essays*. Cambridge University Press, 2009.

Williams, Joseph M., and Joseph Bizup. *Style: The Basics of Clarity and Grace*. Pearson, 2015.

9. Sample Title Page

Universität Leipzig
Institut für Anglistik
Modul 2104: Difference in Literature and Culture
Seminar 2104-3: Pop Star Celebrities and the Global Marketplace
Prof. Dr. Oliver v. Knebel Doeberitz

SoSe 2019

Pop Music as Cultural Practice

eingereicht am 25.04.2019

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