

Bachelor's Program in International Business

INSTRUCTIONS FOR BACHELOR'S THESIS 2022-2023

28 September 2022

Note: In case any changes are made during the thesis process, students will be informed on the changes by email. The updated version of this document will always be available on Into.

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THESIS MATERIALS AVAILABLE ON INTO

Please note that all the information and electronic forms are available on Into:
Studying in Mikkeli -> Bachelor's Thesis

You can access the thesis materials from here:

<https://www.aalto.fi/en/programmes/bachelors-programme-in-international-business-mikkeli/thesis>

Student Guide main page for Mikkeli students:

<https://www.aalto.fi/en/programmes/bachelors-programme-in-international-business-mikkeli>

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY, DOCUMENTATION AND PLAGIARISM

The work reflected in your thesis is your development of ideas, theories, and data that you have researched. The ideas of others must be documented appropriately. Accurate documentation in your thesis is also a reflection of academic honesty. **Plagiarism in the thesis – in any form – is strictly forbidden.** Any evidence of plagiarism in the thesis will result in serious consequences for your thesis grade and may result in disciplinary action. An Internet-based plagiarism-detection service Turnitin is used in the Mikkeli program to detect plagiarism in Bachelor's Theses. If you are in doubt about the rules, check with your supervisor. (See more information on this in chapter 4.)

1. SCHEDULE OF EVENTS, DOCUMENTS AND DEADLINES

The 2022-2023 Bachelor's Thesis process formally begins in late September 2022. Your work on the thesis begins immediately with the exploratory and developmental stages of the thesis. During the process, you will attend several information sessions, workshops and group meetings. Three personal consultations with your supervisor are also required.

A key factor in completing the thesis successfully is starting early and keeping up with the process, ie meeting deadlines. **You are not allowed to take any courses during module 7 (Jan 23 – Feb 10, 2023), enabling you to focus entirely on your research.**

The first column of Table 1 on the next page shows some of the key steps and requirements the students and the supervisors should follow during the thesis process. Students should also create their own detailed schedules for completing various steps, eg by using a Gantt chart. The titles of the documents the students need to turn in (either to their supervisor via MyCourses/Turnitin, Sophia Butt, IT staff, the library or the Mikkeli study office) by the given due dates are listed in the second column of the table. Please see the explanations for various steps and documents in section 2 of this document.

In particular, keep in mind the following:

- Your evaluation and thus grades will be affected by your performance in managing the thesis project (submitting work to your supervisor on time, attending meetings and otherwise maintaining communication with him/her, as well as attending thesis info sessions and workshops).
- A score of 0 in any of the attributes of the thesis grading rubric (when the supervisor gives the tentative grade on the final draft) will result in a failing grade for the thesis.
- Your supervisor will complete a review of your performance in December and in February, evaluating whether or not you have progressed enough to be allowed to continue the thesis process.
- A passing grade given for the Bachelor's Thesis cannot be improved later.

You can find Bachelor's Theses from recent years via the links below.

- Open access theses:
<https://aaltodoc.aalto.fi/handle/123456789/21758/browse?type=department&value=Mikkelin+kampus>
- These theses you can read only in the library or in the Learning Center in Otaniemi:
<https://aaltodoc.aalto.fi/handle/123456789/10/browse?type=department&value=Mikkelin+kampus>

The theses from earlier years are available only as hard copies in the library.

Please feel free to ask our IT Staff for more information on the technical issues (ITSupport-mikkeli@aalto.fi). In case you have other than technical questions, feel free to contact your supervisor or Mari Syväoja (mari.syvaoja@aalto.fi).

Table 1. Bachelor's Thesis Steps and Due Dates

MEETINGS, WORKSHOPS AND OTHER STEPS	BACHELOR'S THESIS PROCESS DOCUMENTS	DUE DATES
Info session 1: Thesis instructions and instructions for choosing a thesis topic (auditorium)		Sept 28, 2022 at 12.30-13.00
Info session 2: Information retrieval, key parts of the thesis, research plan and grading rubric, and discussion of choosing a thesis topic (aud)		Oct 12, 2022 at 16-17
Program Director's office hours on campus: choosing a thesis topic (3 rd floor conf. room; signup sheet on Director's office door.)		Oct 18, 2022 at 13-16 Oct 19, 2022 at 13-16 Oct 20, 2022 at 13-16 Oct 21, 2022 at 13-16
	Indication of Interest Area for Thesis form	Oct 24, 2022 at 9.00
Thesis groups and topics announced		Oct 27, 2022 at 12.30-13
Info session 3: Thesis group session and selecting the student group leaders (aud)		Oct 27, 2022 at 12.30-13
Individual consultation 1 with supervisor		during Nov 1-18, 2022
Info session 4: Literature review (aud)		Nov 16, 2022 at 16-17
Workshop: Literature review/ROUND 1, groups 1-2 (including: Evaluating sources)		Nov 21-24, 2022
Info session 5: Use of Turnitin in the thesis process; submission box, similarity reports (aud)		Nov 29, 2022 at 12.15-13
Support for stress and time management		available all the time
	First draft of Research Plan	Dec 2, 2022 at 9.00
Supervisor comments on Research Plan draft		Dec 9, 2022
	Revised Research Plan and Thesis Outline	Dec 16, 2022
Supervisor comments on Revised Research Plan & Thesis Outline		Dec 22, 2022
Workshop: Literature review/ROUND 2, group 3 (including: Evaluating sources)		Jan 2-5, 2023
	Draft Reference List	Jan 7, 2023
Individual consultation 2 with supervisor		during Jan 10 - Feb 15, 2023
	First draft of Literature Review	Jan 26, 2023 at 9.00
Supervisor comments on Literature Review draft and similarity report		Feb 1, 2023
	Revised Literature Review and updated Thesis Outline	Feb 10, 2023 at 9.00
Supervisor comments on revised Literature Review & updated Thesis Outline and review of similarity report + Student performance review		Feb 17, 2023
Methodology and data analysis mentoring (online)		during Feb 17 - March 15, 2023
Individual consultation 3 with supervisor; consultation on methodology and analysis		during Feb 17 - March 15, 2023
	Full draft of Thesis	March 17, 2023 at 9.00
Supervisor comments on full draft with tentative grade for thesis; review of similarity report		March 17-23, 2023
Info session 6: The final steps of the process (aud)		March 22, 2023 at 12-13
	Final Thesis (supervisor + library copies)	April 3, 2023 by 09.00
	Executive Summary of Thesis or Press Release (Maturity Test)	April 3, 2023 by 09.00
	Abstract page of thesis for thesis seminar	April 3, 2023 by 09.00
	Presentation slides for thesis seminar	April 12, 2023 by 09.00
Thesis presentation seminar		April 14, 2023 12-16
Grading of the Bachelor's Thesis, Bachelor's Thesis Seminar and Maturity Test; review of similarity report		April 25, 2023

2. DOCUMENTS AND STEPS IN THE BACHELOR'S THESIS PROCESS

This section provides information on:

- all the documents you have to turn in during the thesis process,
- the deadlines for these documents and
- to whom you should send each document.

Note: When sending documents, always include your own name in the titles of the documents, e.g., LastName_ResPlan or LastName_LitRev.

Info sessions on various topics

We will organize several info sessions during the thesis process and they are part of the Bachelor's Thesis Seminar (2 cr). Please note that the attendance will be checked and reported to the supervisors, and it will affect your Bachelor's Thesis Seminar grade.

Indication of Interest Area for Bachelor's Thesis form

You can find this document in electronic form on Into. Please complete the form, save it using your last name in the title of the document (e.g., LastName_IntForm), and **send it by email to the study office (studyoffice-mikkeli@aalto.fi) by October 24, 2022 at 9.00 (Finnish time).**

The thesis groups with supervisors (and thesis topics) will be announced in the thesis info session 3 on October 27, 2022 at 12.30-13.00 (and on Into after that).

If you feel the need, due to health issues, for **special support** from the supervisor during the thesis process, please indicate it on the Indication of Interest Area form. To be considered for the special support, you will also need to provide a relevant medical certificate or other official documentation to Mari Syväoja by October 24, 2022 or as soon as possible after that.

Student group leader role

Once the thesis groups have been announced, each group will be asked to select a student group leader. This will be done during info session 3. The group leader should assist the supervisor with the practicalities of arranging possible group meetings (eg room bookings) and help communicate questions or concerns to the supervisor. If the leader is not familiar with the IT system the supervisor would like to use for a group meeting, she/he should contact the IT staff during their office hours. Thesis students are encouraged to meet informally in the groups during the process to share advice on research and writing and generally provide peer support.

Mandatory literature review workshop

All thesis students are required to attend one of the Literature Review Writing workshops (sessions and individual consultations), which will be held **November 21-24, 2022 (Round 1, groups 1-2) and January 2-5, 2023 (Round 2, group 3)** by Sophia Butt. **Note: You may participate only in one of the groups.** The workshop will focus on writing the literature review and other aspects of thesis writing, like tone, register and academic style. More information on the workshop and texts to be submitted to Sophia Butt will be provided separately.

Students must register for one of the workshops beforehand. Instructions for the registration process will be sent to students separately. **Note: Registration is binding.** Once registered, a group swap will only be permitted in exceptional cases, with the prior permission of Sophia Butt.

Support for stress and time management

Stress and study anxiety are surely inevitable during the busiest time of your studies – however, in Aalto we think school stress shouldn't be something that takes over your whole life and energy. How can one manage and succeed in studies while staying balanced and well? There is no easy way out of stress – it cannot be totally eliminated. However, you don't have to tackle it alone!

Aalto University Study Psychologists offer online counselling and support for stress management and other study related issues, such as learning, motivation, self-regulation and study skills. You can find more information and their contact details here: <https://www.aalto.fi/en/palvelut/individual-counselling-by-study-and-career-counselling-psychologists>.

Discussions can give you a chance to get to know your own positive stress coping mechanisms. You can also learn a thing or two about keeping up your motivation and learning how to be more mindful and self-compassionate.

Research Plan

The Research Plan form can be found on Into. The Research Plan should be about 4-5 pages in length. It must contain the following information:

1. Tentative working title of the thesis
2. Your interest and relationship to the thesis topic (indicate if the topic involves family business, friends, funding for thesis work, among other factors)
3. The research problem
4. Research question(s)
5. Research objectives
6. Importance and/or significance of the research
7. Description of research methodology, including whether the thesis will be based mainly on secondary literature (desk research) or primary data you will gather yourself.
8. Literature to be used (specific examples of scholarly sources)
9. Critique of a journal article related to your topic
10. Plan of action (schedule of your work, issues to resolve, etc.)

Note concerning methodology: Your research questions will guide your choice of methodology, for which you should create a realistic plan for implementation. First, ask yourself to what extent you will need to gather primary data in order to address your research questions. Or are there enough secondary sources reporting on existing data that will suffice? If you will need to gather primary data, what methods will you use?

- Qualitative? Interviews, focus groups, etc.?
- Quantitative? A survey? If so, how will you define your target group, what would be a sufficiently large N to generalize on your findings?
- Both? In what proportion?

When will you carry out these steps? Do you have time to do what you'd like to do? Think through these questions as you prepare your research plan and discuss key issues with your supervisor. Prepare a detailed action plan for yourself so that you can meet the key thesis deadlines.

Submit the first draft of your research plan on MyCourses (as a Word document) **to your thesis supervisor by December 2, 2022 at 9.00 (Finnish time)**. In case you have completed your draft research plan already earlier, feel free to submit it on MyCourses to your supervisor earlier.

Your supervisor will give comments on your first draft of the research plan on MyCourses by December 9, 2022. If more work on the research plan is needed, you will be asked to re-submit your research plan to your supervisor on MyCourses by December 16, 2022 together with the Thesis Outline document.

Your supervisor will also give you written comments on your revised research plan and thesis outline on MyCourses by December 22, 2022.

NOTE: If a student has not submitted any significant work to their supervisor by the final Research Plan deadline (December 16, 2022), they cannot continue in the process.

Thesis Outline

The thesis outline helps to identify the flow of the thesis and indicates the direction and detail of the thesis to the supervisor. **Submit the first draft of your thesis outline on MyCourses to your thesis supervisor by December 16, 2022**. Use this thesis outline later to develop the table of contents of your thesis (see section 3.3). The electronic form "model outline" is available on Into. Your supervisor will give comments on your revised research plan and thesis outline on MyCourses by December 22, 2022.

Submit also the updated thesis outline (with a revised Literature Review) on MyCourses to your thesis supervisor by February 10, 2023 at 9.00. Use this thesis outline later to develop the table of contents of your thesis.

Draft Reference List

Your research plan, drafted and revised in December, will provide the basis for your work on the literature review. As you build your discussion of the existing research on your topic, you will compile a list of the most suitable secondary sources. The Draft Reference List is intended to show your supervisor where you are heading with the research and the quality of the sources you are finding. You are expected to list at least 25-30 references following the Harvard Referencing System.

Submit the draft reference list on MyCourses to your thesis supervisor by January 7, 2023.

Literature Review

You should actively start working on your literature search and literature review as early as possible. There are several purposes of the literature review. They include, among others, to:

- chart what is already known about the topic
- facilitate problem definition
- learn about different theoretical and methodological approaches to your topic
- help you develop a framework for analysis
- provide ideas about different variables
- suggest additional research questions
- help you interpret your findings

What it is

A survey of scholarly books, articles and other sources relevant to a particular issue, area of research, theory or methodology, which is organized thematically.

What it is not

A list of article summaries (he said this, she said that, they said another thing) – you structure the discussion, the themes, the headings.

What it demonstrates

The literature review signals to the reader that you have positioned your own research in a broad body of literature – that you have “done your homework” and are aware of the main works and ideas relevant to your field. The literature review also presents your critique of the academic studies most relevant to your own research topic.

Two tips when doing your research: 1) Skim the reference lists of the well-published scholars in your field. Classic works are cited frequently in such publications; use these original sources and include them in your literature review. 2) Keep in mind that, in addition to compiling research presented in journals and books, recent research is often presented in online working papers and high quality conference proceedings (peer reviewed).

Overall, you must engage with the works you are reading – go beyond just a summary of their research questions, methodology and conclusions – why is the work important for your discussion? Is it helpful, is it inadequate – if so, in what ways? How would you improve on it with your own research? Ask yourself these kinds of questions.

Part of the literature review includes presenting the framework guiding your study.

Notes on the Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework provides the structure of the research idea or concept and how it is put together. It elaborates the research problem in relation to relevant literature; it may summarize the major (dependent and independent) variables in your research. It should:

- reflect the existing research and its relevance for your topic;
- provide clear links between the existing literature and your research questions;
- identify gaps – however small – in the research that you are trying to fill;
- show how you have adapted or improved or extended an existing framework;
- present the key ideas in your approach and their relationship; and
- be expressed in a schematic diagram or table.

The literature review section of the thesis should be about 10-20 pages in length including references. **Submit a first draft of the Literature Review (as a Word document) to your thesis supervisor** via the Turnitin submission box on MyCourses **by January 26, 2023 at 9.00 (Finnish time)**. Please use the format guidelines for the thesis provided in section 3. It is important that you submit a full draft of the Literature Review in order to benefit fully from your supervisor's suggestions for improvement.

The literature review will be run through Turnitin in order to check its originality. Your supervisor will comment on your literature review draft and the similarity report on MyCourses by February 1, 2023.

If more work on the literature review is needed, you will be asked to re-submit your revised literature review to your supervisor by February 10, 2023 at 9.00 (Finnish time) via the Turnitin submission box on MyCourses. Your supervisor will send you their comments on the revised Literature Review, Updated Thesis Outline and the similarity report on MyCourses by February 17, 2023.

Note: You can submit your literature review on MyCourses/Turnitin several times before the deadline (you will automatically get to see the similarity report), but keep in mind that **you need to always submit the final version by the deadline**. In case of resubmission, the old version will be deleted by the system automatically. Note. After 3 resubmissions, reports generate after 24 hours.

Student performance review

The student performance review is due **by February 17, 2023**. Your supervisor will fill out a form, including possible comments, and send it to you and the study office (studyoffice-mikkeli@aalto.fi). If you have not completed the required work and shown enough progress by this time, you will not be able to continue the thesis process this year. The student performance review form is available on Into.

All recommendations for dropping a student from the thesis process will be reviewed by the Manager of Academic Operations. A student who has been recommended to be dropped may email the Manager of Academic Operations to provide an explanation, but it must be sent within seven days of having received the performance review form. In these cases the Program Director makes the final decision on whether to drop the student from the thesis process.

Methodology and data analysis mentoring (online)

As part of the thesis project, you will be able to register for virtual/online consultations with Dr. Suzanne Altobello on various methodological and statistical aspects of your thesis project. You will add an open course to your MyCourses website where she will curate videos and resources covering qualitative and quantitative methodology. She will also meet with students individually online during the period designated for data collection and analysis in the thesis project (February 17 – March 15, 2023).

Full draft of Bachelor's thesis and tentative grade

The full draft of the thesis – the final manuscript as intended by the author, pending changes required or suggested by the supervisor – must be submitted to the supervisor via the Turnitin submission box on MyCourses **by March 17, 2023 at 9.00 (Finnish time)**. Note that submitting an incomplete draft will affect your thesis project management grade.

Note: You can submit your full draft of the thesis on MyCourses/Turnitin several times before the deadline (you will automatically get to see the similarity report), but keep in mind that **the deadline for the final version is March 17, 2023 at 9.00**. In case of resubmission, the old version will be deleted by the system automatically. Note. After 3 resubmissions, reports generate after 24 hours.

The full draft of the thesis should be between 35 to 50 pages long not including references and appendices. All component parts of the thesis (see section 3 of this document for a complete list) must be complete and submitted by the date above. Please follow also the exact format requirements noted in section 3.

Your supervisor will send you the comments on and a tentative grade for the full draft of the thesis, as well as any comments on the similarity report during March 17-23, 2023. The supervisor will use the thesis grading rubric to guide the process and indicate areas still needing more work. If he/she suggests ways in which you should improve the thesis, you will have the opportunity to do so up until the **April 3, 2023** deadline for submitting the final thesis to your supervisor via the Turnitin submission box on MyCourses.

Note: The tentative grade is always given for the work received by the deadline; no new draft versions should be sent to the supervisor after the full draft deadline, only the final thesis. Remember to submit a version to Turnitin at least one day ahead of the deadline to get one last similarity report and deal with any citation/referencing issues before making your final submission.

Deadline for dropping the thesis

If you decide, after receiving the tentative grade, to not complete the thesis this year, you must immediately discuss your decision with Mari Syväoja and then inform your supervisor by email. Note that experience has shown that it is very difficult to complete the thesis the following year. **So it is much wiser to finish the thesis during the first year.**

Final Thesis

The deadline for submitting the final thesis in one document (pdf form) to

- 1) your supervisor and**
- 2) Aalto library**

via the submission boxes on MyCourses **is April 3, 2023 at 09.00 (Finnish time)**. In this case you may submit the final thesis only once and you will not get the similarity report, only your supervisor will get to see it.

The final grade is given for the work received by the deadline; no new versions should be sent to the supervisor after the final thesis deadline. The electronic library copy must match this version of the final thesis.

At the Aalto University School of Business all theses will be stored in PDF/A format in an electronic archive maintained by the Aalto University Library.

Please note the following issues related to electronic archiving of the thesis:

- Your thesis will be public. If you do research for a company and the data you compile is sensitive/confidential, you may need to prepare two versions of the thesis, one for the company and the other for your thesis at Aalto University.
- If you give permission to publish only the metadata of your thesis, you will be able to read your thesis only in the Mikkeli campus library or in the Aalto Learning Center in Otaniemi.
- When you are filling in the Thesis Information Form, please note these:
 - upload the whole abstract
 - for the number of pages, please note that the cover pages, the table of contents or abstract page are not counted in number of pages
 - appendices are counted separately, e.g. 35 + 5 (number of pages + number of pages of appendices)
 - the list of references is not an appendix, it is counted in number of pages

Maturity Test (Executive Summary OR Press Release)

All students must complete and pass the Maturity test (see also the BScBA Study Guide and Into for more information). The test is to demonstrate 1) that the student is familiar with the field in which the Bachelor's thesis is written and 2) the student's maturity in Finnish or Swedish (if the student has obtained his or her secondary education in Finnish or Swedish). If the student has not studied the secondary level education in Finnish or Swedish, it is possible to apply for an exemption in order to write the Maturity test in English. The student has to have the exemption granted before taking the Maturity test.

You must submit the Maturity test on MyCourses by April 3, 2023 at 9.00 (Finnish time). Please remember to include your name and student number in the text! See instructions below – there are more detailed instructions also on MyCourses how to submit the document.

The Maturity test is completed by writing a one-page executive summary or press release based on the Bachelor's thesis. The Maturity test is accepted given that both the content and the linguistic form are accepted. The grading principle is pass/fail.

Write a one-page executive summary or press release based on your Bachelor's thesis (spacing 1.15, font type Calibri, font size 11, all margins 2 cm). In the text, you should cover the findings and implications/significance of your research. Pay attention to the legibility and the linguistic clarity of your text. Please note that the Maturity test is an independent text without references to your thesis.

Instructions for executive summary

The purpose of an executive summary is to support managerial decision-making. In contrast to the abstract of your thesis, your task in the executive summary is to convince your readers of the utility of your research and its practical application in economy and/or business, and to talk the readers into "buying" your research findings.

Structure your summary in an explicit way: introduce the findings and significance of your research, including the solution you recommend for the problem addressed, as well as explain how the research benefits a specific target group or groups. Use sub-headings that arouse interest.

Instructions for press release

Write a press release about your Bachelor's thesis that could be published in a newspaper, magazine or in social media. The purpose of the press release is to present the central findings and significance of your research in a way that would interest the public.

Based on the intended target audience, start the press release with the issues that you think they would find the most interesting. The press release should have an interest-creating main heading, a starting paragraph that summarizes the essentials of your topic, and then sub-headings and other paragraphs that cover the details of the topic.

Thesis seminar session: own presentation and comments on other presentations

It is required to attend the thesis seminar presentations and defense at the campus during the thesis seminar day on April 14, 2023 at 12.00-16.00 (the detailed schedule will be sent beforehand by email). The thesis presentations and defense are carried out in English in the thesis seminar groups (they may consist of students from several thesis groups). Each student will have a maximum of 10 minutes for their presentation to explain the main issues involved in the thesis, plus 15 minutes for a question and answer session with the audience.

You must send the abstract page of your thesis by email to the Mikkeli study office (studyoffice-mikkeli@aalto.fi) by April 3, 2023 at 9.00. Each student will receive the thesis abstract pages prepared by the other members of their seminar group before the seminar day by email. All participants are expected to engage presenters in dialogue and ask questions about their theses.

Considering the 10 minutes allocated for the seminar day presentation, you should not have more than 10-12 slides for the presentation. The structure of the presentation could be for example the following:

- The research problem, objectives and questions -- to orient the audience to the research (1-2 slides)
- Your conceptual framework (1 slide)
- A very short summary of your methodology (1-2 slides)
- A summary of your main findings (3-4 slides)
- Conclusions/implications/suggestions for further research (1-2 slides)

If you are planning to use Power Point for your presentation,

- you must send your slides by e-mail beforehand - at the latest **by April 12, 2023 at 9.00** to this e-mail address: ITSupport-mikkeli@aalto.fi.
- You must include your last name in the title of the PowerPoint document (e.g., LastName_Presentation)
- Please note that you cannot use memory sticks or your own laptops. You have to send the presentation beforehand.

Grading of the Bachelor's Thesis, Thesis Seminar and Maturity Test

You will get 10 credits for the Bachelor's Thesis. **Bachelor's Thesis** will be graded (grading scale: 0-5) with the Bachelor's Thesis Grading Rubric (available on Into).

You will get 2 credits for the **Bachelor's Thesis Seminar**, which includes evaluation of your:

- time management, process management and engagement with the supervision process,
- presentation during the thesis seminar day, and
- involvement in the seminar discussion of other students' research findings.

Your participation in the Bachelor's Thesis Seminar will be graded (grading scale: 0-5) with the Bachelor's Thesis Seminar Grading Rubric (available on Into).

Final grades for the Bachelor's Thesis, Bachelor's Thesis Seminar and Maturity Test are sent to each student **by email by the Mikkeli study office as soon as possible after April 25, 2023** (the deadline for supervisors to send grades to the study office).

The Bachelor's thesis is graded on a scale of 5 (highest), 4, 3, 2, 1 (0=fail).

The Bachelor's thesis seminar is graded on a scale of 5 (highest), 4, 3, 2, 1 (0=fail).

The Maturity test is graded pass/fail.

Details on the grading scales, rubrics and grading process are described in separate documents available on Into.

NOTE. In the next year 2023-24 the students will complete only one course: Bachelor's Thesis and Seminar (10 cr), so the seminar will not be graded separately anymore.

3. FORMAT GUIDELINES AND RELATED REQUIREMENTS

3.1 Important foundations of the thesis

Please note that all theses completed by School of Business students are public and available in the library (in electronic form). The Bachelor's Thesis must also:

- be written within the general field of international business,
- be written in English,
- have a theoretical foundation or perspective, and
- use a recognized methodological approach.

3.2 General format requirements

- Document in Word –form, final thesis has to be converted to PDF/A format
 - o see instructions for converting a file to [PDF/A format](#)
- Font: Arial 12
- Line spacing: 1.5
- Margins: top and bottom: 2.54 cm, right and left: 2.54 cm
- Margins are justified on the left and right
- Page numbering: bottom, centered and excluding the title page
- Blank lines: 2 blank lines at the conclusion of each section
- Paragraphs: One skipping line between the paragraphs

Note that the specific requirements for the thesis are listed in the Thesis Instructions. More general style recommendations are provided in the Aalto Mikkeli Style Guide.

3.3 Order of the pages and their format guidelines

1. COVER PAGE

There is an electronic form for the cover page on Into.

2. ABSTRACT PAGE

There is an electronic form for the abstract on Into.

The abstract should be 150-200 words long and appear on a separate page. It should summarize the research and results, and highlight the importance of the findings. It should not include a lot of detail about the data and methods (unless the primary contribution of the thesis is in its use of sources or methodology), nor should it contain lengthy mathematical expressions or complicated notation.

3. TABLE OF CONTENTS

An electronic form is available on Into of the model outline for creating the table of contents of your thesis. In your final thesis, please name the section Table of Contents. Headings in the table of contents should match exactly the headings used in the text. Note that you are free to adapt this model outline in your thesis, in consultation with your supervisor.

4. TEXT PAGES

Headings

Divide the main body of the thesis with appropriate section and subsection headings. Do not use subheadings unless a section can be divided into two or more subsections.

Number the headings from the beginning. Type main section headings with bolded

1. CAPITAL LETTERS (upper case),

and other sections with

1.1 Small letters (lower case),

including those for appendices, acknowledgments, and references.

Reference citations in the text

The purpose of reference citations in the text is to 1) document the origin of an idea or paraphrase of an author or other source of information and 2) document the exact quotation of an author or other source. Citations of references in the text are typically short but provide sufficient information for the reader to locate complete documentation in the reference list. References cited in the text must also appear in the reference list (see 6 below).

Accurate documentation in your thesis is also a reflection of academic honesty.

Plagiarism in the thesis – in any form – is strictly forbidden. Any evidence of plagiarism in the thesis will result in serious consequences for your thesis grade (see more information on the Code of Academic Integrity in section 4).

All citations – whether in the text or in the reference list – must conform to the standards set by the BScBA Program.

5. REFERENCES

The reference list is where you provide complete documentation of each of the references used in your thesis. As is the case with reference citations within the text, it is critical to be accurate and consistent in identifying and citing each source of information used.

Please note that your documentation must be based on the Citation and Referencing Guide, Harvard System (available on Into), which is the standard for referencing in the BScBA program.

6. APPENDICES

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4. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND TURNITIN

4.1 Code of Academic Integrity

Aalto University operations are founded on integrity, openness, and equality. This means for instance that 1) Aalto University activities are based on honesty, fairness and objectivity and that 2) Aalto University measures individual success with clearly defined criteria in order to recognize good performance without bias. The goal is that Aalto University students succeed in their studies and in the world of work while acting in compliance with the responsible conduct of research and good artistic practices and the professional practices of their field.

The students of Aalto University shall commit to studying in compliance with the Code of Academic Integrity. Students are expected to abide by the law and to have, upon their entry to the university, a basic understanding of the means prohibited at a university (e.g. plagiarism). The students must comply with the guidelines given on examinations or on the completion of other study attainments. Each student has the final responsibility for their learning and for finding out the permissible practices. Ignorance is not an excuse when information is available.

4.2 Violations against Code of Academic Integrity

Violations against the Code of Academic Integrity or violations of the responsible conduct of research are divided into disregard for responsible conduct of research and good artistic practices, and in most serious cases, misconduct.

- Disregard for the responsible conduct of research and good artistic practices
- Forms of misconduct in studying that are considered violations of the Code of Academic Integrity:
 - o Cheating on exams
 - o Unattributed borrowing or plagiarism; plagiarism is strictly forbidden in all forms of academic work. Various documents can be checked by the faculty and staff to identify plagiarism by using specific online plagiarism prevention systems (e.g. Turnitin).
 - o Examples of plagiarism include but are not limited to:
 - quotations or word-for-word citing without clear indication of the source
 - minor changes to the source text, for instance changing few words or the word order
 - inadequacies in citing and referencing
 - copy and paste
 - direct translation from the original without indicating the direct quotation
 - collusion
 - autoplagiarism
 - o Fabrication, reporting invented observations or results to the research community
 - o Misrepresentation/falsification; modifying and presenting original observations deliberately so that the results based on those observations are distorted.
 - o Misappropriation; unlawful presentation of another person's result, idea, plan, observation or data as one's own research.

See the Aalto Code of Academic Integrity and Handling Violations Thereof at:
<https://www.aalto.fi/en/applications-instructions-and-guidelines/aalto-university-code-of-academic-integrity-and-handling-violations-thereof>

4.3 Turnitin

The Aalto University School of Business BScBA Program at the Mikkeli Campus will use Turnitin for checking key thesis documents, i.e. literature review, full draft of thesis and final thesis.

Aalto University Instructions on Turnitin for students, including information on Skillful Writing and Prevention of Plagiarism, can be found here:

<https://wiki.aalto.fi/display/turnitin/Turnitin+for+Students>

Please note that for **independent** Turnitin check there is a workspace called [Independent Turnitin Originality Check for Academic Year 2022-2023](#) on MyCourses.

The Turnitin system checks the originality of texts against comparison databases (Originality check) and creates a similarity report including similarity index. In the literature review and full draft phase of the process, students can also see the similarity report on their submitted text in time to improve it and resubmit it before the final deadline. **Note. After 3 resubmissions, reports generate after 24 hours.** The report shows similarities and a percentage similarity index. It does not identify plagiarism as such; the similarities must be interpreted by the supervisor, who also checks that the student has properly used the Harvard referencing system.

If the Turnitin similarity index percentage is too high, and/or you have not cited sources properly, your supervisor will advise you how to address these problems. The supervisors are asked to comment on the thesis documents in MyCourses.

The main goal for checking the similarity report of the literature review and full draft of the thesis is to guide the students to use proper citation methods in order to turn in a final thesis with no suspicion of plagiarism.

In case the supervisor suspects plagiarism after a student has submitted their final thesis, the supervisor will contact Mari Syväoja, the official investigator of the BScBA Program. In cases of plagiarism, the final decision on the actions to be taken will be made by the relevant authorities in Aalto.

Technical instructions on submitting your thesis documents via Turnitin will be available in the info session on November 29, 2022 at 12.15-13.00 and on Into after that.

Please feel free to ask our IT Staff for more information on the technical issues (ITSupport-mikkeli@aalto.fi). In case you have other than technical questions, feel free to contact your supervisor or Mari Syväoja (mari.syvaoja@aalto.fi).

5. THESIS SUPERVISORS

5.1 The role of the supervisors

Thesis work requires the student to work quite independently when carrying out the research and writing. However, it is extremely important for each student to actively keep in contact with their supervisor. Furthermore, you need to be very clear in your comments and questions – supervisors cannot guess what might be intended – so that they can offer the best help to you. It is critical that you stay in contact with your supervisor by email and in MyCourses and attend all required consultation sessions. **It is the student's responsibility to contact the supervisor and respond in a timely manner to supervisor questions.**

5.2 Assignment of the supervisor

You will be informed of your supervisor in the info session on October 27, 2022. Supervisors are assigned on the basis of your general subject area. **Please do not contact any potential supervisors before the assignment of supervisors has been determined.**

If for some reason during the process you want to change supervisors, please discuss the issue first with Mari Syväoja. Please note that it is very difficult to change supervisors after the Research Plan stage.

5.3 Working with your supervisor

Before contacting your supervisor, always think about the problems you wish to discuss or address. Use your contacts with your supervisor sparingly and wisely. Do not ask questions that are already addressed in the thesis instructions or other publications. You should always do the appropriate background work and try to find the answers before contacting the supervisor. If you are sending material to the supervisor to read, allow enough time for them to reply. You should not expect to hear back from them immediately.

When sending material to your supervisor, please indicate what is new (revisions, editions, etc.) compared to earlier versions sent. Also please include your name in the titles of the documents you send to your supervisor.

Not all supervisors live in the region and, therefore, they will not always be available for face-to-face meetings when you want (assuming our campus is open). Two study rooms are equipped with a computer and a web camera and they are available for thesis students in order for you to contact your supervisor even if he/she is not in Mikkeli. It is up to you to set up individual online meetings with your supervisor as needed. Possible group meetings with the supervisor will be coordinated by the student group leader.

Note that the way in which you carry out this project will be reflected in your grade.

6. AWARDS AND GRANTS

Mikkeli University Consortium and the BScBA program will award one of the thesis students for superior performance in the research and writing process. This year the theme for the award is: "*Sustainability and/or digitalization in business*". The nominations are done by the supervisors. The thesis must be high quality research and show relevance to the theme above. The award-winning student will be contacted by the staff to agree on

- a presentation of the thesis during one event and
- the timing of handing out the gift and diploma.

Suur-Savo Energy Foundation has granted two 1000 euro grants for the Bachelor's thesis completed in the field of Energy Markets. The thesis must get a grade of 4 or 5. The student must apply for the grant after the process with the supportive statement from the supervisor. The decision is done after the thesis process is completed and the student in question will be contacted by the staff to agree on the arrangements.