

Department of English and American Studies Assessment criteria for bachelor and master theses

Dimension 1: Content & Coverage

The paper ...

- is relevant to the topic set / chosen
- formulates a research question and makes a clear point (thesis statement)
- addresses the research question
- · demonstrates an understanding of
 - relevant key concepts (BEd/BA)
 - all relevant concepts (MA)
- is informed by
 - relevant theoretical positions (BEd/BA)
 - relevant theoretical positions reflecting the complexity of the debate (MA)
- shows appropriate use of methods for analysis of primary material/data
- draws on an appropriate number and variety of sources

Dimension 2: Structure

The paper ...

- includes all obligatory parts (table of contents, introduction, main part, conclusion, references, etc.)
- is well structured and reader friendly
- is explicit in terms of its microstructure at paragraph level including, where appropriate
 - the purpose of the paragraph (topic sentence)
 - signposting
 - transitions

Dimension 3: Argumentation & Critical Awareness

The student ...

- synthesizes existing approaches (theories, methods, findings)
 - in a general manner (BEd/BA)
 - showing an awareness of their relative importance within a particular debate (MA)
- develops ideas coherently and links arguments logically, avoiding contradictions and overlaps of position
- shows critical awareness in their use of primary and secondary material, e.g. by comparing and contrasting them
- frames the analysis/interpretation/discussion suitably and draws conclusions which logically follow from the material and arguments presented before
- demonstrates a critical awareness of the purpose of the paper, the question or problem being addressed (MA)
- elaborates their own position in relation to other positions/debates in the field (academic voice) (MA)
- demonstrates awareness of the limitations of the study (MA)



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Dimension 4: Formal Aspects & Language Use

The student ...

- adheres to the University of Vienna Guidelines for Good Scientific Practice (cf. University Gazette, 31.1.2006: http://www.univie.ac.at/mtbl02/2005_2006/2005_2006_112.pdf)
- adheres to the relevant departmental style sheet
- adheres to the set word count
- adheres to commonly accepted conventions for academic writing in English as appropriate to the discipline
- demonstrates a broad range of language and a high degree of linguistic control

This set of criteria has been jointly developed by supervisors at this department.

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