Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL)
Fachdidaktik Englisch
University of Bamberg

Guideline for final theses

Zulassungsarbeit

Basic information

- Students studying *Lehramt* have to complete a *Zulassungsarbeit* to be admitted to the First State Examination (*Erste Staatsprüfung*, LPO I); students studying English can write their *Zulassungsarbeit* in TEFL.
- You should agree on a topic with your supervisor approx. one year before registration to your First State Exam (§29 LPO I). There is no official registration with the examination office.
- **language**: English
- **grading**: Your supervisor grades your thesis (grades 1-6) and you will receive a written *Gutachten*. You will receive your official grade with your First State Exam. Please contact your supervisor to get additional feedback.
- useful link: https://www.gesetze-bayern.de/Content/Document/BayLPO_I-29
- You can find all forms of the examination office on this website.

Submission

- The deadline for the submission of your *Zulassungsarbeit* is **1 February** (if you plan to take the First State Exam in autumn) or **1 August** (if you plan to take the First State Exam in spring). In agreement with your supervisor, the deadline can be extended to 1 April (autumn turn for the First State Exam) or 1 October (spring turn for the First State Exam). Please note that the supervisor does not necessarily have to agree to this extension.
  → relevant form: *"Zustimmung zur Gewährung eines Nachtermins"*
- **length**: 15.000-20.000 words; approx. 50-70 pages (max.) (see TEFL style sheet + template)
- **format**: Hand in two print copies and one digital version together with the relevant forms from the examination office <u>to your supervisor</u> in person (who confirms having received the thesis).
  → relevant forms: *"Aufkleber für die Zulassungsarbeit"* (Please make sure you select the correct school type!), *"Gutachtenformular"*, *"Empfangsbestätigung"* an das Prüfungsamt

Bachelor/Master thesis

Basic information

Berufliche Bildung (BEd/MEd)
- You can find all the relevant information online:
  https://www.uni-bamberg.de/berubi/studium/abschlussarbeiten/
- **Steps:**
  1) Find a supervisor and agree on a topic.
  2) Register for your thesis (stating your name, *Matrikelnummer, Studiengang, Prüfer*in*) through the *Prüfungsamt* via email (beruflichebildung.pruefungen@uni-bamberg.de). They will send you a form to fill in. Send this to your supervisor and they will pass it on to the *Prüfungsamt*.
  3) Write your thesis within three months (BEd) / six months (MEd).
  4) Your supervisor has three months to correct your thesis.

Wirtschaftspädagogik / WiPäd (BSc/MSc)

- You can find all the relevant information online:
- https://www.uni-bamberg.de/wipaed/studium/waehrend-des-studiums/seminar-und-abschlussarbeiten/ *(WiPäd)*
- https://www.uni-bamberg.de/pruefungsamt/abschlussarbeiten-informationen-zur-anmeldung-und-abgabe/ *(Prüfungsamt)*
- **Steps:**
    1) Find a supervisor and agree on a topic.
    2) Register for your thesis (stating your name, *Matrikelnummer, Studiengang, Prüfer*in*) through the *Prüfungsamt* via email (sowi.pruefungen@uni-bamberg.de). They will send you a form to fill in. Send this to your supervisor and they will pass it on to the *Prüfungsamt*.
    3) Write your thesis within two months (BSc) / four months (MSc).
    4) Your supervisor has three months to correct your thesis.

All theses

Supervisor

- You should contact a potential supervisor (e.g. via email) **approx. one year in advance** and you should ideally have attended one or more of their seminars.
- It is at the discretion of the supervisor whether or not a short abstract/outline is requested in advance and whether or not they have the capacity to supervise your project.
- **Do not miss the opportunity to receive feedback and get in touch with other students writing their final theses!** You are therefore required to attend the **TEFL research seminar** to discuss your thematic focus and/or the progress of your thesis.
- You must stick to agreed deadlines and arranged meetings; the supervision may otherwise be terminated prematurely.

Topic and methodology

- You should discuss the topic with your supervisor. You can make suggestions depending on your research interests or participate in a current TEFL project. For the latter case, you will find suggested topics in the [TEFL Research VC](). If you are interested in any of the topics listed there, please contact the corresponding lecturer.
- possible topics: a relevant TEFL/ELT topic related to your chosen school type (e.g., primary, secondary, vocational schools) and research interests
- The research methodology may, for instance, comprise an analysis of data, interviews (with teachers/learners), a textbook/materials analysis, a compilation and analysis of a text corpus, the development, implementation, and analysis of a teaching project. Please note: Empirical projects at schools require approval by the Bavarian Ministry of Education!
- If you conduct an empirical study yourself, make sure you are familiar with the basics of research ethics, such as obtaining informed consent before conducting your study (see, e.g., the text by Legutke & Schramm 2022 in the TEFL Research VC).
- Theory-practice links are important in TEFL theses, which means you can develop teaching materials, lesson sequences, and/or discuss practical implications – depending on your topic.
- Regardless of the topic, you should always consult
    1. thematic literature (related to your thematic focus – see TEFL reading list + relevant academic journals) *and*
    2. literature on your research methodology.

Structure and formal requirements

- Depending on your thematic focus and your research methodology, your thesis will have its individual structure. Your thesis should have a short and precise title that mirrors the thematic focus (and methodology). This guideline can provide a first basis:
  1. **Introduction** *(approx. 2 pages)*
     → topic of your thesis, context, relevance and motivation, main goals, structure
  2. **Theoretical background** *(approx. 30-40% of the main part of your thesis)*
     → literature review, previous research findings, research gap
  3. **Study design** *(approx. 10-20% of the main part of your thesis)*
     → research questions, methodology: data collection and analysis
  4. **Findings and discussion** *(approx. 30-40% of the main part of your thesis)*
     → main findings using figures and tables where appropriate, critical analysis, comparison to previous research, limitations of the study
  5. **Practical implications / examples / lesson sequence** *(approx. 2 pages or more if this is a focus of your thesis)*
  6. **Conclusion** *(approx. 2 pages)*
     → summary of your project and ideas for future research in the field
  7. **References** → make sure to cite according to the TEFL style sheet!
  8. **Appendix** → e.g., transcripts, lesson plans, lists, etc.
- The indicated length/page numbers will vary in your thesis depending on its focus; the indications above are merely a rough guideline.
- Make sure you choose short but very clear and precise headings. Each main section (apart from the Introduction and Conclusion) should have sub-sections (2.1, 2.2 etc. – at least two each).
- Make sure to read the TEFL style sheet thoroughly (→ *Downloadbereich* on the [website of the TEFL department](#)). It comprises detailed information on formal requirements (e.g., word count).

Assessment criteria

The following criteria are applied for the assessment of final theses:

- content (accuracy, relevance, suitability, comprehensibility)
- analysis and argumentation (discussion, use of logical argument, coherence, critical reflection)
- structure and writing (clarity of layout and structure, use of headings, articulation of arguments, precision, accuracy, economy of writing, use of scientific language, correctness)
- referencing and bibliography (evidence of reading, correct and consistent citation style, correct attribution of sources, complete and accurate bibliography, completeness of appendix)
- creativity, originality, individuality (variety of concepts/tasks, originality of the approach, suitability for the selected teaching/learning context)

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