



Guidelines for the research-based thesis

Thesis coordinators

Haaga-Helia University of Applied Sciences

Haaga-Helia Bachelor's Degree

Bachelor's Thesis Instructions

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Abstract

Author(s) State the author(s) here, first name before surname, alphabetized according to surname
Degree Bachelor of Business Administration, Bachelor of Hospitality Management, Bachelor of Sports Studies, Bachelor of Culture and Arts (delete the unnecessary degree alternatives)
Report/Thesis Title Write the main title of your report/thesis here
Number of pages and appendix pages x + y
<p>The abstract presents the main points of the thesis to the reader. Key information such as the background of the thesis, objectives, demarcation, theoretical framework, implementation, methods, timeline as well as results and discussion of the study are provided.</p> <p>The abstract follows the same order as the report proper. It is a nutshell overview of the whole report. The abstract must form an independent entity that can be understood without reading the entire thesis.</p> <p>The abstract is written in neutral English in a concise and understandable style. Complete clauses and sentences are used, the passive voice is favoured, and the third person (author/authors) is preferred instead of the first person (I, we).</p> <p>The past tense is used when referring to previously published research, when discussing the progress of one's own work and its findings, or when stating conclusions others have made. The present tense is used when general results are presented, and also when the use of one's own findings and insights are presented.</p> <p>The abstract must not exceed one page in length. It should comprise at least three paragraphs which are separated with one blank line. Start a new paragraph for each new topic. The abstract must not include source references.</p>
Keywords The abstract ends with a list of keywords, 3–6 words that best describe the contents of your thesis, in order of importance. Make use of glossaries available at http://finto.fi/fi/ and https://an-nif.org/

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1 Introduction

The research-based thesis aims to solve an informational problem, such as what our customers are like, what kind of services customers value, what kind of investment strategy small investors have, how satisfied employees are with the reward system, what are the challenges of teleworking and how the pandemic period affects purchasing behaviour. The solutions to these questions are sought by collecting material. The data is usually collected yourself, but you can also use ready-made data, databases or registers.

The data is collected either quantitatively or qualitatively. The data can also be collected in both ways, in which case it is a thesis that utilizes multi-methodology, that is, method triangulation. In this case, however, it is possible that the thesis will become too extensive. Discuss method choices with your instructor.

A quantitative research approach is best suited to a situation where it is desired to obtain as representative data as possible from a large target group. Data can be collected from all members of the target group (overall survey) or only from a selected subset, using either the random (sample) or non-random (sample) method. Data are typically collected through a questionnaire and analysed by statistical methods. Although the research approach is quantitative, the questionnaire typically also contains some open-ended questions that are analysed using qualitative methods.

Qualitative research seeks to describe, understand, or interpret phenomena in more depth than quantitative research. There are typically 6 to 12 subjects to be examined. For example, six employees or five groups are interviewed, ten documents are analysed, eight restaurants are observed, or eight events are videotaped. A document can be, for example, a book, article, report, news, blog, homepage, tweet, recipe, announcement, or advertisement. The material is analysed using qualitative methods, for example, by structuring, thematising, typing or summarizing, all of which are typical methods of content analysis.

Note that the expert interviews you conduct to build your theoretical framework are equivalent to sources. They are not dealt with by qualitative methods but by referring to them like sources. Experts are referred to by the person's name or pseudonym, for example Expert A. Both the text reference and the source entry in the source list are made from the expert interview. There may be one or more expert interviews, the number does not matter, unlike a research interview. In addition to the theoretical framework, reference to an expert may also be included in the discussion section, while the implementation and results of research interviews are reported in the empirical part of the report. Research interviews are not source-coded.

Please also note that your material may constitute a personal register in accordance with the Data Protection Act. Personal information is all individual information that can be combined to identify a person directly or indirectly. Be especially careful about meeting the requirements of the Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), for example, when contact information is asked among respondents for a give-away prize, follow-up interviews, or workshop work. (Thesis coordinators 2022, 20.)

Discuss with the commissioning organisation if your thesis is such that the commissioning organisation wants to restrict its publication in Theseus. Please note that secret or hidden theses are not allowed: all theses will be published in Theseus. If the client does not allow the publication of the thesis report in the open collection of Theseus, the work will be published in the restricted collection of Theseus, where the title and abstract of the work will be available for reading. The complete thesis reports of the restricted collection can be read under Haaga-Helia's domains. However, a person who does not have Haaga-Helia's online IDs can read the report by visiting the library or requesting it via e-mail.

2 Structure of the report

The report of a research-type thesis almost always follows the structure of a traditional report: introduction, theoretical framework, empirical part, discussion, sources and appendices (Appendix 1).

2.1 Introduction

In the introduction, introduce the background, objectives, research method, research problem (main and sub-problems) and delimitations of the research. In addition, you can briefly introduce the client, which will be described in more detail in the empirical part.

When writing the introductory text, follow the Guidelines for Long Reports and Theses, which also presents the overlay matrix, which is often included in the Introduction to a research-type thesis (Thesis coordinators 2022, 4).

2.2 Theoretical framework

A theoretical framework is essential to all theses, which is linked to the phenomenon under study. There must be a clear link between the theoretical framework and the empirical part. Discuss the themes and structure of the theoretical framework with your instructor. The overlay matrix helps you to delimit the themes of the theoretical framework so that they are linked to the phenomenon under study.

2.3 Carrying out the study

The empirical part of the thesis consists of explanations of the research implementation and results. The implementation part of the study presents:

- the research approach with justification
- the target group of the study and its selection and justification
- the choice of method for collecting or producing data and the reasons for it
- a concrete description of the implementation or working methods of the production of the data
- methods for analysing the data and justifying the choices made.

The description of the research method should be concrete and so precise that someone else can replicate the same research project if necessary. It is always important to justify method choices using appropriate and reliable method sources. The part of the text referred by the source must not contain text explaining your own work. In practice, the easiest way is to first quote the source and, after citing the source, explain your own solutions at the end of the paragraph.

You can use the Webropol tool with Haaga-Helia domains to create questionnaires and collect data. If you use another tool (e.g., SurveyMonkey, SurveyPal, Quest-back, Zeffi, Google Forms), at the request of the client, check the support from the client, as Haaga-Helia only supports the use of the Webropol tool.

2.4 Results

The results of the empirical part are presented objectively, based on the data and consistently reflecting the research questions. Introduce in the results section:

- data, in other words, background information of the respondents
- results structured in sub-chapters according to research objectives
- key results illustrated with figures and tables
- where appropriate, a summary of the results, that is, an objective compilation of the main results.

Note that all figures and tables must be accessible, that is, alternate texts must be defined for them. In addition, combined cells must not be used in tables, and the first row of the table must be defined as a recurring identifier. Select the Table style as the text style for the table. For more detailed instructions on creating figures and tables, see the general reporting guide. (Thesis coordinators 2022, 7–10.)

Quantitative research analyses can be performed, for example, with Webropol's own analytics (Reporting and Professional Statistics) and SPSS statistical software, which you can install on your own computer free of charge. The results of the correlation and test tables in the quantitative analysis are described in context, but the tables themselves are placed in the appendices. You can also use Excel to create figures, but its features in the actual analyses are limited. You can illustrate open answers with, for example, a frequency table or a word cloud (e.g., Wordart).

It is often possible to analyse qualitative data using Word or Excel. It is important to illustrate the results of high-quality data; you can draw pictures, draw diagrams or illustrate them with word clouds. Extracting a direct quote from the data is also an illustration of the results when it succinctly encapsulates the relevant result. Note, however, that the anonymity of the respondent is maintained, that is, the single direct quote does not reveal a person's identity.

The results are reflected upon in the results section and in the discussion section of the report, either by referring to the subchapter of the theoretical framework or the original source in the theoretical framework. If the theoretical framework supports the result, use the following notation when referring to a chapter (see Chapter No.), for example (see 2.2). If the result differs from the theoretical framework, use the notation (cf. chapter number). A carefully crafted overlay matrix will help

you to make correct references. Deviations from the assumptions of the theoretical framework should always be checked to eliminate the possibility of errors. On the other hand, the idea of all research is to produce something new that has been found in previous studies. Deviations from the existent theory may give an indication of the obsolescence of the current model or theory used, in which case further research proposals may include attention to the need for further research.

2.5 Discussion

Include in the Discussion chapter:

- a summary of the results
- conclusions based on the results and development proposals based on them
- reflection on the results with regard to the theoretical framework
- the reliability and ethics of the research
- proposals for further research
- an evaluation of one's own thesis project and learning.

The central content of the Discussion chapter of a research-type thesis is a reflection on reliability and of the research findings and ethics. In particular, the reliability of quantitative research is addressed through the concepts of validity and reliability. These concepts can also be applied to the consideration of the reliability of qualitative research, although the reliability of qualitative research is often addressed through the concepts of credibility, relevance and reproducibility.

Also use the Guidelines for Long Reports and Theses (Thesis coordinators 2022, 4–5) to prepare the Discussion chapter.

2.6 Sources

The list of sources contains all the information of the sources used in alphabetical order. Be sure to also include sources for the methods employed. When creating source entries, follow the Haaga-Helia Library's LibGuides Reference help (Haaga-Helia Library and Information Services 2022).

2.7 Appendices

The appendices of the research-based thesis typically include:

- a cover letter and reminder message
- a questionnaire or interview guide
- statistical analysis tables or large figures

There is no actual data in the appendices; in other words, no observation matrix, completed forms, documentary material or transcribed interviews. Each attachment is numbered and titled in the

style H2 Unnumbered. The layout and text of the appendix may otherwise differ from the styles of the thesis, such as the line spacing, font size and type. A new attachment always starts on a new page, but one attachment can be several pages long (e.g., a questionnaire). (Thesis coordinators 2022, 5.) Note, however, that all materials must be retained until the thesis has been reviewed. In addition, for inspection purposes, the materials must be handed over to the evaluators upon request.

Sources

Thesis coordinators 2022. Reporting Guidelines for Long Reports and Theses. Haaga-Helia University of Applied Sciences. URL: [https://www.haaga-helia.fi/sites/default/files/file/2022-02/Guidelines for long reports and theses 2022 0.pdf](https://www.haaga-helia.fi/sites/default/files/file/2022-02/Guidelines%20for%20long%20reports%20and%20theses%202022%200.pdf). Accessed: 7 March 2022.

Haaga-Helia Library and Information Services 2022. Reference help. URL: <https://libguides.haaga-helia.fi/referencing>. Accessed: 7 March 2022.

Appendices

Appendix 1. Structure of the research-based thesis report

Cover page, abstract, table of contents
Introduction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – general introduction – objectives, research problem or objective setting, demarcation, and in a research-based thesis, an overlay matrix – key concepts – there is no need to present to the reader the structure of the report if it follows this traditional report structure.
Theoretical framework <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – theories and previous practical and experiential information – establishing the research space among prior research, theories and models using professional literature and other sources. – a possible summary of the theoretical framework presented as needed.
Empirical part <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – research target – objectives, research problems and development task – choice of research methods with justifications – description of implementation – data and analyses conducted – research results – summary (not always necessary, see Discussion, summary of results).
Discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – summary of results – reliability and validity of results (alternatively placed in the last subchapter of the empirical part) – ethical viewpoints – conclusions and suggestions for development or further research or projects – an evaluation of the thesis project and one's own learning during it.
Sources
Appendices <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – cover letter – questionnaire, interview forms – analysis results.