

Information on academic writing for students in our Master's program *Media, Society and Communication*

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This brief overview contains a small collection of important information about academic work practice.

1) *Where to find academic literature for my studies?*

- Online library system of University of Innsbruck:
https://bibsearch.uibk.ac.at/primo-explore/search?vid=UIB&lang=en_US
- The electronic journals library (access to texts from within the university network/Wi-Fi):
<https://ezb.ur.de/ezeit/fl.phtml?bibid=UBI&colors=7&lang=en&bibid=UBI>
- Our physical library is at SoWi:
<https://www.uibk.ac.at/en/university-and-state-library/sowi-bibliothek/>
- To access certain academic literature and use certain services outside of the university network, you need to use a VPN via EZproxy:
<https://www.uibk.ac.at/en/university-and-state-library/search-use-media/digital-offer/remote-access-ezproxy/>
- You can find more information about searching and using literature here:
<https://www.uibk.ac.at/en/university-and-state-library/search-use-media/specialist-information/subject-information-on-media-society-and-communication/>

2) *Where to get training for academic writing?*

The university library offers a variety of online and offline trainings for academic writing and research. We highly recommend all students to use these resources:

<https://www.uibk.ac.at/en/university-and-state-library/education-training-consultation/>

As for the continuous improvement of writing skills, we recommend the Academic Phrasebank of the University of Manchester:

<https://www.phrasebank.manchester.ac.uk/>

3) *Which literature should I use for academic writing?*

Here is a list of books that can be helpful (they are either available online or at the SoWi library)

Mautner, G., & Ross, C. J. (2023). *English Academic Writing: A Guide for the Humanities and Social Sciences*. UVK Publishing. <https://doi.org/10.36198/9783838560281>

Powner, L. C. (2015). *Empirical Research and Writing: A Political Science Student's Practical Guide*. SAGE Publications.

Rozakis, L. (2007). *Schaum's Quick Guide to Writing Great Research Papers*. McGraw-Hill Education.

Turabian, K. L. (2018). *A manual for writers of research papers, theses, and dissertations: Chicago style for students and researchers* (9th edition). The University of Chicago Press.

4) *How do I reference and quote in my papers?*

In order to write good term papers and your Master's thesis, you need to be proficient in the basic academic writing techniques, e.g. referencing correctly.

A common guide is the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA), 7th edition. You can find a concise overview here:

American Psychological Association (2024). *Style and Grammar Guidelines*.
<https://apastyle.apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines>

The full version of the Publication Manual is available at the SoWi library:

American Psychological Association (2020). *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, Seventh Edition*.

Harvard referencing is an alternative citation style. Here is an overview:
<https://university.open.ac.uk/library/referencing-and-plagiarism/quick-guide-to-harvard-referencing-cite-them-right>

5) *Which reference citation software should I use?*

Reference citation software allows you to organize your literature and automatically create citations. We recommend using Zotero, which is free and easy to use and also allows to incorporate APA 7 style: <https://www.zotero.org/>

The university offers a course about reference management with Zotero:
<https://www.uibk.ac.at/en/university-and-state-library/education-training-consultation/program/>
(look for "Reference management with Zotero")

6) *Is there any other software/service that is provided by the university?*

Yes, the Central IT Service (ZID) provides a list of software for students (e.g., Microsoft Office):
<https://www.uibk.ac.at/zid/software/>

Here you find important information about passwords and accounts, especially about accessing the university WiFi/network :
<https://www.uibk.ac.at/zid/account/index.html.en>

7) *What about using AI to help me write my paper?*

We know how tempting it is to use AI tools for this type of work. However, you should always consider the following:

a) Academic writing, like writing in general, is a creative process, not a machine-like output. By writing yourself, you mentally process the arguments and knowledge that is necessary for a paper. Delegating this to a machine means you learn next to nothing in terms of intellectual development and won't progress in your studies.

b) In most cases, it is prohibited to use AI for your academic work. This prohibition allows you to develop the skills, techniques and knowledge necessary to succeed in our master's program. In addition, if you get caught having used AI outputs for your papers, your enrollment may be at risk. Please, consider this as well: Silently inviting lecturers to read and grade papers that are generated by AI is insulting to the staff of our department.

c) In general, we acknowledge that AI can be a helpful tool for many things. However, our aim here is to empower you to think for yourself. Our lecturers will encourage you to use and reflect on tools and cultural practices in appropriate ways as part of the analysis and critique of the work of algorithms and AI in mediated life-worlds and societies. For being basically a proxy to a machine, no one needs to study at university.