

GUIDELINES FOR THE ASSIGNMENT AND PREPARATION OF QUALIFICATION THESES

(2025)

The purpose of this text is to provide CEVRO University students with basic methodological and practical guidelines for preparing their bachelor's or master's (hereinafter referred to as *qualification*) thesis. These guidelines elaborate on certain provisions of the Vice-Rector's Directive, which sets out the basic requirements for the preparation of qualification theses.

In their qualification thesis, students demonstrate their ability to independently produce a scholarly text. They should be able to clearly define the topic of their thesis, justify the choice of topic (its academic and social relevance), establish the objectives of the thesis, describe and justify the methods used to achieve these objectives (i.e., the methodology), apply and critically evaluate key theoretical approaches, analyze and accurately interpret the relevant literature and other professional sources used in the thesis, and formulate conclusions as well as propose possible alternatives and approaches to addressing the researched problem.

The topic of a qualification thesis should be defined specifically and relatively narrowly so that it allows students to engage deeply with the chosen issue and present an informed and well-founded perspective on the subject. Conversely, topics that are too broad making them difficult to process due to the complexity of the issue, or those likely to result in a purely descriptive work without any original contribution are considered unacceptable. **The thesis should therefore under no circumstances remain at the level of a superficial compilation of existing academic literature. It must always demonstrate the student's own intellectual input and contribution to the scholarly treatment of the chosen topic.**

When choosing the topic of a qualification thesis, students should take into account the type of thesis (bachelor's or master's), as well as current issues and questions arising from social practice (for example, in the fields of law, economics, politics, or international relations), or historical topics with a clear relevance to the present. The aim should be to offer possible solutions to the issues under examination. In other words, **the topic of a qualification thesis should address a particular social problem** rooted in practical experience — be it legal, political, security-related, economic, or of another nature. Students are encouraged to avoid topics that have already been repeatedly and extensively discussed in academic literature. Instead, they should select new, unexplored, or insufficiently researched topics. One of the key evaluation criteria for qualification theses (especially master's theses) is whether the work demonstrates **original added value** — that is, whether it contributes new insights or approaches, or offers an innovative treatment of a well-covered topic, enabling the problem to be viewed in a new light. In the evaluation of qualification theses, it is generally understood that master's theses are subject to higher standards than bachelor's theses, particularly in terms of scope, application of theoretical approaches, depth of analysis, and the level of independent argumentation and reasoning.

A student has the **right to write their qualification thesis on a topic announced by a department other than the one guaranteeing their study program**. Similarly, they may choose a supervisor from another department, or, in specific cases, among external experts who do not teach at the university. In all such cases, however, the student must obtain the approval of the head of the guaranteeing department, and the topic of the thesis must be relevant to the student's study program. **The thesis proposal must be submitted exclusively to the Council of the study program in which the student is enrolled.**

A) THESIS ASSIGNMENT

The first step in preparing a high-quality qualification thesis is to create a thesis proposal, which should include, in particular:

- a. the title of the thesis in both Czech and English,
- b. brief description of the objective of the thesis, i.e., what it aims to achieve,

c. the main question the thesis is intended to answer (hereinafter referred to as the “research question”) or a hypothesis that the thesis will either confirm or refute,

d. the sources to be used, with at least one of them published in a foreign language.

Regarding a) The title of the thesis should clearly indicate the problem being addressed. It should accurately reflect the content focus of the qualification thesis and therefore should not be too general or broad.

Regarding b) The student must define the content and focus of the thesis, including the objective(s)— that is, what they aim to achieve, the direction of their research, and the anticipated contribution of the work. The student should also justify the choice and significance of the selected topic (for example, if the topic addresses a current social issue, the thesis should contribute to a better understanding of a particular phenomenon, the analysis may fill gaps in existing research or propose alternative solutions, etc.).

Regarding c) A key component of the thesis proposal is the so-called research question, through which the author precisely specifies the core of the investigated problem. By “research question,” we mean a hypothesis to be confirmed or refuted, or, more generally, a research problem defined as a question to be answered. Formulating a relevant research question helps students clearly define the topic. The research question or hypothesis is closely linked to the objective of the thesis and must be compatible with it.

Regarding d) In the thesis proposal, the student should also indicate the primary sources (especially printed sources) they plan to use. The proposal should include a list of anticipated literature and resources that the student will consult in preparing their thesis. This list does not need to be exhaustive. It is sufficient to include approximately ten of the most important sources, such as scholarly books and articles, book chapters, or other relevant documents (e.g., laws, constitutional texts, official documents, websites, archival materials, historical press), which relate to the chosen topic. At least one of these sources should be published in a foreign language, unless the topic makes this impossible. During the preparation of the qualification thesis, it is expected that students will significantly expand this range of sources.

B) PREPARATION OF THE QUALIFICATION THESIS

In preparing both the thesis proposal and the qualification thesis itself, regular consultations between the student and the thesis supervisor are essential. The supervisor primarily provides methodological guidance. The form and frequency of consultations, including any feedback, are determined by mutual agreement between the student and the supervisor. **The author of the thesis is responsible for both the content and the formal presentation of the work; the supervisor is not responsible for these aspects.**

The student must not deviate from the approved thesis proposal. In exceptional cases, a student may request a change of the thesis topic. Any proposed change is subject to the approval of the Vice-Rector for Studies.

A bachelor’s thesis must have **a minimum length of 30 standard pages of main text, with at least 54,000 characters including spaces**. The recommended maximum length is 40 standard pages of main text. A master’s thesis must have **a minimum length of 50 standard pages of main text, with at least 90,000 characters including spaces**. The recommended maximum length is 60 standard pages of main text.

The following elements are not counted into the main text length: the title page, pre-title page, declaration of originality, table of contents, Czech and English abstracts, appendices, list of references, and the thesis assignment. Conversely, the footnotes (bibliographic notes) are included in the prescribed length; however, they are intended primarily for citations and not for creating a parallel text to the main body of the thesis.

The formal requirements for the qualification thesis are as follows:

1. Title Page

The title page has a standardized format, including the name of CEVRO University, the title of the thesis, the

heading “Bachelor’s Thesis” or “Master’s Thesis,” the student’s name, and, at the bottom, the city (“Prague” or “Český Krumlov”) and the year of submission.

2. Imprint Page

The imprint page contains the same information as the title page, supplemented by the name of the relevant department, the study program, and the name of the thesis supervisor.

3. Declaration of Originality

The author must include a declaration of originality, stating that the thesis was prepared independently, that all sources used—including generative AI tools—have been properly cited, and that their use is clearly indicated in the text. The author signs this declaration, which is placed on a separate page.

4. Acknowledgements (optional)

The thesis may include a personal acknowledgement of the supervisor or other individuals who assisted in the preparation of the thesis. The author may also thank other persons or institutions that contributed to the work.

5. Czech and English Abstracts

The abstracts briefly summarize the content of the thesis: the problem statement, research question, theoretical background, methods, results, and conclusions. Each abstract should be no longer than one standard page (1,800 characters including spaces) per language. The content of the Czech and English abstracts must be identical. Each abstract should also include keywords in the respective language. Keywords are significant words or phrases (usually nouns) chosen in correlation with the title and content of the thesis, in accordance with the Union Catalogue of the National Library of the Czech Republic: https://aleph.nkp.cz/F/?func=file&file_name=find-b&local_base=skc. The recommended number of keywords is an odd number, usually 5, 7, or 9.

6. Table of Contents

The thesis should be divided into chapters, which may be further subdivided into subchapters and paragraphs. Multi-level numbering is recommended for sections, up to a maximum of three levels (see template, p. 5).

7. Introduction

The introduction typically spans two to three pages. Students should outline the chosen topic and the reasons for its selection, define the objectives of the thesis, and present the research question or hypothesis. The introduction should briefly summarize existing knowledge in the field. A section following the introduction may be dedicated to evaluating the literature used and its contribution to the thesis. Students should also justify the chosen structure, introduce the methods to be used (which will be elaborated in the main body of the thesis), and, if necessary, explain the purpose of individual chapters. For law-focused theses, a shorter introduction is recommended, according to the supervisor’s or program guarantor’s instructions.

8. Main Body of the Thesis

The main text is structured into chapters, subchapters, and paragraphs, forming a logically organized presentation of the topic.

Typically, the thesis includes a **theoretical part**¹, where the author presents concepts, terms, or theoretical foundations derived from current knowledge in the field. This section provides an organized overview of the relevant scholarly literature. In law-focused theses, this may be replaced or supplemented by an analysis and evaluation of applicable legal regulations, including different interpretations.

Students must present and justify the **method(s)** used to achieve the objectives of the thesis.

Next is the **empirical-analytical section**, where the author presents empirical findings and arguments relevant to the topic. This section analyzes the problem and its current state in sufficient detail and may also include analysis of the broader context, including possible international comparisons.

¹In the main text, it is not appropriate to call this part theoretical, as well as to call the following parts analytical or practical. Therefore, avoid using these terms in your thesis.

A key component is the **practical part**, in which the author proposes solutions to the problem based on the theoretical and analytical sections. This part is the most important section of the thesis. It should present the rationale for the chosen solution (e.g., why a particular option was selected among alternatives), its advantages and disadvantages, its contribution to practice and/or theory, and, where applicable, the conditions for implementing the solution or recommended procedures. Law-focused theses may include an evaluation of how legal provisions have been applied in practice, as well as the author's (or adopted) proposals for possible amendments.

9. Conclusion

The conclusion briefly summarizes the results. The author compares the objectives set out in the introduction with the achieved outcomes or proposed solutions, answers the main research question(s), and confirms or refutes the hypotheses. The author may discuss possible implementation of proposed solutions, further research directions, or unresolved issues in the field. Personal opinions may be expressed, provided they are supported by scholarly arguments. The conclusion must not be generated using AI tools. Its length is usually two to three pages, similar to the introduction.

10. List of References

This section contains all sources used, arranged alphabetically and numbered. The bibliography must comply with the ČSN ISO 690 standard (see below).

11. Appendices

Appendices may include documents, summarized data, or other materials (e.g., prompts) that complement the main text. Appendices are optional but should be numbered sequentially, categorized by type (tables, graphs, images), and labeled with a description and source.

12. Approved Thesis Assignment

The approved thesis assignment is included as the final part of the thesis.

C) CITATION OF LITERATURE AND SOURCES IN THE QUALIFICATION THESIS

A necessary component of any scholarly work — whether a seminar paper, bachelor's thesis, master's thesis, journal article, monograph, or conference proceedings — is consistent and accurate citation of the literature and other sources used. Failure to meet this formal requirement, or significant deficiencies in this area constitute sufficient grounds for evaluating the submitted qualification thesis as unsatisfactory. Citation of literature serves two main purposes:

1. Ethical: It is not permissible to claim as one's own knowledge, findings, ideas, or data that have been discovered, established, or formulated by others. The intellectual property rights of other authors must be respected. If the author uses the ideas or data of other authors without proper citation, this is considered plagiarism. The thesis text must clearly distinguish between the author's own findings, opinions, or evaluations and those of experts or other authors. Academic writing should strive for objectivity and impartiality. However, the author's own assessments are permissible, provided they are supported by scholarly arguments. The conclusion is an appropriate place for the author's final evaluations and commentary.

2. Practical: Readers of the academic work (reviewers, opponents, instructors, fellow students, etc.) should be informed about the literature and sources the author consulted. Readers can verify the text based on the cited literature or use it for their own research, gaining a better understanding of the current state of inquiry. Moreover, accurate citations benefit the author: if they revisit the work months or years later (for instance, to expand, revise, or reuse it), they can quickly locate the sources used and continue building on the previous work. In contrast, absent citations make it extremely difficult or even impossible to trace all sources.

Sources must be cited not only in the case of direct quotations (i.e., when the author reproduces a passage verbatim) **but also when the author summarizes or paraphrases another author's ideas in their own words.**

Citation is also required for numerical or statistical data, legal references, constitutional texts, or other official documents.

Direct quotations must be clearly marked with quotation marks and italics. It is permissible to omit parts of a quoted text or to insert commentary; omitted sections are indicated by three dots enclosed in square brackets: [...]. The quoted text must not be otherwise altered, even if it contains typos or factual or grammatical errors.

It is not necessary to cite generally known facts or information (e.g., “the Czech Republic is a member of the European Union”). If the author is unsure whether a fact is common knowledge, it is safer to cite the source. As a general rule, it is better to cite more often than too rarely (or not at all).

If the thesis includes tables and graphs, they must always be numbered and accompanied by a title and source indicating where the data was obtained. If the author created the tables or graphs, the source can be indicated as, for example, “compiled by the author” or “own calculation”. Tables and graphs must include a legend explaining all abbreviations, symbols, and other variables. The title of a table or graph should appear above it, its description below, and the source cited in the footnotes.

Handling References, Citations, and Bibliography

The methods for citing literature and other sources are governed by the ČSN ISO 690 standard. **This standard is mandatory unless a different recognized citation style is specified in the approved thesis assignment, which may be used, for example, if the author intends to publish the thesis or part of it under conditions requiring a different citation style. Any use of an alternative citation style must be indicated in the approved assignment, in the section describing the problem and the research question.**

References to literature should appear not only in the summary at the end of the thesis under the section “List of References” but also directly in the text, so that the reader can trace the source of a particular piece of information or idea. It is important to distinguish between references placed in footnotes within the text and bibliographic details included in the final list of references at the end of the thesis.

References in footnotes should include only the most essential bibliographic information. Footnotes are numbered consecutively throughout the document using Arabic numerals. In the text, a small superscript number is inserted immediately after the information being cited², corresponding to the numbered footnote on the same page, which provides the full reference to the source. On this page, there is such a footnote for used literature or source.

When citing a source for the first time, the footnote should include all the relevant bibliographic details. For immediately repeated citations, it is possible to use abbreviations such as “ibidem” along with the page number of the repeated reference. Caution is required when using these abbreviations, because inserting or removing footnotes during editing can easily introduce errors and mislead the reader (or the author). For repeated citations that are not immediately consecutive, a shortened form of the reference may be used (see below). If a work cites two or more publications by the same author from the same year, these works must be distinguished alphabetically by adding a lowercase letter to the year of publication (e.g., 2024a, 2024b, etc.). This letter must also appear in the corresponding full bibliographic entry in the final list of references. In general, bibliographic information for foreign-language publications is not translated, although exceptions may be made for page numbers, volume, or issue numbers.

References in the final list of references follow rules similar to those for footnotes, with the difference that additional bibliographic details are included. These typically include the publisher’s name, ISBN for books, and ISSN for journal articles. Below are examples of complete bibliographic entries for the list of references, shorter versions for footnotes, and abbreviated forms for repeated citations:

²In MS Word text editor, we use the references function and then “insert a footnote” command.

1) Monographs

Format for a full bibliographic entry:

AUTHOR. *Title of the publication*. Subtitle(s). Format. Edition. Additional contributors. Series, volume number. Place: Publisher, Year. ISBN.

Example:

HOBSBAWM, Eric J. *The Age of Extremes: The Short Twentieth Century 1914–1991*. 2nd ed. Translated by J. PEČÍRKOVÁ and P. ŠTĚPÁNEK. Historical Thinking, vol. 4. Prague: Argo, 1998. 627 pages. ISBN 978-80-257-0302-1.

Short version for footnotes:

HOBSBAWM, Eric J. *The Age of Extremes: The Short Twentieth Century 1914–1991*. Prague: Argo, 1998.

Abbreviated version for repeated citations:

HOBSBAWM, 1998, pp. 48–112.

Detailed guidance is available here: <https://www.iso690.zcu.cz/schema-a-priklady/knihy.html>

2) Journal Article

Format for a full bibliographic entry:

AUTHOR. *Title of the article*. *Title of the journal*. Subtitle(s). Place: Publisher, Volume/Year, Issue, Pages. ISSN.

Example:

KARLÍKOVÁ, Zuzana. *The COVID-19 Pandemic through the Eyes of a Pediatrician*. *Acta medicinae*, vol. 3 (2014), no. 4, pp. 64–66. ISSN 1805-398X.

Short version for footnotes:

KARLÍKOVÁ, Zuzana. *The COVID-19 Pandemic through the Eyes of a Pediatrician*. *Acta medicinae*, vol. 3 (2014), no. 4, pp. 64–66.

Abbreviated version for repeated citations:

KARLÍKOVÁ, 2014, pp. 64–66.

Detailed guidance is available here: <https://www.iso690.zcu.cz/schema-a-priklady/lnky-v-asopisech.html>

3) Contribution in an Edited Volume (Conference Proceedings, Anthology, etc.)

Format for a full bibliographic entry:

AUTHOR. *Title of the contribution*. In: *Title of the volume*. Subtitle(s). Place: Publisher, Year, Pages. ISBN or ISSN.

Example:

VAŘEKA, Pavel. *Archaeological Research on Medieval Villages in the Tachov Region Destroyed after 1945*. In: *Archaeologia historica*. Brno: Muzejní a vlastivědná společnost, 2008, pp. 101–117. ISBN 9788072750764.

Short version for footnotes:

VAŘEKA, Pavel. *Archaeological Research on Medieval Villages in the Tachov Region Destroyed after 1945*. In: *Archaeologia historica*. Brno: Muzejní a vlastivědná společnost, 2008, pp. 101–117.

Abbreviated version for repeated citations:

VAŘEKA, 2008, pp. 101–117.

Detailed guidance is available here: <https://www.iso690.zcu.cz/schema-a-priklady/pspvky-ve-sbornicch.html>

4) Bachelor's, Master's, Rigorosum, Doctoral, and Habilitation Theses

Format for a full bibliographic entry:

AUTHOR. *Title*. Subtitle(s). Type of work. Additional contributors. Place: Name of the university, faculty, Year.

Example:

LACHOUTOVÁ, Adéla. *Social Exclusion of Municipal Apartment Residents and Strategies for Coping with the Risk of Losing Housing*. Master's Thesis. Ladislav TOUŠEK (supervisor). Plzeň: University of West Bohemia, Faculty of Philosophy, 2023.

Short version for footnotes:

LACHOUTOVÁ, Adéla. *Social Exclusion of Municipal Apartment Residents and Strategies for Coping with the Risk of Losing Housing*. Master's Thesis. Plzeň: University of West Bohemia, Faculty of Philosophy, 2023.

Abbreviated version for repeated citations:

LACHOUTOVÁ, 2023, p. 13.

Detailed guidance: <https://www.iso690.zcu.cz/schema-a-prikлады/diplomov-prce-p.html>

5) Legislation and Internal Regulations

Format for a full bibliographic entry:

COUNTRY. Type of document, number and year of publication in the official collection, date of approval, title. In: Official Collection, date. ISSN.

Example:

CZECH REPUBLIC. Act No. 40/1964 Coll., of 26 February 1964, Civil Code. In: Collection of Laws, 5 March 1964, vol. 1964, issue 19. ISSN 03228037.

Short version for footnotes:

CZECH REPUBLIC. Act No. 40/1964 Coll., of 26 February 1964, Civil Code. In: Collection of Laws, 5 March 1964, vol. 1964, issue 19.

Abbreviated version for repeated citations:

Act No. 40/1964 Coll., of 26 February 1964, Civil Code. In: Collection of Laws, 5 March 1964, vol. 1964, issue 19.

Additional examples of bibliographic citations and other types of sources are available

here: <https://www.iso690.zcu.cz/home.html>

6) Internet Sources and Websites

When citing internet sources, it is essential to specify the type of source: Online, Blog, Website, Tweet, Comment on a blog post.

Examples:

- Czech Statistical Office. Website. Updated 19 October 2023. Available at: <https://www.czso.cz/>. [accessed 19 October 2023].
- Definition of types of research, development, and innovation results. Online. Research and Development in the Czech Republic. Council for Research, Development, and Innovation, ©2011. Last modified 19 January 2011, 09:54. Archived copy available from: Internet Archive (distributor), <https://web.archive.org/web/20110216194306/http://www.vyzkum.cz/FrontClanek.aspx?idsekce=29415>. [archived 16 February 2011, 19:43:06]. [accessed 19 October 2023].
- BANABIC, Dorel. *Advanced Methods in Material Forming*. Online. Springer, 2007. Available from: ProQuest Ebook Central (distributor), <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/zcup-ebooks/detail.action?docID=302014>. [paywall]. [accessed 3 August 2023].

Detailed guidance: <https://www.iso690.zcu.cz/specifické-zdroje/elektronické-informacní-zdroje.html>

7) Generative AI Tools

Format: Creator. Name of the service. Format and type of source. Version. Date of release, date of modification/revision. Availability. [Date accessed].

Examples:

- OpenAI. *ChatGPT*. Online, Generative AI. Version GPT-4o mini. 15 May 2025. Available at: <https://chatgpt.com/>. [accessed 16 May 2025].
- Midjourney, Inc. *Midjourney*. Online, Image Generator. Version 6.1. Available at: <https://www.midjourney.com/home>. [accessed 16 May 2025].