

BA THESIS TEMPLATE 2022/2023 (version 1.1)

The BA thesis is an academic attainment and should accordingly follow the rules and conventions of an academic text by being objective, written in a formal tone-of-voice, avoiding sweeping generalisations, etc. (for a more in-depth discussions the rules and conventions of academic writing, see [Academic Writing in English \(AWE\) \(aalto.fi\)](#)).

The page recommendations attached to each of the sections below are based on the joint experiences of the thesis supervisors and written from the perspective of being single-spaced text in Times New Roman 12p. However, the length of a BA thesis can vary and depends on the thesis topic, how the reported work has been organized, the style of writing as well as the prior experience and skills of the person writing it. So, please make sure to discuss your text with your supervisor as the thesis process progresses.

TITLE PAGE [1 PAGE]

- The title page should follow Aalto University guidelines (LINK) by including:
 - the Aalto logo,
 - the name of the programme (“Bachelor’s Programme in Design”),
 - the title and sub-title,
 - the first and last name of the author,
 - the type of document (“Bachelor’s Thesis”), and
 - the year of completion.
- The title for the thesis should ideally draw attention while also clearly indicating the scope and content of the work. People should get a basic idea about what the thesis is about and, ideally, be able to make a first assessment about its relevance. Consider the possibility of using a shorter main title to grab attention coupled with a more descriptive sub-title that describes the subject area and scope of the thesis.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT [1 PAGE]

- The people that have supported you in doing the thesis are appropriately thanked and credited in the Acknowledgment. The order by which they are thanked follows the order by the magnitude by which they have supported your work. People that frequently are thanked in the acknowledgement include: supervisors and advisors, experts that have shared their expertise in defining the scope of the thesis or providing feedback throughout the thesis process, the people that took part in the study as well as other people that have provided general support and given feedback through the process. Family and friends are thanked last.
- The Acknowledgement is sometimes also used to give a more general/personal background or/and motivation for the choice of thesis subject which goes beyond the more formal framing of the thesis in the introduction.

ABSTRACT [1 PAGE]

The abstract concisely summarizes (i) the scope and purpose of the thesis, (ii) the approach taken and (iii) the key findings and what was produced. Try to cover the main point of each section of the thesis.

- A reader should be interested in the work reported and able to acquire the main points about the work by only reading the abstract.

CONTENT [1 PAGE]

- The content page follows Aalto University guidelines ([LINK](#)).

INTRODUCTION [2-3 PAGES]

- The thesis topic is introduced in a way that underscores its significance; often practical, industry, cultural or societal.
- The theoretical framing – main literature stream(s) – in terms of where concepts and ideas come from and where the thesis is situated is explained.
- The scope and focus of the thesis (both in terms of what and how things are studied and produced) are briefly and clearly described.
- The research aim/purpose and the main questions of inquiry for the thesis (including the research questions) are introduced. If possible, try to make a distinction between main and sub questions. Avoid articulating the scope of your questions in terms of questions requiring a yes/no answer.
- The practical design relevance of the thesis topic and what is produced throughout the thesis – including what people potentially could do with the outcomes of your work - is clearly explained. What forms the contribution of your work based on what has been said earlier and/or how things are organized/pursued at the moment?
- The key concepts and ideas for the thesis are appropriately (briefly) introduced and defined. If more extensive elaborations are needed, these are typically incorporated in the literature review.
- Overall structure of the thesis is summarized to guide the reader in understanding the scope of the thesis. Beyond briefly explaining what is discussed in each section, try to provide an explanation for how they fit together.

LITERATURE REVIEW [5-6 PAGES]

- The purpose of the literature review, including how the findings of it aligns with the rest of the thesis, is clearly introduced. For example, the purpose of a literature review can be described in terms of clarifying how a topic/phenomenon earlier has been understood or conceptualized in the pursuit of clarifying what topics to address in interviews with experts and/or what potentially should be acknowledged for the production part of a thesis.
- What literature that is reviewed, including how it was located and selected, is explained.
- The structure of the literature is organized in coherent sections which are appropriately introduced and concluded. Try to break down the scope of your review in subtopics which each

are given a separate section. As support for the text, consider if the overarching structure of the literature review could be visualized in a figure.

- The key findings from the literature review are concisely summarized and provides a bridge to the research approach and/or the design production. As support for the text, consider the possibilities of summarizing the key findings in a table or figure.

RESEARCH APPROACH [3-4 PAGES]

- The approach for data collection and analysis is clearly explained and justified. Why you collected and analyzed data in a particular way (including how it fits with your thesis subject and interests) needs to be clear.
- The procedure for data collection (e.g. recruitment for interviewees, or selection of documents or website of analysis) is clearly explained and justified. Describe the different steps you took in a way that a reader can follow (and potentially replicate) your process.
- The amount and quality of data are explained. Consider the possibility of using tables to add details about your data. For example, for interviews, a table in which relevant characteristics of each interviewee is summarized can provide much needed overview. At a bare minimum, information about how many hours of interviews, pages of transcripts, etc. that has been collected and studied need to be stated together with basic information about interviewees and how they were recruited.
- How the interviewees were informed about the scope of your study and gave their consent to participate is explained.
- Material that was used for data collection is introduced in the text, and when relevant added as an appendix to the thesis. Interview guides are included as appendixes. However, in preserving overview, the basic structure for an interview is briefly introduced in the method.
- The procedures for data preparation and analysis are explained and, when needed, justified. Make sure that the reader can follow the different step you took in drawing conclusions from your data.

FINDINGS [5-7 PAGES]

- The findings are reported in a way that accurately reflects what and how things were studied. In general, totally conclusive findings are very rare. Following this, the quality of your work is typically assessed in terms of how your results capture the context and diversity of what has been studied. So, while there is a structure, not everything needs to fit perfectly within it.
- How findings align with (stem from) the raw data is clear. For example, findings from a series of interviews are typically exemplified through direct quotes from the interviewees.
- In providing overview, tables displaying the distribution of diverse types of responses can provide a useful foundation. The introduction of a table and/or figure can also be effectively used to communicate/summarize/illustrate the results.

DESIGN PRODUCTION (IF APPLICABLE) [3-4 PAGES]

- How the production part of the thesis was organized and how it informs and/or relates to the research is explained. Consider if a figure and/or table can provide an overview of your process and the relationship between research and design.

- The final production is introduced in text and pictures/figures and its development showcased in photos, in-between concepts and/or sketches from the process.
- The authorship of the production is properly explained if it involved in direct and indirect collaboration(s).

CONCLUSIONS & DISCUSSION [3-4 PAGES]

- The results of the thesis are concisely discussed (summarized) in relation to the questions of inquiry that has been set for the thesis. Try to explain how the results potentially are similar and different to what earlier has been said in literature (and the literature that you reviewed in particular).
- The practical relevance of the resulting findings and production is discussed. What can/should/could people actually do given what was found and produced through the thesis process.
- The main limitations of the work are appropriately acknowledged and analyzed. A clear reflection on a limitation (a) pinpoints and demarcates its impact on the results (findings), (b) introduces the reasoning for why it emerged (and why it potentially was deemed appropriate and/or acceptable at a given point in time) and (c) gives advice on how it potentially could be addressed ('avoided') in future studies/projects.

REFERENCES

- The reference list includes all relevant source material.
- Only source material that is referenced in the text is included in the reference list.
- All references and citations are listed in APA style.

APPENDICES

- Informed consent form template
- Guiding questions for interviews
- Interview transcript sample
- Codebook (how the data were analyzed to discover the findings)
- Any other relevant information / documents to understand what has been done (but which are not essential to the thesis)