First name Surname

**Writing Guidelines**

Possible specifying subheading

School of XXX

Type of thesis in Discipline

Degree programme name

Vaasa 20XX

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **UNIVERSITY OF VAASA**  **School of XXX** | | | |
| **Author:** | First name Surname | | |
| **Title of the thesis:** | Writing Guidelines: Possible specifying subheading | | |
| **Degree:** | Master of Example Sciences | | |
| **Discipline:** | Own degree programme | | |
| **Supervisor:** | First name Surname | | |
| **Year:** | 20xx | **Pages:** | 55 |

**ABSTRACT:**

The thesis must include a one-page abstract, placed immediately after the cover page. The abstract should be written in Calibri font, size 11, with single line spacing. The abstract is primarily written in the passive voice, and the recommended verb tenses are present and perfect. The first person may be used, if necessary, to clarify personal choices. The abstract must not include citations or specific research results, such as percentages.

The abstract corresponds to the maturity test of the Master’s thesis. It includes information on the background or starting point of the study, the research problem or research objective, the theory, key concepts, methods used, data, key findings and research results, as well as the conclusions and interpretations. The length of the abstract should be one full page (approximately 400–450 words). Abstracts are not required for course assignments.

If a thesis is written in English, the abstract must be written in Finnish. However, if the author has received their basic education in a language other than Finnish, the abstract may be written in English or another language, as agreed with the supervisor.

The abstract is included when the thesis is stored in the database, and it is publicly visible and searchable by search engines.

Keywords describe the key concepts of the thesis. Five to eight keywords, written in the same language as the thesis, are listed at the end of the abstract. These keywords may be discussed with the supervisor, as they are essential for retrievability. Keywords should not aim to be unique but should reflect the field to which the thesis pertains. When storing theses in the Osuva database, only words included in the General Finnish Ontology (YSO) may be used.

|  |
| --- |
| **KEYWORDS:** (5–8 keywords, check in the term bank if necessary). |

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# Using the writing guidelines

This text presents the writing guidelines of the University of Vaasa. The guidelines apply to all degree programmes and specialisation options. Whether written in Finnish or English, theses must follow the writing guidelines of the University of Vaasa. Instructions on any exceptions are provided separately by the thesis supervisor (e.g. in the case of legal sciences).

The writing guidelines explain the layout of the thesis, the use of sources, and the final editing of the text. These guidelines also apply to other written assignments from the beginning of university studies, to ensure that students become familiar with them before writing their thesis. The guidelines do not cover all possible scenarios; in cases of uncertainty, students should consult their supervisor.

The purpose of these writing guidelines is to help students understand the structure of a thesis or paper and to demonstrate how the guidelines should be applied in their own work. The layout of this text serves as an example of the required thesis layout. All elements included in this document are mandatory parts of a thesis. The abstract page is not required for course papers, and teachers may also give different instructions for the title page and contents table of a course paper.

The examples used in this document have either been invented or extracted from various publications. Also, some sources in the reference list are fabricated. For the sake of clarity, the source references are not marked separately for each example. The most common referencing examples are given in this text.

# Format and layout requirements

This section discusses the layout requirements for written works, as well as the structure of sections, paragraphs, and headings. Instructions for images, figures, and tables, along with example contexts, are also provided. The layout follows the guidelines of the University of Vaasa, which in turn are based on the 7th edition of the American Psychological Association (APA) guidelines, as regards referencing sources. However, it is important to note that the referencing examples given in this document do not follow APA exactly, as the university’s guidelines are an adaptation of the APA 7th edition guidelines. The writing guidelines of the University of Vaasa are applied regardless of whether the thesis is written in Finnish or English. Dissertations follow the guidelines of the University of Vaasa’s publication series.

## Title page

The title of the work is written on the title page. It must be concise and accurately reflect the content of the work. The title may consist of two parts, in which case it is divided into a main title and a subheading. The main title usually summarises the topic of the thesis, but it can also, for example, be a quotation from the material used in the research. A subheading is often necessary to clarify the scope of the research.

The margins on the title page of written works are the same as elsewhere in the document (see Section 2.3). The title page uses the Calibri font, with single line spacing. The University of Vaasa logo is centred at the top of the page. The author’s name, in font size 16, is centre-aligned, in the middle of the page. Below the name, the bold main title is written in font size 20. If there is a subheading, it is written in font size 14. On the right-hand side of the title page, information about the type of work is provided, in font size 12. The final line at the bottom of the page gives the university’s location, centre-aligned: Vaasa 20XX (font size 12). The year given is the year the thesis has been approved. For assignments other than theses, the guidelines for the title page are course specific.

## Page numbers and contents table, as well as other lists

After the title page, all pages are numbered sequentially, with the abstract on page two, and after it the contents table. Page numbering continues through to the last page of the appendices, at the end of the study. The page number is centred 1.5 cm from the top of the page, using Calibri font in size 11.

In all written works, the contents table is formatted and positioned in the same way as in these instructions (see pp. 3–4). The contents table is titled Contents. It is recommended that the contents table be generated using the automatic function of a word processor. The line spacing is 1.5. In the contents table, the content of the study is divided and organised by title and page number, following the sequential order of the thesis. Level 2 subsection headings are indented 0.5 cm from the left margin and Level 3 subsection headings are 1 cm from the left margin. The references section is placed at the end of the contents table, followed by any other lists. In the contents table, the words References and Appendices are not preceded by a number. If there is one appendix, it is featured in the contents table as follows: Appendix. Appendix title. If there are several, they are numbered consecutively. Dotted lines are not used between headings and page numbers in the contents table. The abstract page is not included in the contents table.

Other lists include lists of images, figures, tables, symbols, terms, and abbreviations. These are placed on a separate page after the contents table. Images, figures, and tables are listed one below the other, by title and page number. The titles of the lists are in font size 14 and emboldened. The list does not include any sources. If there are no more than three images, figures, or tables, a separate list is not necessarily needed.

When a list of abbreviations is used, the abbreviations do not need to be explained in the text. If there are only a few abbreviations, consider writing the full concept when first referring to it in the text, instead of creating a list of abbreviations.

Signs, abbreviations, symbols, and terms that the reader is unlikely to be familiar with are listed with explanations, and grouped in alphabetical order: for example, first the Greek alphabet, then the Roman alphabet, and finally the abbreviations. The list of abbreviations is titled Abbreviations and includes established, regulatory, and other abbreviations used in the study. Established abbreviations include, for example, BBC (British Broadcasting Corporation) and NBC (National Broadcasting Company). For statutes, the full name is written together with the number. The list of abbreviations only includes cases where an actual abbreviation has been used. For example, a statute is not included in the list of abbreviations, unless an abbreviation is used when referring to it. If there is only a small number of abbreviations, it is advisable to write the full terms in the text when they appear for the first time, instead of creating a list of abbreviations.

## Text layout and font

The body of the thesis is written in Calibri font, size 12. **Bold** and *italic* styles are used in accordance with the supervisor’s instructions. Italics are often used to indicate the substance of the language (e.g., the word *word* contains four letters). For the sake of accessibility, bold is preferable to italics. Underlining text is not recommended, as it is often associated with hyperlinks. Colours may be used, but they should not be the sole means of conveying information. Emphasis techniques should be used sparingly and must be applied consistently when used.

The text is positioned so that the left, right, top, and bottom margins are all 3 cm. Both edges of the text must be justified. All written papers should use 1.5 line spacing. Single line spacing is used in the abstract, code, or in direct quotations longer than three lines. Single line spacing is also used for table, image, and figure captions, examples, and footnotes. In the reference list, the line spacing should be 1.5. Lastly, no lines of text should be left standing alone at the top or bottom of a page (commonly referred to as orphan lines). This is particularly important for section headings. The entire document should be automatically hyphenated. No blank pages should be included.

## Sections, headings, and paragraphs

The text is divided into sections, each of which is titled and numbered. All headings are in bold font and are preceded by two blank lines. Main section headings are written in bold, and font size 16. All main sections (1) of the thesis begin on a new page. In other written works, the section headings are separated from the preceding text by two blank lines. Subsections continue on the same page as the preceding text.

Level 2 headings (1.1) are written in bold, and font size 14. There must be at least two subsections: for example, if the work includes subsection 1.1, it must also contain subsection 1.2. The headings of all Level 2 subsections are separated from the preceding text by two blank lines (line spacing 1.5, with 0-point spacing in Word). If a Level 2 subsection follows the main section headings, one blank line between the headings is sufficient. However, in theses, it is recommended to include introductory text between the main section and the subsection.

Level 3 headings (1.1.1) are separated from the preceding heading or text by two line breaks. The font size is 12, and these headings are also in bold. There must be at least two subsections: for example, if the work includes subsection 1.1.1, it must also include subsection 1.1.2. A maximum of three levels (1.1.1) is recommended. A Level 4 heading may be used if necessary for clarity, and its layout should correspond to Level 3 headings. After the heading, there is always one blank line before the text.

The text is divided into paragraphs, with each one separated by a single blank line. It is recommended that the paragraphs are of approximately uniform length; for example, there should be no full-page or single-sentence paragraphs. Long lists, such as those marked with dashes or numbers, should be avoided.

By using word processor styles, the file can be made accessible. Merely formatting the headings by manually adjusting the layout is not permitted. More information on accessibility is available on the writing guidelines website.

## Figures, images, tables, and examples

Figures, images, and tables complement the text. Their content must be sufficiently detailed so that they can be viewed and understood without dependence on the main text. Each figure, image, table, and example must be referenced in the text. Figures, images, and tables must be clearly visible and appropriately sized. For instance, they should not contain unnecessary blank space and must fit within the set margins and on a single page.

Figures, images, and tables are separated from the body text by a single line break (with 0-point spacing in Word) both above and below. Figures and tables must have a consistent overall graphic appearance, in compliance with the academic standards of the field in question. Captions and explanatory texts for tables should be written in font size 11. The content of figures and tables should not be repeated verbatim or numerically in the text but must be adequately interpreted and explained. Every figure, image, or table should be referred to at least once in the body text. This can be done either before or after the figure, table, or image, provided the explanation or mention forms an integral part of the text.

Figures and tables can be referred to in the text, for example as follows:

1. Process writing involves different steps (see Figure 2).
2. Table 1 summarises the numbers and percentages of Facebook content categories.

Figures, images, and tables can also be presented in appendices. Figures, images, and tables must include alternative text, known as alt text. For all figures, images, and tables, including those translated by the author, the original source must always be cited. If a figure, image, or table has been modified, the source should be marked as (adapted from...). If a figure, image, or table has been created or modified using artificial intelligence, acknowledgement of AI usage, including the prompt that was used, must be included in the caption or table description (see Section 2.5.1).

### Figures and images

Images and figures must either be the author’s own or include the original source title and a reference. The source reference should be formatted according to the guidelines (author, year, and, if necessary, page number). For images that exceed the work threshold, authorisation from the original creator is required. For example, a screenshot from a website is subject to copyright. Images and figures are each numbered in their own series and listed separately after the contents table. Figures and images are separated from the main text by one blank line above and below. The title of the figure, i.e., the caption, is written below it and ends with a full stop. Any source references are included in parentheses after the caption. In this case, the caption ends with the full stop after the source reference. The text **Figure 1.** or **Image 1.** is in bold, but the caption itself is not. The font used is Calibri, size 11, with single line spacing. Captions must be given. If the caption continues onto a second line, it should be indented to align with the first line. Figures and images must be adequately explained in the text. The alternative text must provide theinformation that would be lost to the reader if the figure or image were not visible.

Figures can be used to illustrate and simplify the topic that is presented. There are several tools that can be used to create diagrams, such as Word SmartArt. Figure 1 shows how the research results can be presented graphically.

Figure 1. Degrees completed at the University of Vaasa in 2020.

Figure 1 was created using the Word SmartArt programme, which can generate various figures based on research data. This is one way to present statistical information. Figure 1 shows the number of degrees completed at the University of Vaasa in 2020.

When designing figures, one should keep in mind that even a small symbol can have a significant impact. For example, the direction in which an arrow points can crucially alter the content and meaning of the figure, as shown in Figure 2. The ability to design a figure often demonstrates a student’s understanding of the relationships between different components. Any technical drawings or diagrams must use standardised and quantity symbols. If the figure is borrowed from another source, the original title must be used, and a reference to the source must be provided. A reference to the original source is required even in cases where only part of a figure or table has been borrowed. In these instances, the text must clearly indicate what the author’s own contribution is and what has been borrowed from the original source.

Figure 2. The stages of process writing (Kniivilä et al., 2017).

Images, such as photographs or screenshots, should only be used in the thesis if they are necessary to the purpose and method of the research. If the thesis method involves image analysis, it is natural to incorporate images. However, in such cases, the copyright of the images must be considered. Photographs are likely to exceed the so-called work threshold, meaning permission to use them must be obtained from the creator. If the creator has transferred their rights to another party, such as a publisher or producer, permission to use the work must be sought from them. Permission should be requested at the beginning of the thesis writing process, so that any potential restrictions on the use of images can be considered when planning the research.

In academic writing, images can, to some extent, be used without permission under the fair use principle. Fair use allows for excerpts from published works to be used for academic purposes when the image is closely related to the subject being discussed. Only as much of the image as is necessary for the examination of the topic may be used, whether that means part or all of it. In other words, merely decorative images may not be used. The use of an image is justified when it clarifies or illustrates the thesis author’s own work. The source reference for the image should include the name of the publication or photographer.

If a figure or image has been created or edited using AI, a statement indicating that AI has been used, including the prompt utilised, should be included in the caption beneath the figure or image, as demonstrated in the example below.

Image 1. The future advertisement for Finland’s most popular coffee. NB: The image was created using AI, with the prompt: “Create an advertisement for Finland’s most popular coffee in 2045” (OpenAI, 2023).

The source is included in the reference list, and the citation includes the model creator, company, or publisher, and the date (see Section 4.8).

### Tables

Tables can be used in the thesis, for example, to describe the data and present the results of the analysis in a concise form. A table consists of rows and columns, in which the data are presented in a simplified manner.

Tables are often used to present statistical data. Statistical data are presented in a separate table, either within the text or as an appendix. If there is only a small amount of numerical data, it can also be presented in untitled and unnumbered formats. It is not necessary to present all statistical data separately when focusing on findings relevant to the study. The same information must not be presented both as a table and a figure. In qualitative research, quantitative descriptions may be based on very small samples. In such cases, it is important to critically discuss the generalisability of numerically presented data in the text. When percentages are given, it is advisable to also include in the table the numbers on which the percentage calculations are based.

The body text must include a mention of each table, either before or after the table is presented. Statistical data must be introduced in accordance with the principles of statistical presentation. The tables must be clear in appearance and appropriate in size. For example, they should not have unnecessary blank space and must fit within the set margins, ideally on a single page. The header row of the table must be clearly indicated.

In Table 1, the order in which the content categories are presented is based on quantity, but other criteria may also be used. Alphabetical order often does not work well, as it may affect the interpretation of the table and the information it presents.

In Table 1, the order in which the content categories are presented is based on quantity, but other criteria may also be used. Alphabetical order is seldom the best choice, as it may affect the interpretation of the table and the information it presents.

Table 1. The total number of Facebook content categories and their percentage shares (Koiranen, 2015, p. 62).

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Content categories** | **Number** | **Share (%)** |
| Relationships | 60 | 17.7 |
| Opening hours | 55 | 16.2 |
| Marketing | 51 | 15.0 |
| Content sharing | 44 | 13.0 |
| Events | 43 | 12.7 |
| Information search | 43 | 12.7 |
| Space disruptions | 20 | 5.9 |
| Training | 13 | 3.8 |
| Instructions | 10 | 3.0 |
| **In total** | **339** | **100.0** |

Tables are separated from the body text by one blank line above the table caption and one below the table. The table caption is written above the table and ends with a full stop. When source references are provided, they are enclosed in parentheses after the table caption, and the caption ends with a full stop after the reference. The text **Table 1.** is in bold, but the caption itself is not. The font is Calibri, size 11, with single line spacing. If a table caption continues onto a second line, this should be indented to align with the text on the first line. If the table has been created or edited using AI, a statement indicating that AI has been used, including the prompt that was utilised, should be included in the table caption above the table (see the example in Section 2.5.1).

In tables, text is usually left-aligned, and numbers are right-aligned. To optimise visual accessibility, the header row should be clearly indicated. Once the table has been created, the top row of the table should be marked as the header as follows: Place the cursor on the top row of the table to display the Table Tools on the Word command line. From the Table Tools, select “Layout” and then select “Repeat Header Rows”. This will ensure the header row of the table is repeated, even if the table spans several pages. The font of the table should match the font of the body text, and depending on the size of the table, the font size can be either the same or smaller than that of the text. The layout of all tables used in the document should be consistent, and excessive embellishment should be avoided. Tables should not be used merely to enhance the visual appearance of the text. Tables are listed sequentially in a separate list after the contents table, images, and figures.

### Examples

All examples from the research material that are given must be numbered consecutively, as illustrated in the following example.

1. However, neutral verbs may have their own function in referential structures, in addition to communication. This is shown in example (1).
2. Juha Korkeaoja, Deputy Chairman of the party’s parliamentary group, said: “It would be worth asking those concerned first. That would clarify the situation considerably.” (Here information on the origin of the example is recorded, e.g., *Helsingin Sanomat*, 2017, September 2.)

In example (1), saying something does not, in itself, form the core of the news, but − −.

The examples must be distinguished from the rest of the text by indentation (1.5 cm for the example number, 2.5 cm for the example text) and single line spacing. Usually, there is text following an example, so it should not be the last part of a section. All examples must be referenced in the text and adequately explained. The interpretation of the examples should not be left to the reader. Examples are not enclosed in quotation marks and are not italicised.

## Special cases

Special cases concern, in particular, the fields of technology and law.

### Mathematical equations

Mathematical equations should be numbered consecutively and integrated into the text, following standard punctuation rules, including the use of commas. Each equation should be written on its own line and separated from the surrounding text by one blank line before and after. The sequential number of the equation is written in parentheses to the right, and the equation itself should be indented so that the equation part of all equations starts at the same point. This is illustrated in example (4).

1. The CS variable is examined using the equation

, (1)

where [– –].

The actual variable is introduced first, and the comma preceding the subordinate clause is placed at the end of the equation. The quantities in the equation should only be explained in connection with the equation if they have not already been explained in the text or in other equations. If the sentence does not continue after the equation, a full stop should be placed at the end of the equation. In this case, any source reference should be placed at the end of the text preceding the equation.

In mathematical representation, standardised signs and symbols must be used wherever they exist. Standards can be found in the following publications, for example:

* SFS-ISO 1000 + A1 (1999). SI units and recommendations for the use of their multiples and of certain other units
* SFS-ISO 31-0 + A1 (1999). Quantities and units. Part 0: General principles
* SFS-ISO 31-11 (1999). Quantities and units. Part 11: Mathematical signs and symbols for use in the physical sciences and technology.

In the absence of standardised symbols, other established signs should be used, and as a last resort, symbols created by the author may be utilised.

### Codes and code snippets

The code or code snippet should be indented and separated from the rest of the text by one blank line before and after. The font used should be a monospaced font, such as Courier, except for pseudocode examples, where it is recommended to use a proportional font. If a code snippet is fewer than ten lines, there is no need to create a title or list, as shown in example (5).

1. For example, the following Robot Framework test sequence could be created with which the version of the injection logic block is read into a variable called version and executes a test step depending on the version.

${version}=Get Version

Run Keyword If

${version} == '0.2' Inject CRC Fault 1234 2

This snippet of a Robot Framework example test sequence would inject a CRC fault twice to address “1234” if the fault injector version was 0.2. (Mäenpänen, 2019, p. 60).

If there are ten lines or more, they should be treated as images or figures, that is, they are labelled **Algorithm 1.** or **Code 1.**, as shown in Algorithm 1.

**\*\*\* Settings \*\*\***

Library CalculatorLibrary

**\*\*\* Test Cases \*\*\***

Additions

Calculate 12 + 2 + 2 16

Calculate 2 + -3 -1

Subtractions

Calculate 12 - 2 - 2 8

Calculate 2 - -3 5

Calculation errors

Calculation should fail 1 / 0 Division by zero.

**\*\*\* Keywords \*\*\***

Calculate

[Arguments] ${expression} ${expected}

Push buttons C${expression}=

Result should be ${expected}

Calculation should fail

[Arguments] ${expression} ${expected}

${error} = Should fail C${expression}=

Should be equal ${expected} ${error}

Algorithm 1. Example of a Robot Framework test sequence, containing a test case and custom keywords (Mäenpänen, 2019, p. 37).

If the code has been created or edited using AI, a statement indicating that AI has been used, including the prompt that was utilised, should be included in the description below the code (see the example in Section 2.5.1). Further details on specific guidelines in the field of technology can be obtained from thesis supervisors.

### Footnotes

In public law, only regulations are referenced using parenthetical citations, while all other sources are marked with footnotes. In business law, regulations can be cited either using footnotes or in-text citations according to the APA style. The chosen method of referencing should be applied consistently throughout the thesis. When using footnotes, the number should be placed before the full stop. The font size for footnotes is 10, and the line spacing is single.

Thesis writers in the field of law should observe the established citation practices of their discipline. It is advisable to discuss these with a supervisor before beginning the thesis.

### Case indices and summaries of court rulings

Summaries of rulings in court cases, as well as rulings by the highest legal authorities, are separated from the body text in public law theses by indenting 1 cm from the left margin and using a font size of 11 and single line spacing. These should not be directly quoted, but rather paraphrased in one’s own words.

In a case index, the court cases mentioned in the thesis should be listed chronologically and organised by court. The page numbers indicating where each case is discussed must also be given. The case index can be placed either after the contents table and before the abstract page, or after the reference list and before the appendices.

## Appendices

Any appendices included are placed after the reference list. They should be titled, numbered consecutively, given page numbers, and listed in the contents table. Examples of appendices include questionnaires or interview forms used, other correspondence related to data collection, and possible examples of the data. The entire data set should never be included as an appendix. Appendices can also include figures and tables that illustrate the content of the thesis but are too large to be placed within the body text.

# Using sources: citation, quoting and referencing

This section covers the method of referencing sources that applies at the University of Vaasa. In academic writing, referencing methods vary depending on the publication or publisher, so these guidelines apply only to written assignments and theses completed at the University of Vaasa. Sources used in the examples provided in these guidelines are compiled in the reference list at the end.

## General information on referencing

The use of references is part of good academic practice. References provide information about the source material used in the study and indicate how it has been applied. They make it possible to verify the content of the text and show when the author is relying on the work of another researcher. All sources used should be easily located in the reference list. By providing appropriate citation and referencing, the student demonstrates their adherence to established academic practice, as a specialist in their field.

When citing sources, a distinction is made between paraphrasing and direct quotation. Paraphrasing means that the key idea relevant to the research framework is expressed in the **author’s own words**. This is the primary method of referencing in all academic works. However, it is not sufficient for the author to merely change every third word or rearrange the sentence structure, since it is important that the author has fully understood the source text. Without sufficient comprehension, it is impossible to accurately convey the meaning of the source content or to apply it within one’s own research framework.

In direct quotations, the source is cited exactly as it appears in the original text. Direct quotations are enclosed in quotation marks if they are at least three words long but no more than three lines. A short quotation is distinguished from the surrounding text using quotation marks. Quotations longer than three lines, often called block quotations, are written with single line spacing, indented (1.5 cm), and without quotation marks. However, long direct quotations should be avoided. If a direct quotation contains a spelling error, this can be indicated by placing [sic] after the erroneous word (*sic* [Lat.] = thus, so; indeed so). Direct quotations must always include the page number of the source. Example (6) presents a direct quotation that is at least three words but no more than three lines.

1. Being able to focus on writing “depends on other orientations, which affect what we can face at any given moment in time” (Ahmed, 2006, p. 32).

The following examples present a direct quotation that is longer than three lines. For clarity, the examples are not numbered consecutively to better illustrate the layout of direct quotations in relation to the body text.

Ahmed (2006) describes the meanings of the word *occupy* in relation to objects:

We say that we occupy space; that we have an occupation. We are occupied with objects, which present themselves as tools to extend “the reach” of our actions. We are occupied when we are busy. We are booked up; we are using up time when we are occupied with something. We might be preoccupied by something, which means we don’t notice something else. (p. 44)

**OR**

Objects are occupied, but they also occupy those preoccupied by them:

We say that we occupy space; that we have an occupation. We are occupied with objects, which present themselves as tools to extend “the reach” of our actions. We are occupied when we are busy. We are booked up; we are using up time when we are occupied with something. We might be preoccupied by something, which means we don’t notice something else. (Ahmed, 2006, p. 44)

Whenever another author’s text is used to support one’s own interpretation or is directly quoted, a citation must be provided. The source that was actually used should be cited. The general principle is that students should use primary, that is, original sources. If a secondary source, also known as a second-hand source, is used, its secondary nature must be clearly indicated in the text. The following examples illustrate how to reference secondary material used.

1. Elon Musk (Stern, 2011, p. 22) discusses his intergalactic fantasies and Hollywood fame.
2. Elon Musk talks to Stern (2011, p. 22) about the origins of his intergalactic fantasies and Hollywood fame.

The writing guidelines of the University of Vaasa apply the style guidelines of the American Psychological Association (7th edition). However, it is important to note that the university’s guidelines are an adaptation of the APA style, meaning they do not follow it precisely. Note also that all theses written at the University of Vaasa, regardless of whether written in Finnish or English, must follow the university’s writing guidelines.

In-text citations are used for referencing, meaning that references are placed within the body of the text. In-text citations are formatted either as **parenthetical citations** or **narrative citations**. In a parenthetical citation, the following information is placed in parentheses: author, comma, space, date, comma, space, p. (for a single page) or pp. (for multiple pages), space, and the specific page(s) used. In a narrative citation, only the date and page(s) are placed in parentheses. In both citation methods, the exact pages referenced should be included in the parentheses. Pages are separated by an en dash (–), which is longer than a regular hyphen. When citing an entire work, page numbers are not necessary. Instead of a page number, the citation may include a chapter number or title, slide number, video timestamp, or other similar details.

**Parenthetical citation**

Text text text text (Saleem & Larimo, 2016, p. 248).

**Narrative citation**

Saleem and Larimo (2016, p. 248) state that [– –].

According to Koskela (2003, p. 225), [– –].

In parenthetical citations, the ampersand (&) is used within the parentheses, while the word *and* is used in the body text (see also Section 3.3.2). In narrative citations, various reporting verbs, such as *claim*, *state*, *present*, and *discuss*, can be used.

In some cases, not all publication details are available. For example, if the publication date is not provided on a certain website, the abbreviation n.d. (no date) is used, both in the in-text citation and in the reference list. For more information on such cases, see Section 4 (Table 3).

## The positioning of citations

The citation must clearly indicate which part of the text is based on the source. If the citation refers to **only one sentence**, either the parenthetical or narrative citation method can be used. It is important to consider the scope of the citation, as illustrated in example (9).

1. Here is an example of a paragraph that uses the parenthetical citation method. If the source reference is marked in the way shown in this example paragraph, it means that only the last sentence is quoted, and all other text is in the author’s own voice. In other words, only this sentence is cited (Koskela, 2003, p. 222).

Example (10) illustrates a parenthetical citation for a single sentence, and examples (11) and (12) illustrate narrative citations.

1. The concept of change communication has come under increasing criticism (Ahola & Zafar, 2019, pp. 14–15).
2. Ahola and Zafar (2019, pp. 14–15) assert that the concept of change communication has come under increasing criticism.
3. Ahola and Zafar (2019) assert that the concept of change communication has come under increasing criticism (pp. 14–15).

When a narrative citation applies to only one sentence, the page numbers or corresponding information can be placed either at the beginning or the end of the sentence. The full stop concludes the sentence, and it is placed outside the parentheses in both parenthetical and narrative citations.

When the author uses a narrative citation and wishes to apply the citation to **several** subsequent **sentences**, the linguistic choices (wording, vocabulary, theme) must indicate to the reader when the quoted part of the source ends and when the author’s own thoughts begin. This is illustrated in examples (13) and (14).

1. Saleem and Larimo (2016) examined 127 studies conducted between 1972 and 2002 that focused on the relationship between responsible business practices and a company’s financial performance. Half of the studies supported a positive relationship and some results were neutral, but only a small fraction of the studies found a negative correlation between corporate social responsibility and financial performance. However, the strong position of economic responsibility in the discussion of responsibility is not without its challenges. This consideration will be continued in the following section, which emphasises the importance of a critical perspective.
2. Koskela (2003) states that [– –]. They remind us that [– –]. In addition, they emphasise the importance of [– –]. It can thus be concluded that [– –].

The scope of the citation can be clarified in the text by using expressions indicating transitions or contrasts, such as *on the other hand*, *however*, or *in this thesis*. A change in tense can also signal a shift. If a given source is used in the first sentence of a paragraph, followed by a sentence written in the author’s own voice, and then the source from the first sentence is used again, the citation must be repeated precisely. Similarly, if the same source is used again in the following paragraph, it must be cited once more.

Parenthetical and narrative citations can be alternated within paragraphs, as illustrated in example (15).

1. There are a number of ways to structure a paragraph. **Kunelius** (2010, p. 14) states that it is advisable to mention the name of the source author the first time a source is cited in the paragraph. **He** also notes that it is possible to use pronouns, for example, to avoid repeating the surname. After this, the author can add another cited thought and include the citation (Koiranen, 2015). Finally, they can complete the paragraph with their own thoughts.

In the example above, the first and last sentences, written in black, are in the author’s voice. The sentences that begin with *Kunelius* and *He*, written in blue, represent Kunelius’s voice. The sentence beginning with *After this*, written in purple, represents Koiranen’s voice.

In the following example, the narrative and parenthetical citation methods are also alternated.

1. A paragraph can start with the author’s own idea and voice, or the main point can be formulated as their own statement. According to Robson (2023), it can then continue with another author’s voice. Robson suggests this can be done as shown in the next sentence. Ahola and Zafar (2019, p. 70) also note that it is advisable to begin with one’s own voice, continue with another’s voice using a citation, and then return to one’s own voice. Nonetheless, there are other viable methods (Kenny, 2022, p. 38). Here, the author’s own idea or conclusion(s) can follow. In this way, it is possible to incorporate dialogue in the text.

It is important to note that the page number cannot be given as the only source information in a sentence; each sentence mentioning the page number must also include other source information, such as the author and publication year.

## Additional information on citations

The following subsections provide examples of citations that every thesis writer must consider when drafting their text.

### The author’s name in the middle of a sentence

The author’s name may appear in the middle of a sentence, in which case the citation is placed immediately after the name. This is illustrated in example (17).

1. The text type can also be approached from the perspective of the sociology of knowledge: Günthner and Knoblauch (1995, p. 5) suggest that wherever socially relevant information needs to be “transferred”, conventions are also involved.

Using different citation methods within the same paragraph or text helps prevent monotony of style.

### Publication by multiple authors

If a source has two authors, both authors are included in the citation. When the citation is in parentheses, the ampersand (&) is used between the names. When the names are written in the body text, that is, as part of a sentence, the word *and* is written between the names.

If the source has three or more authors (more than two), only the first author’s surname is given in the text and parentheses, followed by “et al.” This is illustrated in the following examples.

1. Giles et al. (2015) consider the applicability of discourse analysis in the study of digital materials.
2. According to Giles et al. (2015), [- -].
3. In addition, the application of discourse analysis in the study of digital materials has been considered (Giles et al., 2015).

If the first or several of the first authors are the same for different sources, the authors’ names must be listed until a difference is found. As the phrase “et al.” is plural, at least two names must be omitted. If this is not the case, all authors’ names must be written out. The names of the authors should be listed in the order they appear in the source and must not be rearranged alphabetically.

### Multiple sources in a single citation

The information presented in one sentence or paragraph may relate to several sources.[[1]](#footnote-2) In such cases, the sources are placed within the same parentheses in alphabetical order, and the references are separated by semicolons. This is illustrated in example (21).

1. Communication as a field of study has been described by many names, ranging from journalism and mass communication to media studies (see Carah & Louw, 2015; Ampuja et al., 2014).

### More than one publication by the same author

Different publications by the same author are distinguished by their publication years, which are listed in chronological order. Publications by the same author from the same year are differentiated in citations and the reference list by lowercase letters a, b, c, etc., as shown in example (22).

1. The versatility of social media as research material has been discussed by Laaksonen (2016a; 2016b).

Lowercase letters are added according to the order in which the publications are mentioned in the text: the first mentioned is a, the second b, and so on. If two authors with the same surname are cited, the reference is clarified by adding their initials. If the publication year is unknown, the citations for the sources with the same name are marked as n.d.-a, n.d.-b.

### Abbreviations

Abbreviations can be used in citations. The abbreviations should be in the language of the work, meaning that English abbreviations should be used in an English text. The most common abbreviations are shown in Table 2, in both Finnish and English.

**Table 2.** Abbreviations in Finnish and English.

| **Meaning** | **Finnish** | **English** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| compare | vrt. | cf. |
| see | ks. | see |
| for example | esim. | e.g. |
| and others | ja muut | et al. |
| page(s) | s. | p.  pp. |
| chapter | luku | Ch. |
| paragraph | kpl | Par. |
| table | taulukko | Table |
| slide | dia | Slide |
| part | osa | Pt. |

If necessary, the nature of the citation can be clarified with the abbreviation cf. (*compare*), which emphasises that the source referred to addresses the topic from a different perspective than that of the author. The abbreviation e.g., when used together with the verb *see*, indicates that additional information or support for the author’s text can be found in the given sources. This can also be used to suggest that the reader should examine the topic more closely in another source or a different section of the text.

## Citing different types of sources

At present, the bulk of source material is in digital format, even when it consists of literature. Visual and audiovisual source material is also being used more frequently in theses. The following subsections explain how to cite different types of sources.

### Books, e-books, and articles

When citing books, e-books, and articles, the same citation methods explained in Section 3 are used. E-books that are subject to updates should be cited with both the original publication year and the year of the most recent update.

Text text text (Salvatore, 2015/2023, Chapter 6, Economies of Scale, Imperfect Competition, and International Trade).

Salvatore (2015/2023, Chapter 6, Economies of Scale, Imperfect Competition, and International Trade) states [– –].

### Theses and dissertations

Theses and dissertations are cited in the same way as published books.

Text text text (Pak, 2023, p. 43).

In their dissertation, Girgibo (2023) states that [– –].

Doctoral dissertations are considered academic publications. It is advisable to consult one’s own thesis supervisor to determine whether it is acceptable to use lower-level theses, such as Master’s theses, as sources.

### Official sources (statutes, decrees, and statistics)

Up-to-date information on statutes of law is available from the Statute Book of Finland or the Finlex database. Finlex is a Finnish online database providing up-to-date legislative and other judicial information. It can be accessed here: <https://www.finlex.fi/en/>. When using law books, it is important to note that the information may be outdated. The database of translations of Finnish acts and decrees into other languages contains approximately 600 full-text translations of Finnish Acts of Parliament (mostly in English): <https://www.finlex.fi/en/laki/kaannokset/>. Finlex also provides [a Glossary of Legislative Terms](https://www.finlex.fi/data/muut/saadkaan/laki.pdf) and a [Glossary of Court Terms](https://www.finlex.fi/data/muut/saadkaan/tuomio.pdf). Parliamentary documents, such as government proposals, committee reports, and statements, are available only in Finnish and Swedish.

When citing a statute or decree, its full name and number should be provided:

According to the Study Leave Act (1287/2013) Section 13., text text text.

**OR**

Text text text (Study Leave Act (1287/2013, Section 13.).

When citing the same statute again in the same text:

Text text text text (Study Leave Act, Section 16.).

When citing several sections of law:

Text text text text (Study Leave Act, Section 9 a., Section 16.).

Use the abbreviation CD when citing committee deliberations:

Text text text (CD 1988, 11 p. 25).

When citing statistical sources, the citation should include the author (publisher), publication year, and page number, as shown in example 23.

1. Every other Finn follows at least one social networking site online (Statistics Finland, 2013, p. 13).

The author of statistical sources is usually an institution, organisation or association.

### Research materials, standards, and patents

Cite research materials, standards, and patents in the following ways:

(Finnish Standards Association, 2017).

The Finnish Standards Association (2017) standard states [– –].

(Arrasvuori et al., 2019).

In the patent by Arrasvuori et al. (2019), [– –].

### Online material

Online material comprises a wide range of sources, from ministry reports to personal blogs. Extra care should be taken with online sources, and if needed, to ask for guidance from the thesis supervisor. When citing online materials, include the author, publication date, and pages numbers, if available. Instead of page numbers, the citation can include a chapter number or heading, slide number, video timestamp, or other similar clarification. The publication date is only included in the reference list, not in the in-text citation.

### TV and film

The director is usually cited as the author of a film or television production.

### Emails, interviews, and discussions

Personal communication includes emails, unarchived discussion forum messages, personal interviews, phone conversations, and other similar forms of communication.

Text, text, text (J. Doe, personal communication, December 11, 2019).

Personal communication is not included in the reference list. In publications aimed at professionals or a wider audience, web pages with restricted access, such as Moodle or a company intranet, are considered personal communication. However, in all papers and Bachelor’s and Master’s theses written at the University of Vaasa, these can be cited as online sources.

# Compiling the reference list

All sources cited in the work must appear in the reference list, and correspondingly, there must be a citation in the text for every source that is found in the reference list. The citation must match the beginning of the reference list entry. The reference list is placed at the end of the text, but before the appendices, if applicable. The line spacing of the reference list is 1.5, and no blank lines are left between entries. All sources (including, for example, data sources) are entered in alphabetical order in a single reference list.

Sources are listed in alphabetical order according to the author’s surname or pseudonym. The articles *a*, *an*, and *the* are not considered in the alphabetical order, meaning the sources are alphabetised by the first meaningful word. Publications by the same author are arranged chronologically, from the oldest to the newest. For each individual entry, any additional lines after the first line should be indented by 1.25 cm. This section provides examples of how to include different types of sources in the reference list.

The reference list must include the following elements, in the given order and with the details required for the particular type of source in question.

The first element is the **author**. The author is the writer, editor, director, photographer, etc. The reference list is alphabetised according to this element. If there are **20 or fewer** authors, all authors are listed in the reference list, and an ampersand (&) is placed before the last author’s name. If there are **21 or more** authors, the first 19 are listed, followed by a comma, a space, three dots, a space, and the final author.

The second element is the **date**. This means the year of publication. This element specifies at least the year, and for online sources, the publication date should be given even more precisely. If no date can be found, such as for a website, the abbreviation n.d. is used.

The third element is the **title**. This means the title of the book, article, blog post, image, etc. Your entry should reproduce the punctuation and spelling of the original title of the source, including any nonstandard spellings or capitalisation that is used by the journal in its title. If you use a source published in a language other than English (e.g., Finnish), translate the title into English and place the translation in square brackets directly after the original title.

The fourth element is the **origin** of the source. This means the publisher, journal, edited volume, or website. If the *name of the website* is the same as the *author*, it does not need to be repeated. The DOI and hyperlink belong to this element. If a book or an article has a permanent identifier (DOI, URN), it should be used even when referencing a printed book. The permanent identifier is written in the reference list as a hyperlink (e.g. DOI <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-658-15220-8_18> or URN <http://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-476-861-0>). If an online source has a permanent identifier, it is not necessary to add separate information indicating that it is an online source or the date it was retrieved. Instead, it can be referenced in the same way as printed material.

If only a web address is available instead of a permanent identifier, extra care should be taken to reference accurately. In this case, the date the webpage was accessed should also be included, so the reader can check if the website has been updated since then. Additionally, the phrase **Retrieved Month DD, YYYY, from** should be added before the web address.

A full stop follows each element, unless the element itself ends with a full stop, exclamation mark, or question mark. No full stop is added after web addresses. The word processor can be allowed to break links, but they should not be manually broken so that they function correctly in the final document and meet accessibility requirements. Similarly, no full stop is added if the element itself ends with a full stop, for example, Surname, A. A.

In some cases, an element may be missing. Table 3 shows how the reference list entry or in-text citation should be constructed when a particular element is missing. Page numbers are always mentioned in citations when they are available.

**Table 3.** One element missing (APA, 2019).

| **Missing element** | **Solution in the reference list** | **Solution in an in-text citation** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Nothing is missing** | Author. (Date). Title. Origin. | (Author, date)  Author (Date) |
| **Missing author** | Title. (Date). Origin. | (Title, date)  Title (Date) |
| **Missing date** | Author. (n.d.). Title. Origin. | (Author, n.d.)  Author (n.d.) |
| **Missing title** | Author. (Date). [Description]. Origin. | (Author, date)  Author (Date) |
| **Missing author and date** | Title. (n.d.). Origin. | (Title, n.d.)  Title (n.d.) |
| **Missing author and title** | [Description]. (Date). Origin. | (Author, n.d.)  Author (n.d.) |
| **Missing date and title** | Author. (n.d.). [Description]. Origin. | (Author, n.d.)  Author (n.d.) |
| **Missing author, date and title** | [Description]. (n.d.). Origin. | ([Description], n.d.)  [Description] (n.d.) |

If the material is restricted to a specific user group, such as company employees (company intranet) or course participants (Moodle), it is referenced as a regular webpage. However, since it is important for the reader to know about the restricted access, this should be indicated in the reference list entry with the note [restricted availability]. As previously stated, this referencing guideline applies only to coursework and theses written at the University of Vaasa. In the case of professional publications, such sources are treated as personal communication and excluded from the reference list.

## Monographs

A monograph is a study written by a single author or a group of authors on a specific, unified topic. It can be a printed book or an e-book, and is sometimes published in both formats. Printed and e-books are cited in the same way. If a permanent identifier, such as a DOI or URN, is included in the details of the printed book, it should be listed in the references as a hyperlink beginning with https://. If the e-book link does not lead directly to the book or if the name of the database is not useful to the reader, it should not be included in the reference list. The place of publication is not included. The details of the monograph are written in the reference list as follows (in these writing guidelines, reference list examples are separated from the body text with horizontal lines, for the purpose of clarity):

**Surname, A. A. (Publication year). *Title of the book* (Edition)*.* Publisher. https://doi.org/10.xxx**

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Kenny, D. (Ed.) (2022). *Machine translation for everyone: Empowering users in the age of artificial intelligence*. Language Science Press. Retrieved October 5, 2024, from <https://langsci-press.org/catalog/book/342>

Mohamed, S. (Ed.) (2024). *Social media: Opportunities and risks*. IntechOpen. <https://doi.org/10.5772/intechopen.100650>

McRobbie, A. (2016). *Be creative: Making a living in the new culture industries*. Polity. ISBN: 978-0-745-66195-7.

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Surnames with a prefix[[2]](#footnote-3) are usually placed in the reference list in alphabetical order according to the main surname, not the prefix. Prefixes are usually placed after the first name. However, different countries have varying practices for the alphabetical order of such names, so the spelling and citation practice should be checked separately, preferably from the author’s own information.

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Leeuwen, T. van (2008). *Discourse and practice: New tools for critical discourse analysis.* Talentum.

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When referencing two or more works by the same author, published in the same year, list the sources alphabetically and use a lowercase letter (a, b, c) beside the publication year to distinguish between them. This also applies to articles.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Klemola, A. (2019a). Internet search-based investor sentiment and value premium. Finance Research Letters, 33. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.frl.2019.06.022>

Klemola, A. (2019b). Small investors’ internet sentiment and return predictability. Review of Behavioral Finance. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1108/RBF-02-2018-0019>

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**Surname, A. A., & Surname, B. B. (Publication year). Title of the book chapter.In E. E. Editor (Ed.), *Title of the book* (pp. 1–123). Publisher. https://doi.org/10.xxx**

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Saleem, S., & Larimo, J. (2016). Hofstede cultural framework and advertising research: An assessment of the literature. In G. Christodoulides, A. Stathopoulou, & M. Eisend (Eds.), *Advances in advertising research (Vol. VII): Bridging the gap between advertising academia and practice* (pp. 247–263). Gabler Verlag. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-658-15220-8_18>

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**Surname, C. C. (Ed.). (Publication year). *Title of the book.* Publisher. https://doi.org/10.xxx**

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Huttunen, R., Kinnunen, M., Lemström, B., Hirvonen, P., & Kuuva, P. (Eds.). (2024). *Finland’s integrated national energy and climate plan update.* Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment. Retrieved October 4, 2024, from <https://julkaisut.valtioneuvosto.fi/handle/10024/165742>

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## Articles

If an article has a permanent identifier (DOI, URN), it should be used even when referencing a printed article. The title of the article is not italicised, but the name of the journal is italicised.

**Surname, A. A. (Publication year). Title of the article. *Name of the journal*, *Volume*(Issue), 1–123. https://doi.org/10.xxx**

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Kazmi, S. A. Z., Naaranoja, M., & Kytölä, J. (2016). Integrating strategic thinking and transformational leadership for NPD idea support process.*Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, *229*, 387–397. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2016.07>

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

If there is no permanent identifier but only a web address, the web address is not included if the source is available in print.

**Surname, A. A. (Year, Month DD). Title of the article. *Name of the newspaper or magazine, Volume*(Issue), 1–123.**

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Bol, D. (2024, September 12). Double defeat for Swinney on school meals and peak fares. *The Scotsman*, 1, 4–5.

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If only a web address is available instead of a permanent identifier, extra care should be taken to reference accurately. In this case, the date when the webpage was accessed should also be included so that any possible updates made to the site since the time of access can be checked. The reference list entry should include the phrase Retrieved Month DD, YYYY, from.

**Surname, A. A., & Surname, B. B. (Year, Month DD). Title of the article. *Name of the newspaper or magazine*, *Volume*(Issue), 1–123. https://hyperlink.address**

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If referring to an article that has been published online before the journal’s print publication, the journal’s detailed information and page numbers may not yet be available, and the article may be labelled with phrases such as “online first publication”, “Advance online publication”, “In Press, Corrected Proof”, or “Ahead-of-print”. These are standardised to “Advance online publication”, and marked in the reference list as follows:

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Klemola, A. (2019b). Small investors’ internet sentiment and return predictability. *Review of Behavioral Finance*. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1108/RBF-02-2018-0019>

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**Surname, A. A. (Year, Month DD). Title of the newspaper article. *Name of the newspaper*, *Volume*(Issue), 1–123. https://hyperlink.address**

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**Surname, A. A., & Surname, B. B. (Publication year). Title of the book chapter. In E. E. Editor (Ed.), *Title of the book* (pp. 1–123). Publisher. https://doi.org/10.xxx**

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**Surname, A. A. (Year, Month DD). Title of the blog post. *Name of the blog*. https://hyperlink.address**

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Ouellette, J. (2019, November 15). Physicists capture first footage of quantum knots unraveling in superfluid. *Ars Technica*. Retrieved December 10, 2020, from [https://arstechnica.com/science/2019/11/study-you-can-tie-a-quantum-knot-in-a-superfluid-but-it-will-soon-untie-itself](https://arstechnica.com/science/2019/11/study-you-can-tie-a-quantum-knot-in-a-superfluid-but-it-will-soon-untie-itself/)/

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## Theses and dissertations

If a thesis does not have a permanent identifier, such as a URN or DOI, the phrase Retrieved Month, DD, YYYY, from is added before the hyperlink. Doctoral dissertations are considered academic publications. It is advisable to consult the thesis supervisor to determine whether it is acceptable to use lower-level theses, such as Master’s theses, as sources in the thesis.

**Surname, A. A. (Publication year). *Title of the thesis* [Level of the thesis, Name of the university]. Name of the database. https://urn.fi/URN:xxx**

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Ittonen, K. (2009). *Audit reports and stock markets* [Doctoral dissertation, University of Vaasa]. Osuva. <https://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-476-256-4>

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## Official sources

The author can also be an organisation, institution, or association. If a source does not have a specific author, it is listed in the references either by the publisher or the title of the source. The format of entries in the reference list must correspond to how the source in given in in-text citations.

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*The Finnish national network in cross-border civil and commercial matters: Guide for the member.* (2020). Ministry of Justice. <http://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-259-916-2>

Ministry of Justice. (2020). *The Finnish national network in cross-border civil and commercial matters: Guide for the member.* <http://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-259-916-2>

*Merriam-Webster Dictionary*. (2024). Opponent. Retrieved October 4, 2024, from <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/opponent>

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### Statistics

If the publisher’s name is given in the in-text citation, the following details should be included in the reference list entry:

**Organisation/Institution. (Publication year). *Title of the statistic.* Publisher. https://urn.fi/URN:xxx**

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### Statutes and decrees

If legal statutes or decrees are included in the reference list, the entry should contain the full title, the number, a slash, the year of issue, the name of the publisher, and where it was accessed.

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*Act on Preventing Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing 444/2017*. Finlex. Retrieved October 5, 2024, from <https://www.finlex.fi/en/laki/kaannokset/2017/en20170444>

*Study Leave Act 1287/2013*. Finlex. Retrieved December 11, 2020, from  <https://finlex.fi/en/laki/kaannokset/1979/en19790273>

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Normally, legal statutes are not included in the reference list. It is advisable to discuss field-specific practices with the thesis supervisor. The reference list entries for other official sources should match the in-text citation exactly.

## Research materials, standards, and patents

**Surname, A. A., & Surname, B. B. (Publication year). *Title of the material* (version) [Data set]. Publisher.** [**https://urn.fi/URN:xxx**](https://urn.fi/URN:xxx)

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**Surname, A.A., and/or Organisation/Community. (Publication year). *Title of the material* (Version) [Data set]. Publisher. https://urn.fi/URN:xxx**

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**Organisation/Community. (Publication year). *Title of the standard* (Version).**

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## Online sources

Online sources should be critically evaluated as regards reliability of content. Also, web addresses should not be manually hyphenated; this should be handled by the word processing software to ensure the hyperlink remains accessible in the final work. Note that for online sources, the title is italicised, but the name of the website is not. The reference list entries for online sources are formatted as follows:

**Surname, A. A., & Surname, B. B. (Year, Month DD). *Title of the article.* Name of the website.** [**https://hyperlink.address**](https://hyperlink.address)

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**Surname, A. A., & Surname, B. B. (Year, Month DD). *Title of the text.* Name of the website.** [**https://hyperlink.address**](https://hyperlink.address)

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**Organisation/Institution. (Publication year). *Title of the text.* Name of the website.** [**https://hyperlink.address**](https://hyperlink.address)

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**@screenname. (Year, Month DD). *Title of the text* [Description of the media].Name of the website.** [**https://hyperlink.address**](https://hyperlink.address)

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Tritonia [@TritoniaLib]. (2020, January 22). *#univaasa Access to Oxford University Press Journals now available! 368 journals in social sciences, law, science & mathematics, and more.* [Tweet]. Twitter. Retrieved January 27, 2021, from <https://twitter.com/TritoniaLib/status/1352581833884651521?s=20>

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**Name of the channel. (Year, Month DD). *The first 20 words of the post* [Description of the media].Name of the website.** [**https://hyperlink.address**](https://hyperlink.address)

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## TV and film

In a thesis, sources such as films, songs, television and radio programmes, as well as images and videos published online, may be used. If multiple films or television programmes are the **subject of analysis**, a list of these materials should be included as an appendix to the thesis. The same applies to videos published on video-sharing platforms such as YouTube, if they are used as research material.

The author of such sources is typically the director, but it can also be the producer, host, or the person who posted the material online. If a source accessed via a streaming service is available only for a limited time, no hyperlink is included in the reference list.

**Director, D. D. (Publication year). *Title of the film* [Film]*.* Production company.**

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Forman, M. (Director). (1975). *One flew over the cuckoo's nest* [Film]. United Artists.

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**Director D. D. (Year, Month DD). Title of the episode (Season number, Episode number) [TV series episode]*.* In P. Producer (Executive Producer), *Title of the series*.** [**https://hyperlink.address**](https://hyperlink.address)

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Barnard, C. (Director) (2024, November 3). Tuulinen päivä [Windy day] (Season 2, Episode 1) [TV series episode]. In C. Barnard, J. Graham, J. Howell, J. McClellan, T. Ross, & H. Spencer (Executive Producers), *Sherwood*. <https://areena.yle.fi/1-62140160>

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**Director D. D. (Year, Month DD). Title of the episode (Season number, Episode number) [TV series episode]*.* In P. Producer (Executive Producer), *Title of the series*. Production company.**

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Chase, D. (Director) (2007, June 10). Made in America (Season 6, Episode 21) [TV series episode]. In D. Chase, B. Grey, I. S. Landress, M. Weiner, & T. Winter (Executive Producers), *The Sopranos*. HBO; Brillstein Entertainment Partners.

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**Poster, P. P. (Year, Month DD). *Title of the video* [Video]. Title of the web page.** [**https://hyperlink.address**](https://hyperlink.address)

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## Artificial intelligence

Artificial intelligence (AI) is not considered a scientific source and, therefore, should not be used as a reference in scientific research. If AI has been utilised as part of the research or writing process, it is important to discuss with the supervisor how AI was used and how it should be reported.

AI can be used, for example, to create or modify images, figures, tables, or code. If an image, figure, table, or code has been created or modified using AI, the AI tool should be included in the reference list.

The creator, company, or publisher of the model is listed as the author.

**Creator/company/publisher of the model. (Publication year). Name of AI (Release date of the version) [Description].** [**https://hyperlink.address**](https://hyperlink.address)

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## Emails, interviews, and discussions

Personal communication includes emails, unarchived discussion forum messages, personal interviews, phone conversations, and other similar forms of communication. Personal communication is not included in the reference list.

In professional publications and those intended for a wider audience, websites with restricted access, such as Moodle or a company intranet, are considered personal communication. However, in all papers and Bachelor’s and Master’s theses written at the University of Vaasa, these should be cited as online sources.

# Conclusions

The purpose of these guidelines has been to present the writing instructions of the University of Vaasa, which are used for course papers and theses. Further information is provided by the thesis supervisors.

References

Adams, A. (2019, October 8). *Book and book chapter references: No location required*. APA Style Blog. Retrieved December 17, 2019, from <https://apastyle.apa.org/blog/publisher-locations-in-book-references>

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Appendices

**Appendix 1. Appendix title**

**Appendix 2. Appendix title**

1. Note! As not all the authors mentioned in the citation may agree with everything written in the paragraph, it may be necessary to separate multiple sources mentioned in a single citation into individual citations. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. Noble prefixes (von, de, af, etc.) are capitalised in the usual way at the beginning of a sentence. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)