

VIA University
College

Formal Requirements for Exam Papers

The AP Degree Programme in Design, Technology and Business
The professional BA Programme in Design and Business
Appendix 2

VIA Design
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1. Front page

The front page gives the reader a first impression of the exam paper. The front page should provide information necessary to get an idea of the topic and content and should include practical information like:

- Name of educational institution
- Course programme
- Title and subtitle
- Name(s) of student(s) writing the paper
- Name of guidance teacher
- Hand-in date
- Type of paper (e.g. 3rd semester work placement paper)
- Number of typing units
- Class name (speciality programme studied)
- Group number

The front page may also include illustrations. The purpose of illustrations is either to attract attention or to picture the topic and content of the paper. It is important that illustrations are not disturbing. There should be no header and footer on the front page.

2. Standard page and page numbers

- A standard page is approx. 2400 typing units including space.
- A paper must include page numbers from table of content to conclusion inclusive.
- Front page, table of contents, abstract, bibliography, and appendices are not included in the total number of typing units
- A paper exceeding the maximum length requirement stipulated will be rejected for assessment.

3. Abstract

The purpose of an abstract is to give a brief presentation of your written work. In addition, the abstract should be a form of declaration of contents for your paper. A good abstract provides an overview of your paper describing theory applied, key concepts, and empirical methods as well as the insights and perspectives of your work. An abstract aims to provide a brief introduction and presentation of your work in order for the reader to form an impression of the relevance of your work.

An abstract answers five key questions:

- What is the main topic of your paper? In other words, what is the main question discussed in the paper?
- What is the research question?

- How did you answer the research question? Which theory/theories and perhaps empirical methods did you apply?
- What are your main conclusions?
- What is the implication of your conclusions and how are they relevant?
- The abstract is not part of the total number of typing units and should, therefore, not have a page number. The abstract is placed before the table of contents.

4. Table of contents

An exam paper should include a table of contents to inform the reader of the scope and structure of the paper. If the paper is written by a group of students and if so agreed with the guidance teacher, the table of contents could indicate who is responsible for which section in the paper. The table of contents comes right after the front page and should use the decimal classification system to show the different levels of the paper.

In the decimal classification system, whole numbers are used for chapters and whole numbers followed by decimals are used for sections and sub-sections.

Text and wording should agree with the table of contents and exam paper headlines.

It is important to ensure that the page numbers used in the table of contents are correct. Please note that word processing programmes have a function that automatically generates tables of content.

Be aware that the table of contents should not be included in the table of contents!

5. Structure of the paper

A paper should be structured in four main parts:

- An introductory part
- A theory and methodology part
- A part for discussion, analysis, and argumentation
- A concluding part

To get a meaningful structure, all in the paper should serve the same purpose. That which is stated centrally in the research question is also important in the plan regarding space and chapters. Each part is important in relation to the main purpose, and the individual parts correlate to make it clear to the reader why they are included in the paper.

6. The introductory part

6.1 Introduction

The introduction should set the academic framework of the paper. It should introduce the reader to the topic and problem scenario of the paper. The introduction should also provide the background information necessary for the reader to understand the paper as well as outline the premises upon which the paper has been prepared. Ultimately, the introduction should be an appetizer making the reader want to read the full paper.

The introduction should give information about topic, delimitation, and purpose/problem scenario.

6.1.2 Topic

The topic section is the entry to the paper, and the first part of the paper that the reader reads. Here it is essential to catch the reader's attention and make him interested in reading the paper. Therefore, it is important to clearly describe the topic and give examples illustrating its problem area. The writer should provide sound arguments for why this is an important topic to discuss.

6.1.3 Purpose/problem scenario

Here the paper's perspective changes from general to specific, and the problem /challenge/phenomenon discussed in the paper should be specified in detail. If the introduction uses examples, at least one example should be used for illustration here as well. The introduction is decisive for understanding the research question/the main question. Coherence is, therefore, important, and the problem scenario should be the natural transition to the next section – the research question/the main question.

6.2 Research question

The research question is the main problem/challenge discussed in the paper. The main question should be formulated so that it cannot be answered with a yes or no answer. Sub-questions are optional. The purpose of sub-questions is to divide the main question into smaller parts, making it more manageable and easier to work with. Please note, however, that you must apply a specific system or method when preparing your sub-questions. They could, for example, be chronological and reflect progression from descriptive and analytical to concluding.

Your research question is your topic/problem scenario translated into an actual assignment:

- Raise a main question which is central to your topic
- Raise perhaps sub-questions
- Build up the questions about something you wonder at
- Avoid questions you can answer with a yes or no answer
- Use your question as a basis for the paper

The text must include:

- What you want to set out in your paper
- What you want to analyse or interpret
- What you want to assess
- Perhaps you want to put another context into perspective

This is how you use your research questions:

- Your paper must at all times relate to your research questions
- Your sources must relate to your research questions
- In your conclusion, you must answer the research questions
- You may correct your research questions in line with your work with the paper

6.3 Definition of concepts

It may be necessary to provide a definition of certain words and expressions used in your paper. If words or expressions are ambiguous, the definition of concepts section should provide a clear definition of their meaning. Please be aware that it may also be necessary to specify the premise upon which the paper has been prepared. For example: Cultural understanding.

7. Theory and methodology part

7.1 Theory of science

According to the Ministerial Order on Academy Profession Programmes and Professional Bachelor Programmes in Design and Business, design and business programmes should qualify the bachelor to work with tasks within design and business using a theoretical and methodical approach.

7.2 Theory

Theories are explanatory models. A theory is a coherent set of assumptions explaining a topic or part of reality. Some theories are the result of empirical studies (inductive) while others are mainly based on logic conclusions (deductive). Theories are not guesswork or opinions. Theories may be split into academic and scientific theories.

Your methodology section should specify which theories you wish to apply in your paper and argue for your theory choice. It should also include an outline of the connection between the theories applied. For example: Do the theories complement each other? Are they contrasts? Why are they used in the paper? What is their function?

Typically, students are not expected to be able to reflect on theories until at BA level.

7.3 Methodology

The method section gives a presentation of the approach used for collecting and working with the material in the paper. This is also referred to as research design. To validate the knowledge produced/obtained, you are recommended to analyse the topic of your paper using a variety of methods. So the purpose of methodology is to consider the process that your paper will go through and which models will be used.

The methodology section gives a brief, but precise presentation of the methods applied for answering the research question. The methodology section may also include argumentation for delimiting the topic (if the paper does not include a separate delimitation section).

7.3.1 Delimitation

In the delimitation section, you should explain the limits of your topic and your discussion. So the purpose of delimitation is to tell your readers which topics you will cover in your paper and to explain why you may not cover certain topics. You should equally provide the academic reasons for your delimitation based on the scope and length requirement of your paper.

7.4 Empirical methods

Empirical research refers to the data you collect in an inquiry for an analysis. Your analysis must be based on this data, which may include own observations, data, texts, sources, topics/products (interviews, observations, questionnaires and text), etc.

In this section, you should provide a description of the empirical methods applied and your argumentation for choosing these methods. In this connection, it would be natural to distinguish between qualitative and quantitative methods. It is important that you are able to explain the relevance of the data collected, and it is therefore essential to carefully consider which knowledge your analysis should produce.

7.5 Source criticism

In academic papers, you assess your sources, i.e. the theoretical and empirical data, from a critical perspective. Source criticism is a scientific method used for weighing the reliability of sources used in relation to topic/event. Sources could and should be used in your analysis and when arguing for your main points. To determine the validity of a source, you should ask yourself what its purpose is and how reliable it is.

7.5.1 Origin

- In regards to your sources, you should ask the following questions:
- Who wrote the book, article, etc.?
- Is the source primary or secondary?
- Where does the source originate? (geographical, social, and psychological environment?)
- What specific context was it written in?
- What general context was it written in?
- What is the reason for writing this source?
- What is the purpose of the source?

7.5.2 Other sources, e.g. products

- How precisely is it possible to date these sources?
- Where is the source produced?
- How is it produced?
- What information does the source give about a specific activity of relevance to the topic discussed?
- Which other similar sources are available?

You may also apply source analysis. Source criticism actually aims at the analysis of the source and its background more than the source itself. The key methodical principles aim at defining the concept of source and at identifying and interpreting sources and making conclusions on this background.

8. Discussion, analysis, and argumentation part

8.1 Discussion

In a discussion, you introduce different theories, compare them, weigh them or test them. A discussion is based on a problem scenario (a question). A discussion typically starts with a presentation of points of views in a text. This is followed by argumentation for or against these points of view. Argumentation is based on other text material, academic knowledge as well as concepts and theory.

8.2 Analysis

Analysis is a Greek word meaning the detailed study of something in order to understand more about it. An analysis attempts to divide a question or a problem into parts and to prove a correlation (and a causal relation) between these parts. Based on your analysis of the individual parts, you may reach an overall understanding of their correlation (synthesis).

8.3 Argumentation

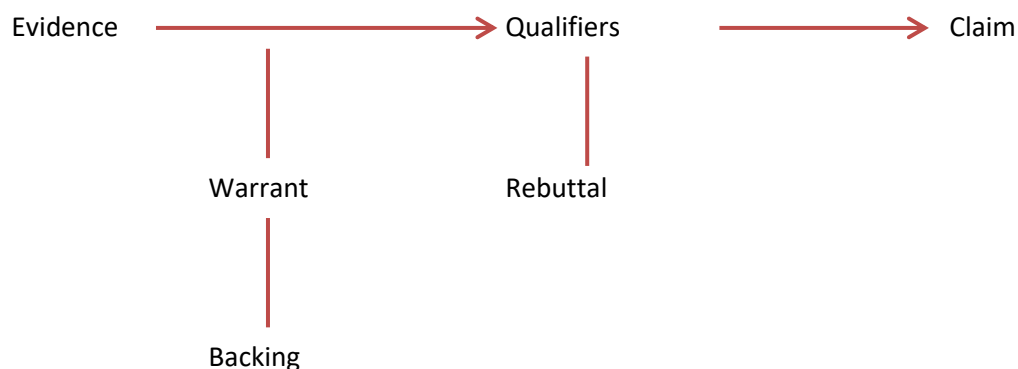
To argue means to give reasons why you think something is right or wrong. When you argue, you do two things as a minimum: You take a stand in a matter of dispute, and you state your reason for doing so.

8.4 Reasoning

To argue for a claim means to present arguments in favour of the claim. When you argue, you may refer to recognised sources with a similar point of view (encyclopedia, scientific literature, etc). You may also present a logical conclusion, deduce a result based on data collected or point to similar situations in different contexts (argument of analogy).

8.4.1 The Toulmin Method

Some students may find it beneficial to use Toulmin's model of argumentation when analysing and arguing for a claim. The claim could for example be that you must use the colour "red". In Toulmin's model of argumentation, there must be backing and warrant to support the claim put forward.



9. The concluding part

9.1 Conclusion

The main conclusion is the most essential part of a paper. Please note that the main conclusion is different from any part-conclusions made in writing your paper. A conclusion is not the same as a part-conclusion, however, it summarises the entire paper including the part-conclusions.

The conclusion should reflect the introduction. The introduction provided an outline of the topics of your paper and your methodology for presenting and discussing them. The conclusion summarises your research question. In principle, it should be possible to understand your paper

by reading the introduction and the conclusion, so it should be absolutely clear what the research question is and what the answer is.

In the main conclusion, you combine all your part-conclusions and write an overall conclusion on what you have done and what you have learned from your work. You CANNOT include new information in the conclusion, and please also note that the purpose of a conclusion is not to continue the discussions in your paper.

Your task is to answer the research question, and the assessment of your performance will be based on how you answer this question.

9.2 Perspectives / Reflection

A good idea may be to include a future perspective on your conclusion and to consider it in the context of future research and application.

10. References/ Sources

When using material not your own, or when using your own previously assessed material, you should make a reference in your text. You should mainly use primary sources. Your text should clearly indicate if you quote or interpret someone else's work. If your use of someone else's work is close to the original text, or if you only use a few pages from a source material, you should refer to the page numbers used.

The method to be applied for source referencing is the Harvard Method, which is explained below.

10.1 Referencing

A reference includes the author's surname as well as the year of publication of the source and perhaps page number(s).

For example:

- (Porter 2004, p. 95)

The author name could also be used in the text so that only year and page numbers are in parenthesis.

For example:

- According to Van Weele, there are six steps in a purchasing process (2014, p. 28).

If there are two authors with the same surname, the first name initials should be included.

For example:

- (Dreyfus, H & Dreyfus, S 1986)

If there are two or three authors, they should all be included in the source reference.

For example:

- (Munksgaard & Johansen 2013, p. 21) or
- Kristiansen & Krogstrup (2002, p. 7) define participatory observation as or

- (Lambert D.M., Copper M.C. & Pagh J.D., 1998)

If there are four or more authors, you should write the name of the first author followed by et al. (et alia) meaning "and others".

For example:

- (Ford et al. 2003)

If the same author has published several publications the same year, you should include an a, b, c, etc. after the year of publication. Titles are listed in alphabetical order starting with a, etc. This is often the case with articles:

For example:

- (Foss & Klein 2008a)

Foss Nicolai & Klein Peter G.: Entrepreneurship: From Opportunity Discovery to Judgment, 2008

- (Foss & Klein 2008 b)

Foss Nicolai & Klein Peter G.: The Need for an Entrepreneurial Theory of the Firm, 2008

- (Foss & Klein 2008c)

If there is a reference to two publications written by the same author, the publications should be written in chronological order.

For example:

- (Hamel 1996, 1998)

The author of a source is not always a named person. Authors may also be authorities or organisations.

For example:

- (Ministry for Economic Affairs and the Interior and the Ministry of Health 2005) or
- (WHO 2003, p. 87) or
- (Act No. 451 of 22 May 2006)

If the following text refers to the same source, (ibid.) may be used to indicate that the author of this source is identical to the author listed right above.

When reference is made to a secondary source, both sources should be stated in the reference, but only the source read should be included in the bibliography. In the reference, the original source should be listed first, followed by the source read.

For example:

- (Kraljic, 1983 in Harvard Business Review, Arjan J. van Weele, 2014)

10.2 Online publications (Internet sources)

Internet sources should be referenced in the same way as other sources. In-text quotations should for example be referenced in this way: According to Krotoski (2014) or “as Krotoski (2014) identified...”

If no date is available on the online text/publication, the correct way of referencing is to write n.d. (no date available).

11. Quotations

Quotations are also referred to using the Harvard Method:

Quotations should use exactly the same words as are used in the original source, and the number and scope of quotations should be limited. In-text quotations should be set off with quotation marks at the beginning and end of the quotation. Reference and page number(s) should be listed for all quotations. Brief quotations should be included in the text whereas long quotations should be indented and written with single spacing. Indented quotations do not need quotation marks. A long quotation is more than three lines. You are required to comment on your quotations in your text.

There are several ways to use quotations.

For example:

- When analysing a text, a quotation may serve as an example/illustration
- For discussing a theory
- For presenting a different perspective than your own
- To support your argumentation
- To illustrate the author’s way of expressing himself

12. Plagiarism

Plagiarism is very serious, and all papers at VIA Design are screened.

You are too close to the original source when you:

- Use too many quotations, i.e. not enough use of your own material
- Do not indicate clearly when you refer to a source and when it is your own words
- Are “infected” with the language used by your sources

13. Bibliography

In the bibliography, authors should be listed alphabetically based on their surname (online sources may be listed based on the name of the website).

13.1 Books

Procedure for referencing books:

- Author(s) surname(s) and first name(s) in initials. Use capital letters for initials and separate them with full stops and end them with commas, like: Andersen H.C.,
- Date of printing (year of publication of edition used)
- Title in italics
- Edition (should be left out if this is the first edition of the book)
- Place of publication (name of city)
- Publishing house, ISBN-number
- Page numbers (if you only use certain chapters from a book)

13.1.2 One author

In case of only one author:

- Kotler, P., 2013. Principles of Marketing. Second Edition Pearson Education Limited, ISBN10: 0273742973, 720 p.

13.1.3 Several authors

In case of several authors:

If three authors write a book, you should list the names of all three authors. If there are three authors, the two first names should be separated by a comma and there should be a & between the last two author names. If there are more than four authors, only the name of the first author should be listed. In replacement of the other three author names, you write "et al." ("and others").

- Arjan J. S & Haug, A., 2010. Business Process Optimization. Århus; Academica
- S S et al 2010. Business Economics 5) Åbenrå: ØKNOM

13.2 Articles

Procedure for referencing articles:

- Author's full name
- Year of publication
- Title
- The full name of the journal in italics
- Volume
- Issue
- Page numbers (start and end)

For example:

- Young Enterprise Denmark, 2009/2010. Entrepreneurship from ABC to ph.d. Odense: Young Enterprise Denmark

13.3 Publications from organisations

Publications from organisations follow the same rules as books. If no person is listed as the author, the organisation, authority, association etc. should be listed as the author.

- Name of organisation
- Year of publication
- Title in italics

- Place of publication (name of city)
- Publishing house.

For example:

- Fonden for Entreprenørskab, 2009/2010. Entreprenørskab fra ABC til ph.d. Odense: Fonden for Entreprenørskab – Young Enterprise

13.4 Online publications

Books, papers, dissertations, etc. are increasingly published online and should be treated slightly different than similar printed materials. After the title, you should write [online]. On the next line, you write: Available on: followed by the internet address (URL). Finally, you should state the date when you accessed the material online. The date should be written in [].

- Name of writer or organisation
- Year of publication
- Title in italics
- Type of material
- Place of publication: (name of city)
- Publishing house (if available)
- Internet address (on a new line)
- Date of access [xx-xx-xxxx]

For example:

- Bain & Company, 2014. Leading a “Digital” transformation. Article. Boston. DK Company

<http://www.bain.com/publications/articles/leading-a-digital-transformation.aspx> [accessed 24 June 2014]

Material that is not generally or easily accessible should be included as an appendix.

14. Tables, figures, illustrations, etc.

Illustrations such as figures and tables are used for clarification and specification purposes and cannot replace text. Figures and tables may be included in appendices unless they are essential to understand the text. Regardless of whether illustrations are part of the text or included as appendices, you must comment on them in your text. Illustrations are numbered consecutively: figure 1, table 1, etc. and should be given headlines matching their content. References should be listed below the illustration. When using own models, figures and tables, you should use the reference: “Of own make”.

15. Appendices and list of appendices

Material which is not directly required to understand the text but which supports or illustrates the text may be included as an appendix. This may be figures, tables, questionnaires, statistical overviews, letters for informants or summaries of opinions. Appendices should have a headline, a number and a reference, if possible. If an appendix is longer than one page, both the appendix number and the page number should be stated. There must be an in-text reference to all

appendices included. The list of appendices containing appendix numbers and headlines in chronological order should be included after the bibliography and before appendices. Interviews recorded on digital media should be included as electronic appendices on a memory stick or similar. Oral interviews should not be transcribed, but you may choose to include them on the memory stick or prepare a written summary.

Material that is not generally or easily accessible should be included as an appendix.

16. Tips & Tricks

16.1 The writing process

It is old-fashioned to think that the best way to start a writing process is to read all your material first. This may be the way you wrote essays in high school, but it is not the way to write academic papers.

A good method is to work with academic paper writing as a process and to be aware of the various stages that the preparation of a paper goes through.

When using a processual approach, you consider working on and writing your paper a development – a process. In this process, you should be aware of when you do what.

You can divide the writing process into five stages:

1. The idea stage where you develop your thoughts and are creative. At this stage, it may be beneficial to use tools like mindmapping and speed writing. It is also at this stage that you phrase your research question so that it can serve as a guidepost for the remainder of the process.
2. The organisation stage is where you organise your ideas. At this stage, you also create the paper structure so that it allows you to communicate what has surprised you and your problem scenario.
3. The analytical/research stage where you collect data.
4. The writing stage is where you sit down and write. When writing, it may be a good idea to have your mindmap or the plan for the section you are currently writing lying next to your keyboard so that you can follow your plan when writing.
5. The editing stage where both content and language is adjusted so that the paper appears as a coherent text.
6. The five stages should not necessarily be considered an advancing process leading up to the hand-in day. You can easily work with several stages in the same day.

16.1.2 10 Writing process activities

Everybody has different working methods, and there is no one “right” method. The below ideas should therefore be considered a suggestion for how to work on a paper and a writing process.

Start by writing. Try to word your thoughts and ideas. Remember that you can always go back and adapt, change and add. It is about getting started – the sooner the better.

1. When you have brainstormed, start specifying your thoughts and ideas about the topic (use questions starting with: What, why and how).
 - What – do I find interesting? What aspect/problem would I (especially) like to clarify, research and analyse?

- Why – do I find this topic interesting? Is there a societal, ethical or techno-logical problem?
 - How –would I like to research the problem? What type of research and analysis method and which theories would I like to use?
2. Research question – When you have worked with the “What, why and how” questions, try to formulate your research question. Try to present a problem using questions and briefly describe to yourself why and how you would like to analyse the problem. Then prepare your research question. You can adjust your research question as you work. However, it is essential that your research question is realistic considering the number of pages required and the time allocated for writing your paper. Use your first research question as the guidepost for your work, but be aware that you can adjust and fine-tune your research question as you write your paper. The purpose of the research question is to help keep your focus and direction and to delimit your paper so that it is possible for you to prepare a clear argumentation.
 3. Plan –You should subsequently design a plan that you can use as your guidepost when writing your paper. It may be beneficial to find out where to place which parts and which theories, methods and procedures you plan to use. In general, a paper should include: Introduction > Research question > Method and delimitation >Main part (your analysis): thesis-anti-thesis: synthesis > conclusion + appendices, notes, bibliography, etc.
 4. It may be a good idea to start in middle of your paper – You could for example start by making your research and analysis. It is not always a good idea to start at the beginning – far from. By starting at the core with the research and analysis, it is easier to delimit the introduction as well as the amount of theory you wish to apply, etc.
 5. Balance – Make sure that there is a balance in your paper. The length of the individual parts of your paper should be adapted to each other. The introduction can-not be five pages long, and the conclusion cannot be only a quarter of a page long.
 6. Structure – Be aware that your main part should analyse the questions posed at the beginning of your paper – in the research question section. In your analysis, you should use theory and empirical methods. The result and the answer to the question raised at the beginning of your paper should form the basis of your conclusion.
 7. Reflection – It is a good idea to make notes in the writing process and to assess your own method and approach both in the process and when you have finished your writing. It is also a good idea to assess the value of your result.
 8. Language/metatext – Remember to “guide your reader”. When writing (or when thoroughly revising your work at the end of the process), it is a good idea to explain what you do in words. This serves as a guideline for the reader to better understand your thoughts and points and what comes next. This form of “metatext” also helps you keep your focus and to apply a tight, logical and purposeful structure in your writing process.
 9. Read, read thoroughly and proofread – It may often be necessary to read the paper thoroughly several times and to proofread it as well. It is also a good idea to have someone else read your paper.

10. Layout and hand-in – Remember to keep yourself up-to-date and comply with rules and regulations regarding typing units per page, length, front page information, bibliography, notes, appendices and other documentation.