

Thesis guide

BA in International Relations
for the 2026/2027 academic year

Budapest, September 2026



**Regulations and procedures
for the 2026/2027 academic year
BA in International Relations
Corvinus University of Budapest**

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1 General Information and Process Overview

This document provides essential information on the thesis writing process, including:

- General guidelines for successfully navigating the thesis writing process
- Checklists for Thesis Writing Seminars I and II
- The objective and purpose of the thesis
- A step-by-step outline of the thesis research process
- Substantive requirements for your thesis
- Format-related guidelines to ensure your thesis meets academic standards
- Contact information for key support personnel

Checklist: Thesis timeline

Autumn Semester

Milestone / Task	What you need to do
Register for Thesis Writing Seminar I	Complete registration for Thesis Writing Seminar I
Consultation with supervisor	Contact your supervisor by 21 September 2026 and agree on a thesis progress schedule; engage in substantive consultation (at least 3 times)
Methodology class	Attend the class and fulfil all requirements as specified
Progress report	Prepare and submit the required progress report by 8 December 2026 (Tuesday), 12.00 a.m.

Spring Semester

Milestone / Task	What you need to do
Register for Thesis Writing Seminar II	Complete registration for Thesis Writing Seminar II
Consultation with supervisor	Contact your supervisor by 15 February 2027 and agree on a progress schedule; engage in substantive consultation (at least 3 times)
Thesis submission to supervisor	Submit a near-final version to your supervisor at least 10 working days before the official submission deadline (3 May 2027, Monday)
Plagiarism check	Complete the required plagiarism check via Moodle. Further information will be provided in the Spring Semester.
Final revisions	Incorporate any minor changes requested / identified following the supervisor's review
Final submission in Neptun	Submit the final thesis through Neptun by the official deadline: 14 May 2027, 11:59 a.m. Further information will be provided in the Spring Semester

After submitting the thesis

Reviewer report	Thesis evaluation resulting in a reviewer report
Thesis defence	Defend your thesis as part of the final examination

Important information and further updates

The thesis submission process is governed by Section 79 of the University's Study and Examination Regulations. This guideline summarizes the most important information and requirements, but is **not exhaustive**. In addition to the official regulations, students will receive important updates and reminders, such as deadlines for topic selection,

progress report submission, supervisor approval, and final submission, via Neptun and Microsoft Teams.

Students are therefore **expected to check Neptun and Microsoft Teams regularly** to stay informed about relevant deadlines, requirements, and announcements.

Please note that it is ultimately the **student's responsibility** to comply with all relevant rules and deadlines as outlined in:

- the Study and Examination Regulations,
- the University schedule for the 2026/2027 academic year, and
- this information note.

Disclaimer

This information is accurate as of 11 September 2026.¹

¹ I would like to express my gratitude to the Department of International Relations for their collective effort in the preparation and evaluation of earlier versions of this guide. I would also like to thank the Secretariat for providing the necessary background information, and the students for highlighting the missing points. Any remaining errors are, of course, my own.

2 Objective and Purpose of the Thesis

The thesis serves as the capstone of the bachelor's programme. It is an **independently prepared, research-based written work** of a defined length and structure that addresses a specific topic within the student's field of study.

The overarching aim of the thesis is to **develop students' critical thinking and research skills**, and to demonstrate their ability to acquire specialised knowledge and conduct academic research independently, while working under the guidance of a supervisor. Students are expected to formulate a focused research question, engage critically with relevant scholarship, select and apply appropriate methods, and present their findings in a clear, structured, and coherent manner.

At the bachelor's level, an **original contribution** does not necessarily mean producing entirely new knowledge or making a major discovery. Rather, students are expected to demonstrate their ability to develop their own analysis or interpretation based on relevant scholarly literature, sources, materials, or data. The thesis should therefore go beyond summarising existing research and make a reasoned, academically supported contribution to the discussion of the chosen topic.

Through the thesis, students are expected to demonstrate that they:

- are familiar with the broader academic context and relevant prior research related to their topic;
- can formulate a focused research question and define an appropriate scope for their research;
- can identify, collect, and critically evaluate scholarly sources, materials, and data relevant to their research;
- can select and apply appropriate theoretical and methodological approaches;
- are capable of analysing sources, materials, or data using a methodologically sound and academically appropriate approach;
- can develop their own reasoned analysis or interpretation and relate it to existing scholarship; and
- can present their research and findings clearly and coherently in written form, adhering to the conventions of academic writing and the applicable requirements for the thesis.

3 Thesis Writing Process

Application for and allocation of topics

In the **Spring semester of the second academic year**, students must apply electronically via Neptun for the thesis topics announced by the Department's lecturers.

Detailed information on the application and allocation process will be provided separately **at a later stage**.

This process applies to second-year students. **Third-year students** have already completed the topic selection and allocation process.

Registration for Thesis Writing Seminars I and II in Neptun

In their third academic year, all BA students are required to complete two thesis-writing seminars under the guidance of their thesis supervisor. Students must register for **Thesis Writing Seminar I** in Neptun in the Autumn semester and **Thesis Writing Seminar II** in the Spring semester.

Students must register in Neptun for the relevant Thesis Writing Seminar in both semesters.

- Thesis Writing Seminar I is available for registration only in the Autumn semester.
- Completion of Thesis Writing Seminar I is a prerequisite for enrolling in Thesis Writing Seminar II.
- It is not permitted to take both seminars in the same semester.

Language requirement. The thesis must be submitted within the student's enrolled programme (International Relations) and must be written in **clear, correct academic English**.

Change of thesis topic

If you wish to change your thesis topic after the allocation, the following steps are recommended:

- First, consult your **current supervisor**, who may agree to modify or slightly adjust the existing topic.
- If a topic change is still preferred, contact a **prospective supervisor** to confirm whether they are willing to supervise you and your proposed topic.
- If the new supervisor agrees, **submit a topic change request via Neptun** by the fifth week of the fall semester.

Please note:

- A **processing fee** applies to this request (see *Student Requirement System Part 4. Regulation on Student Fees and Benefits*, [link](#)).²
- The request is reviewed by the **Programme Director**, in consultation with the **Head of Department / Institute**.
- A decision will be made **within 15 days** of submission, and students will be notified via Neptun.
- Topic changes are only approved in **exceptional, well-justified cases**.
- For further information, see Section 78 of the Study and Examinations Regulations.

Methodology lecture (joint session for all students)

A **mandatory** methodology lecture will be held for all students enrolled in Thesis Writing Seminar I. **The date and venue will be announced later.**

Attendance is compulsory. Students who do not attend this lecture cannot register for Thesis Writing Seminar II. Students with certified and approved absences (e.g. illness or study abroad at a higher education institution) may attend online. Attendance (both in-person and online) will be recorded.

Make-up class for certified absentees. A make-up session will be held later for students with certified and approved absences who missed the original lecture. The date will be announced via Neptun at least one week in advance.

Submission of the certificate of absence. Students unable to attend the lecture must submit appropriate documentation to the Department's Secretariat. In case of illness, an original doctor's certificate is required.

² **Request for change of thesis/dissertation topic and/or change of supervisor:** 4 percent of the mandatory lowest remuneration for full-time work (minimum wage), rounded up to hundred forints/request.

Research and consultations (general considerations)

Thesis supervision is a **shared responsibility** that relies on active cooperation and a constructive working relationship between the supervisor and the student.

Supervisors are expected to be **accessible**, to provide **timely and meaningful feedback**, and to ensure the **academic and research integrity** of the thesis process.

Students, in turn, are expected to **proactively seek guidance**, follow the supervisor's advice and instructions, complete assigned tasks on time, and arrive **well-prepared** for each consultation.

Consultation requirements

Students must consult with their supervisors **at least three times per semester**, whether in person, online, or via email, as mutually agreed. This means a minimum of:

- three constructive consultations during Thesis Writing Seminar I, and
- three during Thesis Writing Seminar II.

Additional meetings may be scheduled at the supervisor's request or upon the student's initiative, depending on the needs of the project.

Roles and responsibilities

Thesis supervision is a collaborative process. Supervisors provide guidance and feedback, while students take an active role in developing and completing their research.

Supervisors will:

- provide academic and methodological guidance;
- help refine the research question, scope, and direction;
- provide constructive feedback and monitor progress;
- agree with the student on a meeting and work schedule; and
- respond to email inquiries within five working days.

Students will:

- take ownership of their research and the development of their thesis;
- prepare for meetings and make effective use of feedback;
- follow the agreed research and meeting schedule, and communicate regularly with their supervisor;
- handle sources carefully and responsibly, including accurate citation and referencing;

- be familiar with and follow the University's rules on academic integrity, plagiarism, and the use of AI tools (see Annexes); and
- raise questions or challenges as they arise.

Supervision may take place individually or in small groups, including through a course-based seminar. The research plan, timeline, meeting schedule, and arrangements for sharing work and feedback should be agreed upon at an early stage and may be adjusted as the research develops.

Thesis Writing Seminar I (Autumn Semester): Progress reporting and thesis development

Students are required to submit at least one progress report at the end of the semester. Additional reports may be requested by the supervisor, depending on the agreed research plan and timeline.

Minimum requirement

By the end of Thesis Writing Seminar I, each student must submit a written report demonstrating the progress made toward the thesis.

Submission deadline: 8 December 2026 (Tuesday), 12:00 a.m.

Required content:

- A detailed outline of the thesis structure
- A bibliography and reference list, categorized as follows:
 - **Primary sources:** Original material that provides direct evidence about the subject of research. Depending on the research question, this may include treaties, laws, official documents, diplomatic records, speeches, interviews, survey data, statistical datasets, archival material, or other original documents/data.
 - **Secondary academic sources:** Scholarly works that analyse or interpret primary material or existing research. They are peer-reviewed, authored by a subject-matter expert, identify the sources or evidence on which the analysis is based, and provide sufficient information to allow those sources to be checked. E.g. peer-reviewed journal articles, academic books, and book chapters.
 - **Secondary professional sources:** Analytical or professional publications that do not meet all of the criteria for secondary academic sources, e.g., because they are not peer-reviewed or the review process is not sufficiently independent. Examples include think-tank analyses, policy reports, and publications by IGOs, NGOs, government bodies, and other professional or specialist organisations. These sources can be useful, particularly for policy analysis and current developments, but should be used critically.

- **Secondary other sources:** Secondary material that does not meet the criteria for either academic or professional sources. E.g. newspapers and magazines, general-interest websites, blogs, opinion pieces, non-specialist commentary, and other publicly available material. Such sources may be useful for background, public discourse, or specific factual information, but should generally not serve as the main basis for the academic argument.
- Additional elements as specified by the supervisor (e.g. a draft chapter of at least 10 pages containing the research question and methodology).

Method of submission: submit via email, Teams, or another platform as specified by your supervisor.

Additional reports

At the start of the semester, supervisors will inform students about any additional reporting requirements, including deadlines and format. Students are expected to follow these instructions closely.

Thesis Writing Seminar II (Spring Semester): Independent research

In the spring semester, no formal progress reports are required. The primary focus is on completing and submitting the final thesis. Final submission deadline: upload to Neptun between **3 May 2027 at 10:01 and 14 May 2027 at 11.59** at the latest.

While this provides more flexibility in scheduling your work, it also demands a **high degree of independence and responsibility**. Students are expected to manage their time effectively, maintain regular contact with their supervisors, and submit draft sections in line with the supervisor's expectations. **Plan your timeline with responsibility, allowing for unforeseen circumstances as well.**

Guidelines for successful completion:

- Remain in close communication with your supervisor.
- Follow instructions and submit drafts in a timely manner.
- Allow ample time for supervisors to review and provide feedback, and for you to revise accordingly.
- Be prepared for each supervision session, and respect the limited time supervisors can allocate for consultations.

Supervisor approval requirement

In line with Section 79(1) of the [Study and Examination Regulations](#), students must submit their thesis to the supervisor for approval no later than ten working days before the final deadline, i.e., by **3 May 2027** at the latest.

The supervisor reserves the right to **reject** a thesis if:

- It was developed without adequate consultation, and/or
- It fails to meet the minimum academic standards of a BA thesis.

In such cases, the student must **revise and resubmit** the thesis in the following semester, subject to the supervisor's approval.

Further details on the submission process can be found below, in the section titled "Thesis Submission".

Assessment of Thesis Writing Seminars I and II

At the end of each semester, students receive a grade from their thesis supervisor based on their overall performance and fulfilment of the course requirements. Please note: the grade received for Thesis Writing Seminar II is not the same as the final thesis grade. The seminar grade reflects the student's engagement and progress during the seminar course.

Requirements for Thesis Writing Seminar I (Autumn semester)

To successfully complete Thesis Writing Seminar I, students must:

- Submit the end-of-semester progress report,
- Submit any additional reports required by the supervisor,
- Attend the mandatory methodology lecture, and
- Participate in at least three consultation sessions (in person or online).

Requirements for Thesis Writing Seminar II (Spring semester)

To successfully complete Thesis Writing Seminar II, students must:

- Continue with independent research,
- Submit draft versions of the thesis as required by the supervisor, and
- Attend at least three consultations during the semester (in person or online).

Failure to meet **all** of these conditions will result in **not passing** the seminar course.

Thesis submission

Supervisor approval. Students must submit a near-final version of their thesis to their supervisor for approval **no later than ten working days** before the official submission deadline. For the current academic year, this means that the draft must be sent to the supervisor by **3 May 2027 at the latest**. Individual supervisors may set earlier deadlines.

Supervisors may require that the final draft be submitted along with the Turnitin text similarity report.

Text similarity check (plagiarism detection). All theses submitted to Corvinus University are checked using Turnitin, the University's official text similarity detection software.

- Students are responsible for ensuring that all sources are properly cited and referenced. Improper citation or missing references may constitute a plagiarism violation.
- A Student Guide to Turnitin is available on the Neptun opening page.

Incorporate minor revisions (if applicable). Following the Turnitin similarity check, the supervisor may suggest minor corrections or adjustments to the thesis. Students should incorporate these changes, where applicable, before submitting the final thesis in Neptun.

Online submission via Neptun. The thesis upload interface in Neptun will be open for **two weeks**, from 3 May 2027 (Monday) at 10:01 until the official submission deadline of **14 May 2027 (Friday) at 11:59 a.m.** Students must upload their final thesis within this submission period and by the official deadline.

Important: Neptun may experience high traffic close to the submission deadline. **Do not wait until the last moment to upload your thesis**, as technical difficulties may prevent successful submission and may result in a missed deadline.

Students on mobility programmes. These requirements and deadlines also apply to students participating in **Erasmus or other similar mobility programmes**.

Using a TDK paper as a thesis

A paper submitted to the Students' Scientific Association (TDK) competition may also be used as a thesis and may qualify for an **excellent (5) thesis grade** if all of the following conditions are met:

- The **study programme leader approves the TDK paper topic as a thesis topic** upon the student's request.
- The TDK paper has been **nominated for presentation at the relevant section of the National Students' Scientific Association Conference (OTDK)**.
- The paper receives an **excellent (5) evaluation from both TDK referees**.

Students who meet these conditions may request an **exemption from the thesis defence**. The exemption can be used **only once**, in the semester in which the TDK competition takes place or in one of the following two semesters, as part of the final examination.

This automatic grading applies only to the thesis itself. Participation in TDK/OTDK **does not exempt students from the comprehensive exam**, which remains a required component of the final examination.

How to request the TDK-based exemption

The procedure is **not automatic**. Students must submit a request by the deadline specified in the thesis submission rules. Students are encouraged to submit the request **before submitting their thesis**.

In some cases, however, the paper may be nominated for the national TDK competition only after the thesis has already been submitted. In such cases, the student may submit the request afterwards.

The **study programme leader** decides on the request within **five days** and communicates the decision to the student via a Neptun message.

If the request is approved after the thesis has already been submitted, the previously submitted thesis is considered **withdrawn**. A new thesis submission record will then be created in Neptun by the relevant Institute, and the TDK paper will be transferred to the appropriate thesis submission system.

Important: If the thesis submission deadline falls **before the TDK competition date**, the applicable procedure may differ and will be governed by the instructions issued by the **Vice-Rector for Academic Programmes**.

For full details and conditions, please refer to Section 80, paragraphs 7 to 10 of the Study and Examination Regulations.

Access and disclosure of the thesis

According to Section 76, paragraph 2 of the Study and Examination Regulations, confidentiality of the thesis cannot be requested or granted. Upon submission, students must declare whether their thesis should be:

- *Partially disclosed (restricted access)*. The student may request limited access to the thesis. In this case, the thesis will be stored in the Library's Theses/TDK Papers Database (a repository within the Neptun system) and will be accessible only through the library website.
- *Fully disclosed (open access)*. If no restriction is requested, the thesis will be published openly in the same database and will be accessible worldwide via the library website. This applies to all theses, including those submitted to TDK.

The decision on disclosure must be made at the time of submission.

4 Thesis Content Requirements

Main elements of a BA thesis

The exact structure of a BA thesis may vary depending on the discipline, topic, and methodology. The table below provides a general overview of the main elements of a thesis and their typical purpose. Students should work closely with their supervisor throughout the thesis process and adhere to their guidance and specific requirements.

Element	Purpose / What it should contain
Title	Clearly and concisely indicates the topic and, where appropriate, the main research focus of the thesis.
Abstract	Provides a brief overview of the research question, approach, main findings, and conclusions.
Table of contents	Lists the main sections and subsections of the thesis with corresponding page numbers.
Introduction	Introduces the topic and its relevance, establishes the research context, presents the research question(s), scope, and limitations, and outlines the thesis's structure and approach.
Literature review / Theoretical framework	Reviews and critically engages with relevant scholarship and establishes the theoretical concepts or perspectives that inform the research.
Methodology	Explains and justifies the methods and approaches used to address the research question(s), including the selection of sources, materials, or data where relevant.
Analysis	Presents and analyses the relevant sources, materials, or data. The analysis should be structured around the research question(s) and supported by appropriate evidence and scholarship.
Discussion	Interprets the findings in relation to the research question(s), relevant scholarship, and/or theoretical framework, and considers their broader significance where appropriate.

Element	Purpose / What it should contain
Conclusion	Summarises the main findings, provides a clear answer to the research question(s), and may identify limitations or possibilities for further research.
References / Bibliography	Provides complete and consistently formatted details of all sources cited or used in the thesis, in accordance with the required referencing style.
Appendices (<i>where applicable</i>)	Contains supplementary material that supports the thesis but is too detailed or lengthy to include in the main text, such as questionnaires, interview materials, datasets, or additional tables.

Note: Not every BA thesis will contain all of these elements as separate chapters or sections. For example, the literature review, theoretical framework, analysis, and discussion may be combined or organised differently depending on the discipline and research design. Students should follow their supervisor's instructions regarding the structure and organisation of their thesis.

Finding reliable sources

Credible sources are essential for academic research. Students are encouraged to use:

- Academic databases (e.g. JSTOR, Scopus, Web of Science)
- University or college library resources (books, encyclopaedias, journals)
- Peer-reviewed journals, including open-access ones
- Government and international organisation websites
- Reputable news outlets
- Professional associations and research institutes

Further guidance will be provided in the Methodology Class. See also the University Library's website on academic writing ([link](#)).

Referencing guidelines will be discussed in the next chapter.

Plagiarism and academic integrity

Plagiarism is the use of someone else's words, ideas, or data without proper citation. All theses at Corvinus University are checked for text similarity using Turnitin.

More information on plagiarism is available through:

- The methodology class
- The [Study and Examination Regulations](#), Sections 59 and 82 (see Annex 2)
- The [CUB Anti-plagiarism regulation](#)
- The [CUB Code of Ethics](#) (under review as of September 2026)

Turnitin text similarity checking

Since 2019, all BA, MA, and PhD theses have been screened using Turnitin, integrated into Moodle.

- After uploading, students receive an analysis overview within a short time.
- A Student Guide on using Turnitin is available on the Neptun opening page.
- Examples of plagiarism from student work can also be accessed [here](#).

Note: Turnitin may not detect all forms of plagiarism. For example, translating a text from another language without proper citation still constitutes plagiarism. If a thesis appears unoriginal, the Programme Director will investigate and take appropriate action.

For further guidance, see the [CUB Library References FAQ](#).

Use of Generative AI in Thesis Preparation

Generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools may be used in the preparation of a thesis, but their use must be **responsible, transparent and consistent with academic integrity**. The student remains fully responsible for the content, accuracy, originality and integrity of the thesis. AI tools cannot be considered authors or co-authors.

Further details are available in the [Provisions on the use of generative artificial intelligence systems in education](#). In addition, the European Commission's [ERA Living Guidelines on the responsible use of Generative AI in research](#) provide practical recommendations for its use. Students are encouraged to consult these guidelines when using AI in connection with their thesis. The key principles can be summarised as follows:

1. Use AI as an editorial aid, not as a substitute for your own academic work

Students should first **read and critically engage with their sources and develop their arguments independently**. Any use of AI should remain subject to the student's critical judgment. AI-generated content, citations, references, and summaries may contain errors, reflect biases, or be entirely fabricated.

Students must therefore carefully check and verify any AI-generated material against reliable sources before using it.

AI tools may be used for limited editorial assistance, such as improving the linguistic quality and presentation of the student's own work.

AI may be used, for example, for:

- correcting grammar, spelling, and punctuation;
- making minor syntax or wording adjustments to improve readability;
- identifying unclear or awkward language in text written by the student;
- checking formatting consistency, including citation and reference formatting, where appropriate.

2. AI must not be used to replace the student's own academic work

Generative AI may assist with the presentation of a student's own work, but it must not replace the student's own academic work or independent thinking.

AI must therefore **not** be used to:

- summarise or interpret the literature in place of the student's own reading and analysis;
- develop arguments, hypotheses, research questions, or conclusions;
- generate substantive or original content for the thesis;
- substantially rewrite or reformulate academic ideas in a way that changes or develops their meaning;
- alter the structure, reasoning, or logic of an argument;
- generate or invent sources, references, quotations, data, or other research information.

Where AI is used for research-related purposes beyond basic language or editorial assistance, students must independently assess the output, verify relevant information against reliable sources, and remain fully responsible for the accuracy and integrity of their work.

3. Protect research data, personal information and intellectual property

Students must exercise particular caution when entering material into external AI tools. **Confidential, unpublished, personal, or otherwise protected information should not be uploaded unless the tool and its use provide appropriate safeguards and are permitted under applicable data-protection, confidentiality, and intellectual-property requirements.**

AI use must also comply with applicable legislation, copyright rules, research-integrity standards, and the University's academic regulations.

4. Disclosure of AI use

Students must be transparent about their use of generative AI in preparing their thesis. Where AI has been used **substantively**, the student must include a disclosure of AI use in the thesis, in the methodology section, and in the

declaration, as specified in the [Provisions on the use of generative artificial intelligence systems in education](#).

The disclosure should:

- identify the AI tool(s) used;
- explain **how and for what purpose** the tool(s) were used; and
- indicate the relevant section(s) of the thesis in which AI assistance was used.

Basic proofreading or minor language-editing assistance typically does not constitute substantial AI use, whereas using AI for activities such as conducting literature reviews, identifying research gaps, or developing hypotheses may be considered substantial. Nevertheless, students should follow any additional disclosure requirements specified by their programme or supervisor.

5. Academic responsibility and integrity

Using AI does not reduce the student's responsibility for the thesis. Students are expected to maintain control over the research and writing process and to verify any AI-assisted output before incorporating it into their work.

Unauthorized or undisclosed use of AI-generated content may constitute a breach of academic integrity. If a supervisor or reviewer has concerns about unauthorized or undisclosed AI-generated content, the case may be referred for review under the University's applicable disciplinary procedures. Possible consequences depend on the circumstances and the relevant University regulations.

A comprehensive list of useful generative AI tools and additional resources can be found on the University's [website](#).

If you are unsure whether a particular use of AI is appropriate, **consult your supervisor before using the tool**.

Recommended reading on the thesis writing process

The following guide is primarily intended for Master's theses, but it also provides valuable insights and practical advice for BA students.

- El-Chaarani, H., & El-Abiad, Z. (2021). How to write a master thesis. Journal of Contemporary Research in Business Administration and Economic Sciences ([link](#))

For those who speak Hungarian:

- Körtvélyesi Zsolt, Bevezetés a tudományos szöveg írásába. Szakdolgozatírók kézikönyve. ELTE Eötvös Kiadó, 2018 ([link](#))

See also the University Library website dedicated to thesis writing ([link](#))

5 Thesis Formatting Requirements

Word limit

The main body of a BA-thesis must contain between **60,000 and 80,000 characters**, including spaces and footnotes (approximately 10,000 to 15,000 words). This limit applies only to the core text. **Fringe sections**, such as the abstract or preface, table of contents, index, summary, reference list, and appendices, are excluded from the word count.

Important: Exceeding the maximum word limit **may** lead to a deduction of marks during the thesis assessment.

Referencing: proper use of sources

A thesis is a scholarly work and must adhere to academic standards of referencing. Referencing styles provide structured guidance on what information to include, the order of that information, and how to format it within the text.

Your supervisor will advise you on the preferred referencing style. Regardless of the chosen system, you must maintain consistency and prioritize clarity for the reader, enabling them to easily locate your sources.

Common referencing styles include:

- APA ([link](#))
- Harvard ([link](#))
- OSCOLA (Oxford Standard for the Citation of Legal Authorities) (see [here](#) and [here](#))

Note: Whichever referencing system is used, you must always indicate page or paragraph numbers for all references, whether you are quoting directly or paraphrasing.

Additional regulations

For more detailed formatting and submission requirements, consult Annex 3 of the Study and Exam Regulations.

Format requirements with regard to the research-based thesis

- a) Name of the thesis file:³ NAME_NEPTUNCODE_thesis_study programme_year
example: SAMPLEMARCELL_KLMN34_THESIS__IEB_2024
- b) Cover page:
 - ba) First cover page: may not include anything besides the word “thesis”, the name of the author and the year.
 - bb) Second cover page: includes the name of the University, the name of the author, his/her study programme and subspecialisation, the title of the thesis, as well as the name of the supervisor and the year.
- c) The table of contents shall come after the second cover page of the thesis.
- d) Format requirements with regard to the text:

The thesis shall be submitted in 12-point font with a decorative stroke (“serif”), using 1.5 line spacing in justified paragraphs (with the exception of lists), the structural levels shall be marked consistently, page numbering shall be continuous, with the appropriate indication of the appendices.
- e) Figures and tables:
 - ea) The figures and tables shall be numbered.
 - eb) If necessary, a list of figures shall be added.
- f) References:

Theses constitute scholarly works, therefore the rules on scholarly works shall apply to them. The most important thing in this respect is to use sources of appropriate quality and to apply appropriate citation rules (APA).⁴
- g) List of references:

The list of references is the detailed specification of the bibliographical references and papers, to which reference is made in the thesis, including inline figures and tables, statistical data and estimations, as well as the contents of the annexes.

Additional formatting requirements

- The thesis must be submitted in PDF format, with adequate margins (2.5 cm on all sides).

³ When uploading your thesis, the name of the PDF file you upload to Neptun.

⁴ As stated above, the supervisor may require other referencing style.

- Use Times New Roman, font size 12 pt, with 1.5 line spacing throughout the main text.
- Include page numbers at the bottom of each page.
- Footnotes should appear at the bottom of each page, not at the end of chapters or the thesis.
- Figures and tables must be numbered sequentially. If applicable, include a list of figures and tables after the table of contents.
- The list of references must include all bibliographical sources cited in the thesis, as well as references to inline figures and tables, statistical data, estimations, and any material contained in the annexes.

6 Thesis Review, Defence and Final Examination

Thesis review

The thesis is assessed by a reviewer who is an expert in the relevant academic field. The **reviewer** is appointed based on the supervisor's recommendation. The reviewer may be a member of the teaching staff of Corvinus University or an external expert in the relevant field. The reviewer evaluates the thesis independently and professionally, based on the established assessment criteria.

Assessment criteria for the thesis include:

- Relevance and clarity of the research question
- Appropriateness of the methodology
- Depth and quality of the analysis
- Quality and relevance of the conclusions
- Structure, presentation, and compliance with formal requirements

The reviewer's assessment reflects their independent academic and professional judgement and, in accordance with the applicable University regulations, is not subject to challenge or appeal by the student.

The review and the grade must be made available to the student via Neptun at least **five working days** before the final examination.

Final examination and thesis defence

The final examination consists of two parts:

1. **Discussion of the assigned topic:** the student presents a topic drawn from a predefined list. This part of the final examination is **not covered in this guide**.
2. **Thesis defence:** the student gives an overview of their research, and responds to questions from the Final Examination Board.

The final examination is conducted by a **Final Examination Board**, consisting of a chairperson and at least two additional members.

Brief overview of the thesis

The thesis defence normally begins with a brief outline of the thesis. A clear and focused structure is recommended. The overview should address the main elements of the research, such as:

- What was your research question or objective?
- Why did you choose this topic? (*optional*)
- What methodology did you use?
- What were your main findings?
- What are the main conclusions and, where relevant, recommendations arising from your research?

Focus on the **key points rather than trying to cover every detail** of the thesis. The purpose of the presentation is to demonstrate that you understand your research, can explain your main decisions and findings clearly, and can reflect on the significance and limitations of your work.

Responding to the reviewer's comments

As part of the defence, you will normally be asked to respond to the **reviewer's comments and criticisms**. Take the reviewer's observations seriously and respond to them professionally. You do not, however, have to agree with every comment. If you have a well-founded academic reason for your approach, you may explain and defend your position respectfully. The purpose is not to demonstrate that the thesis is perfect. Rather, the defence gives you an opportunity to show that you **understand and can critically reflect on your research choices, findings and limitations**.

Answering questions

During the defence, the student may also be asked questions by members of the Examination Board. Questions may concern, for example:

- clarification of particular aspects of the thesis;
- further elaboration of the research topic or findings;
- the choice and application of the methodology;
- the interpretation and significance of the results;
- specific errors or inaccuracies, or inconsistencies identified in the thesis;
- ambiguous, unclear or insufficiently explained points;
- limitations of the research and possible alternative approaches;
- the implications of the findings and directions for further research.

Board members may ask questions during or immediately after the presentation. **A question does not necessarily indicate that something is wrong with the thesis.** In many cases, the examiner simply wishes to explore a particular aspect of the research in greater depth.

Listen carefully to each question and take a moment to think before answering. Make sure you understand what is being asked. If a question is unclear or ambiguous, it is perfectly appropriate to ask the examiner to clarify or rephrase it rather than guessing at the intended meaning.

If you do not know the exact answer, do not panic. Explain what you do know and, where possible, describe how you would approach the issue, what evidence or methodology you would use, or what additional information would be needed to provide a definitive answer. At the same time, **do not invent facts, sources or results**. If you genuinely do not know the answer, it is perfectly acceptable to acknowledge this. You can then demonstrate your ability to reason about the issue by explaining your current understanding, the assumptions involved, or how you would investigate the question further.

Above all, remain calm, professional, and open to discussion. The question-and-answer part of the defence is not only an assessment of whether you know the content of your thesis, but also of your ability to think critically, justify your decisions, respond constructively to challenges, and reflect on the strengths and limitations of your research.

Assessment of the final exam

The final grade is calculated as a weighted average of the following three components:

- the grade for the elaboration of the assigned topic: **50%**;
- the grade awarded by the reviewer for the thesis: **25%**; and
- the grade awarded by the Final Examination Board for the thesis defence: **25%**.

Each of these elements contributes to the overall final grade, reflecting both the written thesis and the student's performance during the examination.

7 Further Information

For additional assistance, please refer to the appropriate contact based on the nature of your inquiry:

Administrative questions

(e.g., deadlines, submission procedures, or technical issues with Neptun or Moodle)

Secretariat of the Department of International Relations

✉ titkarsaggti@uni-corvinus.hu

Academic or content-related questions

(e.g., thesis topics, supervisor selection, or other substantive matters)

Adrienne Komanovics, Thesis Seminar Coordinator

✉ adrienne.komanovics@uni-corvinus.hu

Annexes

Annex 1 Study and Examination Regulation rules on plagiarism

59.§ - General rules on the assessment of student performance

[...]

(15) A student shall refrain from breaching the rules of scientific referencing in his/her works covered by copyright. In the case of breaching the rules on scientific referencing and/or plagiarism, an ethical procedure shall be initiated by the relevant lecturer against the student in accordance with the provisions of the Anti-plagiarism Regulation and the Code of Ethics. If the Ethics Committee establishes an ethical abuse, and finds the act, the conduct or the omission to be of such gravity, it may at its discretion institute a disciplinary procedure against the student on the basis of the Student Disciplinary and Compensation Regulations.

82.§ - Plagiarism checks

(1) The text of the thesis must be checked with the university software used for identifying text matches. The thesis may not be graded without first having undergone a text match examination. The rules on the self-review procedure with regard to the thesis are set out in the Anti-plagiarism Regulation.

(2) If plagiarism is suspected, the supervisor, the referee or the study programme leader shall initiate an ethical procedure against the student. If plagiarism is of a very minor nature in the unanimous opinion of the supervisor or the referee and the study programme leader, and if it is acknowledged by the student, the student may request it to be graded as fail and to waive the appointment of a third referee.

(3) If as an outcome of checking the thesis an ethical procedure is launched against the student due to suspected plagiarism, the thesis must be considered temporarily invalid until the ethical procedure is closed, and this must be recorded in Neptun.

(4) The conduct of the ethical procedure shall be the competence of the Ethics Committee. The Ethics Committee shall consider the suspected plagiarism in accordance with the provisions of the Code of Ethics and the Anti-plagiarism Regulation.

- (5) If the Ethics Committee establishes an ethical abuse, it shall declare the thesis as invalid and shall stipulate any other legal consequences (e.g. improving the thesis, rewriting the thesis, appointing a new supervisor).
- (6) If the Ethics Committee declares that an ethical abuse was committed and, in its scope of judgement, considers the act, behaviour, or omission severe enough for taking further action, it will initiate a disciplinary procedure against the student, based on the Student Disciplinary and Compensation Regulations.
- (7) The detailed rules on plagiarism are contained in the Anti-plagiarism Regulation.
- (8) If the Ethics Committee establishes that the student committed plagiarism while writing the thesis and declares in its resolution that an ethical abuse was committed, the student may not be admitted to the final examination with the thesis affected by the ethical abuse. The student may only be admitted to the final examination if he/she corrects or rewrites and finalises the thesis in accordance with the resolution of the Ethics Committee and the supervisor deems it to be submittable pursuant to the SER (the supervisor shall re-issue his/her declaration), and if the evaluation of the thesis is completed successfully. The correction or rewriting can be done at the earliest during the next thesis submission period, i.e. no specific submission deadlines need to be given to the student.
-

Annex 2 Cover page template

The title page and the inside cover should look as illustrated below:

Title page	Inside cover
THESIS Author's name Year	Corvinus University of Budapest Title Subtitle Author's Name International Relations BA Supervisor's name Year

Annex 3 Table of contents template

1	Chapter 1: Introduction (style: heading 1)
1.1	Summary of earlier research (style: heading 2)
1.1.1	Subchapter title, if applicable (style: heading 3)
1.1.2	Subchapter title, if applicable (style: heading 3)
1.2	Research objectives and questions (style: heading 2)
1.3	Research methods and structure of the thesis (style: heading 2)
2	Theoretical or conceptual framework (style: heading 1)
3	Main body chapter (style: heading 1)
4	Main body chapter (style: heading 1)
5	Main body chapter (style: heading 1)
...	
N	Conclusion (style: heading 1)
	List of References (style: heading 1)
	Further information (style: heading 1)

Annex 4 APA reference style

Examples of in-text citations

When the author's name is part of the sentence:

The author's last name is followed by the publication year in parentheses.

Example: *Piaget (1970) compared reaction times ...*

When the author's name is not part of the sentence:

Place the author's last name and the year of publication in parentheses.

Example: *In a recent study of reaction times (Piaget, 1978) ...*

For works with two authors:

Always cite both authors every time the reference occurs. Use the word "and" to connect their names.

Example: *Piaget and Smith (1972) recognize ...*

Example: *Finberg and Skipp (1973, pp. 37-52) discuss ...*

Direct quotation:

When quoting directly, include the author's last name, year of publication, and page number(s) in parentheses.

Example:

Many inexperienced writers are unsure about "the actual boundaries of the grammatical abstraction called a sentence" (Shaughnessy, 1977, p. 24) or about which form of punctuation they should use..

Alternatively, if the author's name is part of the sentence, only the year and page number need to be in parentheses:

Example:

This is further explained by Shaughnessy's (1977) following statement:

"In speech, pauses mark rates of respiration, set off certain words for rhetorical emphasis, facilitate phonological manoeuvres, regulate the rhythms of thought and articulation, and suggest grammatical structure. Modern punctuation, however, does not provide a score for such a complex orchestration." (p. 24)

Reference list

APA style recommends using a **reference list** rather than a bibliography for citing sources in a paper. A reference list should meet the following criteria:

- **A reference list includes only the sources that were actually cited in the text** of your paper. The references in the list must match exactly with those cited in the paper, both in content and formatting.
- **A bibliography** (not typically required in APA style) lists all sources consulted during the research process, even if they were not directly cited in the paper. This can include materials that were “immediately relevant” but not referenced directly in the text.

Examples of references in a reference list:

Books

- **One author:**
Castle, E. B. (1970). *The teacher*. Oxford University Press.
- **Two authors:**
McCandless, B. R., & Evans, E. D. (1973). *Children and youth: Psychosocial development*. Dryden Press.
- **Three or more authors:**
Smith, V., Barr, R., & Burke, D. (1976). *Alternatives in education: Freedom to choose*. Phi Delta Kappa Educational Foundation.

Journal articles

- **One author:**
Herrington, A. J. (1985). Classrooms as forums for reasoning and writing. *College Composition and Communication*, 36(4), 404-413.
- **Two authors:**
Horowitz, L. M., & Post, D. L. (1981). The prototype as a construct in abnormal psychology. *Journal of Abnormal Psychology*, 90(6), 575-585.

References to Internet sources

When citing internet sources in APA style, include at least the following four components:

1. Title or description of the document or webpage.
2. Date (publication date or retrieval date, depending on availability).
3. URL or Digital Object Identifier (DOI).
4. Author's name (if available).

- **Internet article based on a print source (exact duplicate) with DOI assigned:**

Stultz, J. (2006). Integrating exposure therapy and analytic therapy in trauma treatment. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 76(4), 482-488. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0002-9432.76.4.482>

- **Article in an Internet-only journal with no DOI assigned:**

Sillick, T. J., & Schutte, N. S. (2006). Emotional intelligence and self-esteem mediate between perceived early parental love and adult happiness. *E-Journal of Applied Psychology*, 2(2), 38-48. Retrieved from <http://ojs.lib.swin.edu.au/index.php/ejap/article/view/71/100>

- **Daily newspaper article (electronic version):**

Botha, T. (1999, February 21). The Statue of Liberty, Central Park and me. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from <http://www.nytimes.com>

- **Webpage:**

Raymon H. Mulford Library, The University of Toledo Health Science Campus. (2008). Instructions to authors in the health sciences. Retrieved June 17, 2008, from <http://mulford.mco.edu/instr/>

Annex 5 Communication and Netiquette Guidelines

During the thesis process, students and instructors may need to communicate regularly about topics such as supervision, research questions, methodology, deadlines, administrative matters, and the submission or defence of the thesis. Instructors may receive a considerable number of thesis-related emails and other messages, often concerning very different issues and requiring different levels of attention.

The following guidelines are intended to make communication as clear, efficient, and constructive as possible. They are not meant to discourage students from asking questions or seeking help. Rather, they provide some practical suggestions for choosing the appropriate channel, presenting questions clearly, and maintaining professional and respectful communication throughout the thesis process.

Before contacting an instructor

- Check the syllabus, course website, thesis documentation, or this Guide first to see whether your question has already been answered.
- For straightforward practical matters, consider consulting your classmates first, as they may be able to provide quick support. However, for questions concerning official requirements, assessment, deadlines, procedures, or individual circumstances, consult the relevant instructor, programme documentation or Teams announcements.
- For complex or detailed questions that require discussion, consider scheduling an appointment rather than sending a very long email.

Writing an email or message

- Use your official university email address when contacting instructors.
- Clearly identify yourself, including your name, course or thesis title, and programme where relevant.
- Use a concise, descriptive subject line that clearly indicates the purpose of your message.
- State clearly what you are asking. Rather than writing, for example, “I have a problem with my methodology,” briefly explain the issue and formulate the specific question on which you would like advice.
- If you are referring to a particular part of your thesis, indicate the relevant chapter, section, page, or other identifiable location.
- Include relevant information and attachments. Use meaningful file names and the file format requested by the instructor or programme.
- Maintain a professional and respectful tone. Address the instructor appropriately and pay attention to grammar, punctuation, and spelling.

- Remember that written communication should meet the same standards of professionalism and respect as communication in person.

Timing and follow-up

- Allow a reasonable amount of time for a response. Instructors may have substantial teaching, research, administrative, and supervision responsibilities, and an immediate response cannot always be expected.
- Do not expect responses outside normal working hours, during weekends, holidays, or periods when the instructor is unavailable.
- If you have not received a response after a reasonable period, you may send a polite reminder. Avoid sending multiple follow-up messages about the same matter, as this can make it harder to track the issue.
- If a supervisor or instructor has specified preferred communication methods, meeting arrangements, or expected response times, follow those arrangements.

Choosing the appropriate channel

- Use the communication channel appropriate to the issue and follow the procedures specified by the programme or supervisor.
- Routine questions can generally be handled by email or the designated online platform.
- Matters requiring detailed discussion, explanation, or feedback may be better addressed during a supervision meeting or appointment.
- Do not use informal channels for matters that require an official record unless this has been explicitly agreed with the instructor.

Keep communication constructive

- Academic discussion may involve disagreement, criticism, corrections, and requests for clarification. These are a normal part of the thesis process.
- Express questions, concerns, and disagreements clearly and respectfully.
- Be open to feedback and willing to clarify your position when necessary.
- Never write anything in a message that you would not be prepared to communicate respectfully in person.
- Remember that the purpose of communication during the thesis process is to support constructive academic discussion and help

Annex 6 General Considerations for the Thesis Writing Process

Writing a thesis is a substantial academic project that requires planning, sustained effort, and independent work. The process does not always proceed in a straight line: research questions may need to be refined, methods may need to be adjusted, unexpected findings may emerge, and drafts will usually require several rounds of revision. The following suggestions are intended to help you organise your work and maintain steady progress.

Time management and submission

- **Start early and plan backwards.** Begin with the final submission deadline and work backwards to set realistic milestones for each stage of the project.
- **Break the project into manageable tasks.** Divide the thesis into smaller stages, such as literature review, research design, data collection, analysis, drafting, revision, and final formatting.
- **Set regular working times.** Establish a routine that allows you to make regular progress with reading, research, and writing.
- **Be prepared to adjust your plan.** Research does not always proceed as expected, so allow some flexibility in your timeline.
- **Back up your work regularly.** Use reliable cloud or institutional storage, or another secure backup solution, to reduce the risk of losing your work or research data.
- **Leave sufficient time before the deadline.** Allow time for unexpected problems, feedback, revisions, proofreading, referencing, and final formatting. Avoid planning to finish the thesis on the submission deadline itself.
- **Check the submission requirements in advance.** Make sure you are familiar with requirements concerning formatting, length, file type, appendices, declarations, submission procedures, and deadlines.

Working with your supervisor

- **Communicate regularly.** Maintain appropriate contact with your supervisor throughout the process. Do not wait until you have a “perfect” draft before asking for guidance.
- **Prepare for supervision meetings.** Think in advance about what you would like to discuss and, where appropriate, send relevant material or questions beforehand.

- **Be open to feedback.** Critical feedback is a normal and valuable part of academic work. Use comments and suggestions to improve your research and writing.
- **Take responsibility for your thesis.** Your supervisor can provide guidance and feedback, but you remain responsible for your research and for the decisions you make in developing your thesis.
- **Discuss difficulties early.** If you encounter problems that affect your progress, discuss them with your supervisor rather than allowing them to accumulate.
- **Respect your supervisor's time.** Follow agreed arrangements, submit material when requested, and allow a reasonable time for reading and feedback.

Managing the writing and research process

- **Expect to revise.** A thesis is rarely written perfectly from beginning to end. Developing ideas, writing drafts, and revising them are normal parts of the process.
- **Do not aim for perfection at every stage.** At some points, it is more useful to produce a workable draft and improve it later than to spend too much time trying to get every sentence right immediately.
- **Keep your research question in view.** Regularly check that your reading, analysis, and writing remain relevant to the thesis's research question and objectives.
- **Do not let one problem stop the entire project.** If you cannot immediately resolve a particular issue, note it and, where possible, continue with another part of the thesis. You can return to the problem later.
- **Keep your sources and research materials organised.** Use a consistent system for managing references, notes, data, and drafts from the beginning of the project.

Managing pressure and maintaining well-being

- **Expect periods of difficulty.** Feeling uncertain, frustrated, or stuck is not unusual when working on a substantial research project.
- **Aim for steady progress.** A completed thesis that meets the academic requirements is more important than an indefinitely unfinished "perfect" draft.
- **Take breaks.** Regular breaks and time away from thesis work can help you maintain concentration and perspective.
- **Do not compare your progress too closely with that of others.** Thesis projects differ in scope, methodology, and complexity, and students do not necessarily progress at the same pace.

- **Seek help when needed.** If you are experiencing difficulties that significantly affect your ability to work, discuss them with your supervisor or make use of the academic and other support services available at the university.

The thesis is an independent piece of academic work, but independence does not mean working in isolation. Good planning, regular communication, and a willingness to revise your work can make the process more manageable and contribute to a stronger final thesis.

Declaration on the use of Artificial Intelligence

Artificial intelligence (AI) tools were used in the preparation of this Guide for brainstorming and generating ideas, organising and structuring the material, and grammatical proofreading and language improvement. All AI-assisted suggestions and outputs were critically reviewed, and the Guide's content was checked and verified by the author. The author takes full responsibility for the content and accuracy of this Guide. The use of AI does not transfer or diminish this responsibility.