
Instruction sheet for the preparation of a thesis paper for oral examinations in BA and MA degree programmes

1 Purpose

If you are taking an oral examination as part of your studies, you have to develop a thesis paper in preparation for the examination. A thesis paper serves two functions in this context. On the one hand, it allows the examiner to get an overview of the topics that you have prepared and to understand which aspects you consider important concerning a certain subject. On the other hand, it serves as a handout for yourself as well as for the examiner and the co-examiner during the examination. Additional aids are usually not allowed in an oral examination.

A thesis paper shall be prepared on one, two, or, if necessary, three main topics. You will need to discuss your choice and the number of topics with the examiner before preparing the thesis paper.

Each topic usually contains three to five theses. Deciding on these, please consider the time available for the presentation of the theses during the exam as well as the extent of the content. In some cases, two theses can be enough while four or more theses can be too extensive.

Unless otherwise agreed, the thesis paper is to be sent to the examiner by e-mail at least one week before the examination date.

2 What is a thesis and how is it phrased?

A thesis is a statement put up for discussion, that is then to be proven (scientifically) correct. The correctness or plausibility of a thesis must therefore be adequately substantiated. A thesis should be phrased as briefly and concisely as possible and is to be distinguished from statements that are indisputable or even trivial and thus require no further explanation.

A thesis must be clear and distinct. Avoid overly long and complicated sentences. It is better to combine up to three short sentences into one thesis.

When you make a thesis statement, you are taking a position and thus encouraging discussion or questions. However, make sure that your theses, while being controversial,

are not provocative or polemic. Assertions and correlations must always be factually substantiated and comprehensible through relevant literature.

Your thesis paper must therefore contain independently formulated statements based on scientific literature. It does not represent a collection of quotations, paraphrases, or translations!

It is generally useful for the argumentation if your theses build on and refer to each other. As you prepare for the oral examination, explore how well you transition between theses. You should rephrase your theses if you notice that the argumentation does not seem conclusive or coherent to you.

3 Structure of a thesis paper

A thesis paper **should not exceed one page per examination topic**, including literature (i.e. a maximum of two pages for two examination topics).

3.1 Heading of the thesis paper

Name of the University	Ruhr University Bochum
Name of the Faculty	Faculty of Social Science
Name of the Chair	Chair of Sociology/Social Inequality and Gender
Examiner (title, name)	Prof. Dr. Heike Kahlert
Co-examiner (title, name) – if known	Kristina Novy, M.A.
Term/semester (of the exam)	Winter term 2022/23 or Summer term 2023 etc.
Name of the programme module	Internationalisierung und Vergesellschaftung im Vergleich, Kultur und Geschlecht etc.
Course(s) & course number(s)	Ageing Europe? Ursachen und Konsequenzen des demographischen Wandels (Kahlert, Summer Term 2018), Course no. 080 251 If you are taking a final examination of a programme module (which means that you will be tested on topics of two courses), please name both courses: Zeitgenössische Gesellschaftstheorien und Genderforschung (Kahlert, Winter Term 2022/23), Course no. 080 368, & Feministische Wissenschaftskritik der Postmoderne (Wenzel, Winter Term 2022/23), Course no. 080 371
Examinee	First name(s), surname
Matriculation number	1080 1000 1000
Examination date	e.g. 10.03.2023, 10.00 am
Examination room	e.g. GD E1/325, Zoom

3.2 Presentation of the topic(s) of examination, literature, and sources (if necessary)

- Headline of topic 1
- Theses on topic 1
- Literature used for topic 1
- Headline of topic 2
- Theses on topic 2
- Literature used for topic 2

Bibliography and list of sources

Fully list the literature and sources that you have read and used for the thesis statements as part of your preparation for the examination. This way, you make clear which information you rely on for your argumentation. It is also important for the examiner and the co-examiner to know the literature and sources in order to be able to ask further questions or to discuss them with you in more detail.

For example:

Topic 1:

The social construction of gender

Thesis 1: Institutionalized gender orders are both heteronormative and hierarchical. They permeate all areas of society and are reproduced and consolidated through everyday social interactions.

Thesis 2: Expectations of how one should behave “as a man” or “as a woman” are based on the idea that the social gender emerges as a natural consequence of the biologically ascribed gender.

Thesis 3: The division of labor between men and women that results from hierarchical gender orders is supported by state regulations.

Thesis 4: The institutionalization of heteronormative gender orders is reflected in severe social and legal sanctions for non-binary and/or queer people.

References

Gildemeister, Regine (2008): Doing Gender: eine mikrotheoretische Annäherung an die Kategorie Geschlecht. In: Beate Kortendiek, Birgit Riegraf und Katja Sabisch (Eds.): *Handbuch Interdisziplinäre Geschlechterforschung*. Wiesbaden: Springer VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften, pp. 409–417. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-658-12496-0_35.

Heintz, Bettina, Eva Nadai, Eva, Regula Fischer and Hannes Ummel (1997): *Ungleich unter Gleichen: Studien zur geschlechtsspezifischen Segregation des Arbeitsmarktes*. Frankfurt/M., New York: Campus Verlag.

Topic 2:

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Thesis 1: ...

Thesis 2: ...

Thesis 3: ...

References

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4 Form of the thesis paper

The thesis paper should be submitted as a PDF file if possible, or as a Word file if necessary. Other file formats will not be accepted.

Last updated: 03/2023