How to write a scientific thesis

For Executive MBA students only

1. Content

1.1. Languages

The iimt accepts theses written in English, German or French.

1.2. Number of Pages

A CAS thesis should have between 30 and 40 pages.

1.3. Template & writing Style

- Mandatory Template**:** Use the template provided by the iimt, available in English, German, and French on the official website: https://www.unifr.ch/iimt/en/theses.html.

- Formatting Requirements**:**
    - Line spacing: 1.5
    - Font: Times New Roman or Arial, size 12
    - Text alignment: Justified
    - Margins: 2.5 cm
    - Systematic page numbering

1.4. Confidential Data

Special precautions are required for handling confidential data. Detailed instructions are provided in section 3.3. Contact us if you have any questions.

2. Research and References

2.1. Finding Reliable Sources

A scientific thesis is NOT a novel, a photo reportage, a project, technical nor business report; the scientific paper is a written text rather than a list of bullet points and pictures. Scientific journal articles, working papers, books, expert blogs/podcasts and newsletters are adequate literature. Specialised webpages such as scholar.google.com and digital libraries should be considered as a source for information too.

Although referencing internet sources are allowed (and must be referenced if its content is included into the thesis), keep in mind that Wikipedia and other Internet sources should be verified by scientific papers.

- Google Scholar: https://scholar.google.com/

- ScienceDirect: https://www.sciencedirect.com/ (Use UniFR account for access)

- ResearchGate: https://www.researchgate.net/

- University libraries: https://www3.unifr.ch/biblio/de/search.html (Access to UniFR library with UniFR account.)

2.2. How to Reference

Quotations and references must comply with APA standards. You can find all the information about the bibliography on this website: https://apastyle.apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines/references/examples or by downloading the document entitled **"References".**

2.3. Plagiarism

Any copying of texts or parts of texts written by another author, without mentioning the source or without inverted commas, is plagiarism. This practice is punished by the immediate and definitive rejection of a written work, or by the withdrawal of the title conferred based on the written work if the plagiarism is discovered later (decision of the Faculty Council of 9.11.2004).

2.4. Declaration on honor

The iimt will only accept theses if they include a signed declaration on honor. By signing the declaration on honor, students declare that they have indicated all sources used in their work. Students must include the signed declaration as the final page of their bound thesis. You can find the pdf at this address: https://www.unifr.ch/iimt/en/theses.html.

2.5. Using AI Tools

AI tools, such as ChatGPT, can be valuable assistants for organizing information, checking structure, and refining ideas. However, AI-generated content cannot be used as a primary source of scientific evidence. Always verify and reference the original sources for accuracy and credibility. When using AI tools, ensure they are acknowledged appropriately in your work.

3. Procedure for a CAS Thesis

3.1. Step by step

Step	Details	Who
Topic selection	Candidates are encouraged to start considering their CAS thesis topic early in their course. Ideally, candidates should choose topics that address current issues relevant to their professional context. Alternatively, they may select a subject outside their current field, provided it aligns with a professional or personal project. In such cases, we strongly recommend ensuring, in advance, that they will have easy access to the necessary data for their research. The working title should clearly reflect the subject matter, the specific problems being addressed, and the objectives of the thesis. A focused topic with in-depth analysis is preferable to a broad subject treated superficially.	Candidate
Find a supervisor	Once the topic has been decided, candidates are required to choose and contact a supervisor, who must be an iimt lecturer. It is important to note that teaching staff have the right to limit the number of theses they supervise. The candidate is responsible for selecting and approaching a supervisor, who will then validate the proposed topic.	Candidate Supervisor

Registration form	Registration form, specifying amongst other things the topic chosen, is sent to the iimt. If the thesis is of confidential nature, it must be registered as such on the registration form. Take note of the special conditions applicable. Official registration at the iimt	Candidate Supervisor iimt
Submit thesis	Email the completed thesis in PDF Format to iimt@unifr.ch and to the supervisor	Candidate
Grading	Your thesis is reviewed, graded and the results shared with you	Supervisor
Graduation	Celebrate your achievement at the official award ceremony!	Iimt Graduates

3.2. Registration of the thesis project

An important step is to complete the registration form (equivalent to a scientific proposal) to enrol the thesis.

The specific topic, objectives and content of the thesis are to identify in direct consultation with the chosen supervisor. Both – candidate and supervisor – should provide the necessary information and sign the document.

A thesis is only considered to be registered when the filled in and signed registration form have arrived at the iimt.

3.3. Deadlines

The thesis must be submitted **5 months after the registration form has been validated by the iimt.** Extensions can be requested in special cases (e.g., medical reasons). The reasoned written extension request must be sent to the iimt via an email to iimt@unifr.ch.

3.4. Confidentiality

Your thesis may be shared by the iimt with other students on our courses, for information purposes or as an example. For all external requests, we will contact you to obtain consent to share. For your part, you are free to share your thesis.

To restrict access to confidential work:

- Submit a formal request via email to iimt@unifr.ch.
- Confidential theses are only accessible to the author, supervisor, and iimt administration.

3.5. Correction, Grading and Presentation of the Project

The thesis supervisor has 1 month to review the thesis and submit the grade, unless an exception is granted.

Grades are given on a scale of 1 (worst) to 6 (best), a grade equal to or above 4 is satisfactory. For evaluating a thesis, the following criteria can be taken into consideration:

- Academic Quality
- Scientific rigor and practical relevance
- Contribution to knowledge
- Storyline and clarity
- Originality
- Absence of plagiarism
- Adherence to project schedule

The Supervisor has his/her own method of evaluating a thesis and may add criteria.

4. Regulations

The Regulations[1] are available in German and in French. If any indication in this guideline is contradictory to existing regulations, the regulations must be applied.

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[1] Extract of the Regulations from the 18th December 2023 governing the award of the Executive Master of Business Administration (Executive MBA), the Diploma and Certificates of Advanced Studies