

How to Write a Research Proposal for a BA/MA Thesis in Literary and Cultural Studies

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Before you formally register for the BA/MA thesis, we expect you to submit a research proposal to your prospective supervisor. The proposal will help you to develop your project idea – what do you want to write about, for which reasons, and how are you going to approach your topic –and to structure your thoughts, before you embark on the writing process. Investing sufficient time and thought into writing a research proposal will enhance the quality of your project and save you a lot of time, confusion and disappointment when actually writing your paper. Moreover, it will allow your supervisor to give specific advice and feedback on the content and feasibility of your project idea.

Your research proposal of 1-2 pages should include:

- The provisional **title** of your BA or MA thesis
- A short abstract of your project (150-200 words). The abstract summarises the topic and approach of your thesis. It should contain a **research question** and a (preliminary) **thesis statement**.
- Your (preliminary) selection of **primary material**: Which work(s) of literature or media will you examine in your thesis, and why?
- **Key terms, theoretical concepts, and method(s)**: Which key concepts will inform the analysis? From what theoretical angle will you approach your analysis? How will you proceed in your research and why?
- A preliminary chapter **outline** of the paper (*Gliederung*)
- A **bibliography** (10+ entries) of selected **secondary literature** on your topic.
- A **schedule** of the writing process: When are you planning to work on which part of your thesis?

Before you prepare your research proposal, we strongly recommend you consult the LiKu Guidelines, in particular “[Block 5: Style Sheet: How to Write a Research Paper](#)”.

Please send your proposal to your supervisor via e-mail attachment (Word document or PDF, don't forget to include your name in the file). You will hear back from your supervisor as soon as possible with detailed feedback. On the basis of the research proposal, your supervisor and you will decide at what point you can officially register your thesis.