

Instructions on how to write a concept paper

The concept paper should represent the outline of your seminar paper or thesis. It helps you to better structure the time available and to be well prepared for the meeting with your supervisor.

In the concept paper, you sketch your research question, the relevance of the topic and the focus of your seminar paper or thesis. The more precisely you define and describe the topic of your seminar paper or thesis, the easier the writing process will be afterwards.

Please follow the „Guideline for writing research papers“ while preparing your concept paper.

The concept paper will typically contain the following:

I. Concept of the seminar paper or thesis (1-2 pages of text):

a. Research question:

Outline the aim of your seminar paper or thesis. What is the central question you intend to answer?

b. Relevance:

Why is this question relevant? What is the current state of research (rough overview)? Is the question part of current political discussions?

c. Focus of your seminar paper or thesis:

Relate the literature provided by your supervisor as well as further literature to your research question. Which methods are applied? On which theories do the results draw?

If you intend to conduct an own empirical analysis: Please sketch your approach. Which data are you going to use?

II. Preliminary structure:

Please provide a preliminary version of your table of contents that clarifies the focus and structure of your thesis or seminar paper.

III. Preliminary list of references:

Which are the central research papers you base your paper on?