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Academic Writing

A reader for the introductory phase of studies
with writing impulses and exercises

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Dear students,

Welcome to the ASH Berlin! Your studies have begun and many of you are already enrolled in the propaedeutic seminars. You have probably already come into contact with the first technical terms and tasks. We were even able to get to know some of you in our consultation appointments.

In order to make your start a little easier and to answer your first questions, we at the Writing and Study Skills Service Center have decided to compose this reader. In it, you will find basic terms of academic writing and academic skills as well as advice and guidelines on writing types and strategies. We will introduce you to writing strategies, give you an overview of the different forms of texts, as well as tips on citation and literature research. We introduce research methods and provide information on time management. Many chapters are supplemented by concrete writing exercises or impulses to help you get to know your own writing better. In the last part you will find links to further consulting services at ASH Berlin and other support possibilities.

In general, it is important that you know what is required and that you can find and understand all the content so that you can get on well with your studies and find your way around the seminars.

Therefore: If you have questions, talk to your lecturers. The assignment and criteria should be transparent, the text type and the formatting and time required should be clearly communicated. If German is not your first language and the content is formulated too complicatedly, if in the seminar it is spoken too quickly or if the technical terms are not yet clear to you: point this out to the lecturers and/or talk to us.

We, as the Writing and Study Skills Service Center, advise you on all questions regarding (academic) writing and are happy to refer you to other consulting and support services. For this you will find a list in the last part of this reader.

We wish you a lot of fun while reading, writing and studying.





1. Feelings about writing	6
1.1 Writing types	7
1.2 Test writing strategies	8
1.3 Journey of the writing projects	11
2. Academic Writing – what does that mean?	14
2.1 Language	15
2.2 Citation	16
2.3 Literature research	19
3. Text types	21
3.1 Termpaper	21
3.2 Essay	23
3.3 Portfolio	24
3.4 Learning diary	25
4. Research methods	28
4.1 Literature research	28
4.2 Empirical work	28
5. Planning a writing project – how to do it?	30
5.1 Working steps	30
5.2 Working schedule	33
5.3 Containment table	34
6. Writer's block and fears	37
6.1 Writing impulses	38
6.2 Dealing with fear and the reasons behind it	40
7. Counseling possibilities at ASH Berlin	42
8. Further offers and contact points	44
Bibliography	44
List of Figures	45



1. Feelings about writing

When do we write and to whom are our texts addressed? What feelings do we have while writing and how are the purpose of writing and the feeling of writing connected? Why are we excited or perhaps even afraid when we have to write a text or an exam for university?

In order to understand how we write, when we feel confident or insecure while writing, why we get nervous in some situations, it is first important to understand how writing purposes and writing feelings are connected and where this connection comes from. That's why these considerations are at the forefront of this reader:

Surely it is different whether we write a letter, a WhatsApp message, an email or a paper for university.

The following spreadsheet can help to find out what feelings the different types of writing trigger in us. Have fun filling it out!

Writing time: 10 minutes.

Texttype	Purpose	Feelings while writing	Time scope	Feelings after writing	Writing location
Emails to friends	Private exchange	Relaxed	No limitations	Satisfied	Desk at home
Term paper	Performance record for University				
WhatsApp					

Fig. 1: Spreadsheet writing feeling and writing purpose
(c) Servicestelle für Schreib- und Studienkompetenzen, ASH Berlin 2022



1.1 Writing types

„... and then I wrote a term paper.“

A short sentence that we will certainly all say at some point in our daily study routine - and yet behind this phrase lie very different ways of working.

Before such a paper is written, we take many small steps: We think about what topic interests us, start reading and researching, gather information, come up with a structure, and finally fill the structure with text. This doesn't happen in a straight line at all, one step at a time. We often jump back and forth, rearrange, and start over.

Writing is a process, we move back and forth, one moment we have a concrete plan, the next we question everything all over again. This can be unsettling and make us feel like we're not making progress or that we're doing something „wrong“. But that feeling is deceptive. It's all part of the journey of our writing projects. This path is as different as we are.

The following test can give you a small impression. Fill it out calmly, then add up how often the letters a), b), c) or d) appeared in your answers.

Notes:



1.2 Test writing strategies

The test is based on: Arnold, Sven; Chirico, Rosaria; Liebscher, Daniela; Array: „Goldgräber oder Eichhörnchen – welcher Schreibtyp sind Sie?“ In: *JoSch - Journal der Schreibberatung* 01/2012. Pages 82 – 97. Translated by: Writing and Study Skills Service Center

Test: What are your writing strategies?

Choose the sentence that applies to you the most

1. Start

- I let a topic mature in my head first. (c)
- I first write down everything that comes to my mind about the topic. (a)
- I gather everything that has to do with the topic. (b)
- I write different text beginnings and decide later. (d)

2. Writing process (1)

- I rewrite my text parts several times. (d)
- I develop my writing ideas through making an outline. (c)
- I work on those sections that I feel like writing on and that I have the most ideas about. (b)
- I start writing without thinking about the structure. (a)

3. Writing process (2)

- By several attempts to write a text, I arrive step by step at what I want to communicate. (d)
- It satisfies me to see the text grow in several places at once. (b)
- I am often surprised at the ideas I come up with while writing. (a)
- I work through my outline point by point. (c)

4. Final version

- At the end, I need time again to structure the text. (a)
- At the end of the writing process I only correct minor things. (c)
- I keep all versions of text sections to decide at the end which one is the best. (d)
- At the end I especially have to check my text for repetitions and make sure that I concluded all trains of thought. (b)

Evaluation of writing strategies

After learning what types of writers we are, we can consider which strategies go with which approach:

(a) Write on the fly - Writing is an adventure:

You like to write on the fly and develop your ideas or the structure of the text as you write.

Advices:

When writing on the fly, writing is rarely boring. You are open to new ideas, the text grows quickly in many passages. Just make sure that you allow enough time for revision. It also makes sense to familiarize yourself with structuring techniques so that you don't lose sight of the common thread (see 7.1 Writing impulses).

(b) Patchwork writing - the squirrel technique:

You do not write from beginning to end, but once on this and once on that text passage. In between you also interrupt the writing completely, to research further information first. Slogan: Jump and collect.

Advices:

You are very flexible and can continue writing other passages if you are stuck on a chapter. This helps to avoid writer's blocks. Also, it is motivating to see that the text grows in different places. Make sure to keep track by organizing your documents well, for example by using programs like Citavi or Zotero or writing an excerpt in tabular form. Templates for this can be found in the ASH BERLIN Moodle Course of the ASH writing team. It is also advisable to ask people giving feedback to check the work for transitions and coherence of arguments.



(c) Plan and search for gold:

You prefer to make a plan before you start writing and follow that plan as you write.

Slogan: With a treasure map in hand, you dig deep in search of the ‚perfect‘ text.

Advices:

You work in a clear and structured way. This allows you to plan your time well. You can easily see the common thread at any time and explain your outline and planning well to others. For the writing process, methods that encourage the „Schreibdenken“ (which means to think while writing) can be helpful to come up with new ideas. Also, planning can drag on a bit. It may be helpful to provide the outline with content bullet points early on to prepare the raw text. For more advice on thinking about the „Schreibdenken“ and „getting into writing“, see chapter 7.1 Writing impulses.

(d) Versions writing:

You write your texts in several versions: You often put away your text beginnings or parts of your text several times, and then rewrite.

Advices:

You can write without the pressure of perfection and use writing as a tool for thinking. Plan enough time to create the final version and keep in mind that you will have to part with a lot of text in the end. In order not to lose the overview, it can be useful to adopt structuring methods (see chapter 7.1. Writing impulses).

1.3 Journey of the writing projects

Judith Wolfsberger talks about the writing process as a journey in her book „Frei geschrieben. Mut, Freiheit und Strategie für wissenschaftliche Abschlussarbeiten“. A journey goes through different places and landscapes, what might it look like? There is the „delta of dirty data“. There we collect data, evaluate it and document it.

In the „steppe of procrastination“ we may clean the apartment for the tenth time in a week, offer our help to friends, or constantly plan new activities just so we don't have to write.

Once we make it to the desk, we may find ourselves in the „desert half-knowledge“. This state can be uncomfortable, but arises naturally at the transition from the first readings about a topic to understanding it more fully.

So, don't get rattled, make some tea and read on!

In between, we may also climb the „peak of confusion“, perhaps just when we thought we were safe and sound. There comes this one text, which again confuses everything – is my research question still accurate? And what about the outline, should I reorganize everything again? Why did I choose this topic in the first place? ... this and much more can await us at this summit. It helps to take a deep breath, ask for a counseling session, talk to your fellow students, and maybe put the paper aside for a few days, because that's also part of the writing process: Take a break, get some distance, sleep in, and then, with fresh energy, return to your desk or any other writing spot you prefer.

Our knowledge grows constantly as we read and reflect and it continues to do so during our rest periods. Thoughts take time to sort themselves out and eventually we find ourselves on the boat that finally takes us to the „island of research“. At this point, we have left the deserts, valleys, peaks, and steppes behind, are completely immersed in the writing process, and are moving confidently through our chosen literature.

The more secure we feel with our topic, the more joyfully we can pluck the fruit from the „tree of knowledge“ at the end. Then the work is done and we close the computer and bask in its shade.

Perhaps you are wondering what this little story has to do with writing?

We've included it here because we think it becomes clear from this description that writing is a process, a journey. We set out on a journey with the goal of arriving on the island of knowledge at the end.

Knowing what the stages are can help you better plan your own writing process. Look at the illustration and consider how long you spend in each area and make notes as you approach the next writing project. It can be very revealing to keep in mind how much time we spend at each station. Each one is part of the writing process. This time they will be incorporated into your thinking when you plan the next writing project.



2. Academic Writing – what does that mean?

The Academic System in Germany is hierarchical. We follow a given structure and want to fulfill the expectations placed on us as best we can. However, if we consider the fulfillment of the specifications as the only motivation, writing can quickly cause a feeling of frustration. Writing out of obligation denies us access to writing out of pure interest in the subject, out of joy in writing. It can be equally frustrating and demotivating when the underlying structure and requirements are not clear, when we do not know what we are supposed to do.

Therefore, it can be helpful to clarify the following questions for yourself beforehand:

- ➔ Do I understand what is being referred to?
- ➔ Do I know what stands behind a term paper, a portfolio, a learning diary, and an essay?
- ➔ If it's not clear, ask your lecturers.
- ➔ Is the procedure clear to me, do I know what steps I need to take to reach the goal?
- ➔ Without knowing the timetable, I cannot decide which train to take. Without knowing which steps I have to take to write a term paper for example, I cannot write it. Again: Ask, ask, ask!
- ➔ Why am I writing? Because I have to or because the topic interests me?
- ➔ If possible, choose a topic that interests you. It is easier to write when we are interested in the subject and enjoy it.
- ➔ What is my interest in the topic?
- ➔ Answering this question helps you to find the focus, to narrow down the topic. The more concretely we formulate our question, the more clearly we can decide what is important and what is not.
- ➔ To whom do I address my work?
- ➔ Knowing whether the work will end up in the filing cabinet or in the hands of interested readers is crucial for motivation (cf. Vode/Sowa 2022, S.12).

Advice:
Imagine you are writing a paper for a friend.

2.1 Language

(Summary based on Judith Wolfsberger (2021), *Frei geschrieben. Mut, Freiheit und Strategie für wissenschaftliche Abschlussarbeiten*, p. 112-117).

Find your own technical language. And still know some of the most common phrases. I decide how I write, there is no writing and no thinking without „I.“
Judith Wolfsberger writes of academic language as a language of power.
How can we deal with it?

- ➔ We can be aware that the way texts are written can also lead to building up anxiety and writer's blocks. If the language is very complex, it can be hard to get into reading.
- ➔ We can change our perspective: It's not you, it's the language form of the texts that makes it hard to read and get into writing.
- ➔ We can find our own technical language. This means that you write the way you would speak in a professional discussion or when giving a presentation. This language is probably different from the language you use to talk to your friends. **Your technical language** is also different from the language you find in books or the language your lecturers use to talk to you.
- ➔ Who are you writing for? It can be frustrating to write knowing that your work will end up in the closet. Likewise, your writing can be blocked if you think about your lecturers reading the work.

Advice:
Try a change of perspective:
Imagine that you are writing for your fellow students or for your best friend.

- ➔ According to Otto Kruse, the avoidance of the „I“, the pseudo-objectification, leads to the concealment of one's own thinking process and to the alienation of one's own thinking and feeling, because the origin of our point of view is obscured: „There is no thinking without ‚I‘ and therefore also no writing without ‚I‘.“ [quote translated by Writing and Study Skills Service Center]
- ➔ This distancing from one's own thinking can also lead to writer's blocks.

Advice:
First leave all „I's“ in and check later if a few can be taken out. But: YOUR thoughts are YOUR thoughts, YOUR conclusions are YOUR conclusions and not those of „the author“ or „the present work“.



2.2 Citation

The hallmark of scientific writing is transparency. I prove where my thoughts come from, what I have read, what I base my arguments on. Academic writing means to make all steps transparent:

- I *justify* my choice of literature and the structure of my outline.
- I *explain* which method I use and on which literature it is based.
- I *disclose* where I found what I am writing. Where did I get my information from?

What books do I refer to? This process of *substantiating text passages* is called citation. We distinguish between direct and indirect citations. Here we give you a little insight into citation and the basic rules and terms. It is based on the Harvard citation reader¹, which you can download from the Moodle course of the ASH writing team.

Citation styles:

There are different *citation styles* you can choose from. The most common at ASH BERLIN are the *citation styles* APA and HARVARD. There are minimal differences between these two *citation styles*. The important thing is that you choose one way and apply it consistently throughout your text. In this reader, we will use the HARVARD *citation method*.

Why cite:

- To make *results verifiable*. In order to achieve this, it must be possible to attribute achievements to their originators. Transparency is the basis of citation with the purpose of not passing off the achievements of others as our own.

Function of citations:

By citing, we indicate the use of other people's content as well as where our thoughts go beyond the current state of knowledge. We investigate the state of research, refer to methods and substantiate our results by referring to results of other authors.

Examples of citation rules, citation style: Harvard:

- *Direct citation* is the verbatim reproduction of the passage from the original text. This, like verbatim speech, is enclosed in quotation marks. The citation source follows in a parenthesis after it. Punctuation marks are placed after the parenthesis.
- *Indirect citation* is the reproduction of the contents of the text from the original source in your own words. This reproduction is also called paraphrasing. Even if we reproduce the meaning of the text only analogously, they are not our own thoughts we are referring to, but those of another author. We also have to substantiate this reproduction, by placing a cf. (meaning: compare) in parentheses at the end of the relevant sentence or paragraph.
- *Mark spelling errors*: **[sic!]** (means: this is how the source reads).
- *Mark omissions* with a square bracket: [...]
- *Mark additions* also by square brackets: **[author's note]** or. **[o]ne** book...

- *Emphasis from the original source* must be taken over and will also be marked by a note in square brackets: Therefore, any worrying, any concern about **[emphasis in the original]** something...
- *Own emphasis* is indicated immediately after the change of the original text in a square bracket: If human beings were not allowed to make mistakes **[editor's emphasis]**...
- If we use literature in other languages, but write the paper in, let's say German, the translations are marked this way: A citation in the text in the original language will be translated in the footnote and marked with a bracket behind it: **(translation by the editor)**. English citations/ or citations in common languages do not need to be translated. In general: always check with the university/ your lecturers when dealing with foreign language sources.

Citation from e-books:

- If no page numbers are available: refer to chapters and subchapters, example: (cf. Müller 2010 in chap. 6.5).
- Some e-books also contain a note on citability: „This EPUB-edition is citable. In order to achieve this, the beginning and the end of each page is marked. For words that are separated from one page to the next, the page number is after the word that has been joined in the EPUB.

Example:

|8<>9|

- Citing legal texts: Laws are always cited in the same format regardless of the citation style. The reference is in parentheses or as a footnote, depending on the citation style (ASH BERLIN: parentheses).

Examples:

§ 81 Absatz 1 Satz 3 BGB
§ 81 Abs. 1 S. 3 BGB
§ 81 | 3 BGB

Bibliography:

- All used books, journals, e-books, PDFs, which are mentioned in the text in parentheses must be listed in the bibliography at the end of the paper. This bibliography is therefore a list of the sources used and is listed in alphabetical order, starting with the surname of the author.

Exception: Laws are only listed in the body text and not in the bibliography.



- ➔ Karlsruhe Virtual Catalog (KVK): The Karlsruhe Virtual Catalog is a meta-search engine for finding hundreds of millions of books, journals and other media in library and book trade catalogs worldwide.

Go directly to the KVK:

<https://kvk.bibliothek.kit.edu/index.html?lang=en&digitalOnly=0&embedFulltitle=0&new-Tab=0>

More information about the deposited media and the function:

<https://www.bibliothek.kit.edu/kvk-hilfe.php>

Procedure:

- ➔ *Snowball system*: We find supplementary literature via the bibliography in a reference book or references in the text to other authors. It is worthwhile to make a list while reading, in which the supplementary literature is entered, so that one does not forget the books and can later look up at leisure whether they can actually be of importance for one's own work.
- ➔ *Keyword search*: In webOPAC you can choose from different search fields. For example, you can search for specific authors or titles. But if you want to get an overview of the literature first, it is best to enter your

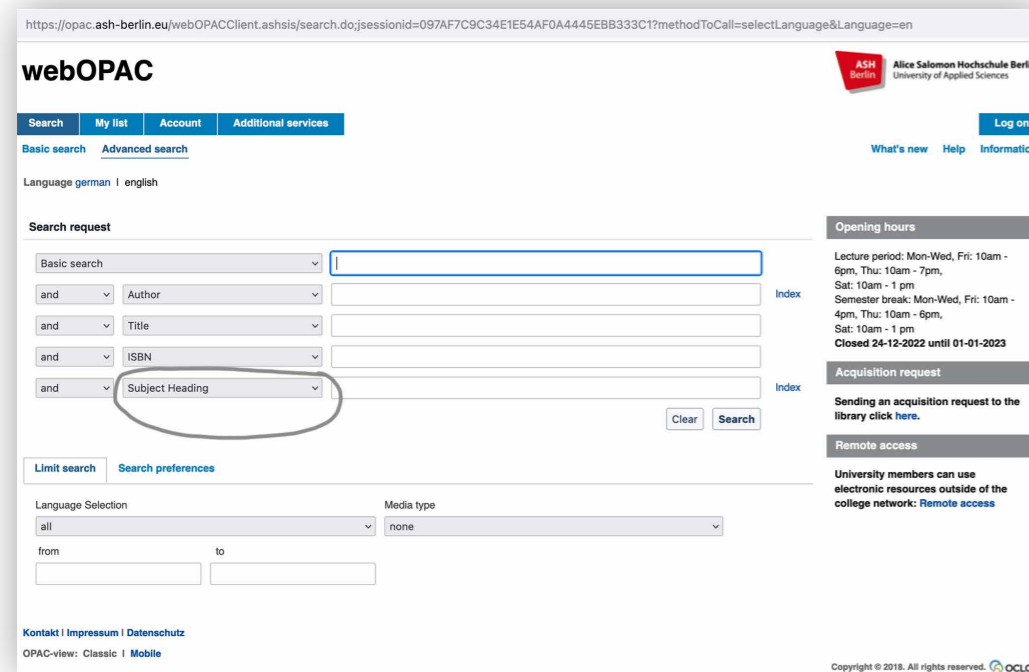


Fig. 4: Keyword search, Screenshot webOPAC, ASH Berlin 2022

3. Text types

In your studies you will get to know a wide variety of text types and at the end of the semester you will usually choose one of them and hand it in as a performance record. Here we present four of them.

Note:

To be able to write a term paper, it is important to know the definition, the requirements (what do I have to do) and the evaluation criteria (what will be evaluated). If something is unclear to you, check with your lecturers. The length (how many pages must I write?) and layout (typeface, line spacing, margins) may differ from seminar to seminar. However, the conditions must be made transparent.

3.1 Term paper

(Summary based on Scribbr: <https://www.scribbr.de/hausarbeit/hausarbeit-schreiben/>)

The term paper is a very structured scientific elaboration on a specific topic. In terms of structure, it comes closest to the final theses (Bachelor's thesis and Master's thesis) and is therefore very well suited as preparation and to practice scientific work. At the beginning of your studies you will probably be able to choose from certain topics and the literature selection will still be predetermined. As time goes by, you will decide on a topic yourself and also make your own choice of literature. The term paper follows a clear structure, so that the individual steps can be easily understood and practiced. The length of a term paper is usually between 10 and 15 pages.

6 steps to writing a term paper:

1. Choice of topic and development of a research question

What interests me? What can I imagine writing about over a longer period of time?

2. Structure and outline

The term paper follows a clear structure. There is a *text part*, a *cover sheet* and a *table of contents*. The cover sheet contains all information about the university, the seminar, the title and the author:

- ➔ Name of the university and course of study
- ➔ Name of the course/seminar
- ➔ Title of the paper
- ➔ Name of the student
- ➔ Contact details and address
- ➔ Matriculation number and semester
- ➔ Date of submission
- ➔ Name of the lecturer



The bibliography is at the end of the paper with the indication of all sources and often also a declaration in lieu of oath. Each item in the table of contents is accompanied by the page number.

3. Literature research

The basis of your term paper is the literature research. You search for literature that is relevant to your research question. For this purpose, you have the university libraries, texts from the seminar and the online search (e.g. Google-Scholar/BASE) at your disposal.

4. Writing the text

The text is divided into *introduction*, *main part* and *conclusion*.

- Components of the *introduction* are (5-10%): Topic, question, objectives of the paper and presentation of the structure and the outline.
- Components of the *main part* are (80-90%): Explanation of terms and definitions, presentation of theories and concepts, analysis of the topic, discussion of the results.
- Components of the *conclusion* are (5-10%): Has the research question been answered? Are there any open questions? What can be further researched?

5. Bibliography and declaration in lieu of oath

The bibliography is the list of all sources that you have used in the paper. The declaration in lieu of oath is an assurance that you have written the paper alone and without outside help. Please check with the lecturers whether you should include such a declaration in lieu of oath.

6. Proofreading

Feel free to give the paper to 2-3 people to proofread. You can give „work orders“: For example, one person can look at spelling and punctuation, another at transitions, a third at citations. Tell the proofreaders until when you need their feedback.

3.2 Essay

(Summary based on: Frank/Haacke/Lahm 2007, p. 176-178).

The term essay is French and means „to try something“. An essay is *not a fixed form* and is more free in structure than a term paper. The essay is also shorter in length than a term paper.

Learning outcomes of an essay are:

- Develop, organize and formulate ideas
- clarify and reflect on one's own perspective
- deal with a question/problem in a short and concise way
- learn to deal with limitations of time and scope
- develop a clear argument from limited information
- critically engage with scientific positions on a topic, one's own perspective is recognizable

Possible structure of an essay:

The following questions can help with literature selection and reading:

- What astonishes me? What surprises me?
- What am I missing?
- What is strange to me?
- What annoys me? What upsets me?
- What strikes me again and again?

From the answers, the topic and the research question can be developed.

Characteristic of the essay is the reflection on a self-selected topic. It is not about proving that we can handle the techniques of scientific work, but about looking at and classifying our own ideas, arguments and considerations.



3.3 Portfolio

(Summary based on Girgensohn/Sennewald (2012): Schreiben lehren, Schreiben lernen. Eine Einführung. S. 97-100)

The term *portfolio* is Latin and is composed of the two words *portare* (to carry) and *folium* (sheet). A portfolio is therefore a workbook, a compilation of the results of work that can be presented. This portfolio can consist of a wide variety of sources and can also include a wide variety of media (photographs, illustrations, reports, clippings).

However, a portfolio is not a loose collection of text clippings and reports. It is a tool for learning and reflection. It trains self-reliance and self-direction in learning processes. You choose what goes into the portfolio. The assessment criteria can be very different. Therefore, talk to your lecturer if something is unclear.

There are two different types of portfolios:

Process portfolio:

- documents various stages of the learning and cognition process (e.g., present excerpts from writing journal, literature lists, excerpts from articles, or brainstorming sessions)
- materials that have shaped your learning process (e.g., excerpts from secondary literature, interview transcripts, texts from fellow students)
- written reflection on your own learning process based on the selected material (presentation of helpful methods such as excerpting, conversations about the topic, an attended lecture)

Product portfolio:

- presentation of self-created texts or work results from the seminar
- reflection on each individual text (or film, etc.) and analysis of what was particularly well done or could have been done differently and what distinguishes the text from the other texts presented
- objective: to understand the learning and writing progress, to reflect retrospectively on what has been learned in terms of contents and methods

Summary:

The process portfolio contains materials, texts and protocols on the topic and serves to enable you to document and reflect on your learning process. It gives you important insights into your individual learning style. How and with which methods can you learn well? The product portfolio is a showcase of your self-written texts. It helps you to recognize your learning and writing progress and to reflect on what you have learned in terms of contents and methods.

3.4 Learning diary

(Summary based on Dokuments of University of Freiburg)

A learning diary is the documentation of your own learning process. It's about writing down what you learned, when, and in which lecture. The term „learning diary“ refers to diary writing and means:

- that it is kept regularly in order to be able to make a connection in retrospect between the lectures and the content learned, to reflect.
- that it is about developing a personal writing style. The learning diary is a dialogue with yourself, there is no „right“ or „wrong“.
- but: unlike the diary, it is not private. The learning diary is handed in to the lecturers and read by them.

Possible guiding questions for keeping a learning journal:

- which issues seem so important to me that I would like to summarize them in my own words in my learning diary?
- what are the most important findings and insights?
- which aspects did I find helpful and interesting? Which not?
- which aspects of what was said can I use myself in current or future activities? What do I want to continue to work on?
- which experiences and observations could help me in future presentations?
- did I notice any references and links between the topic of the seminar and other seminars? Which theories and methods do I already know? what is new?
- which questions do I have? What do I not yet understand?
- which examples do I know that confirm what I learned?
- after the last seminar: reflection: when I read through my notes, what has changed for me in the course of the seminar? What do I take away from the seminar?

Formalities – scope and criteria:

Here you will find guidelines for the possible scope and evaluation criteria. Please ask your lecturer for the exact details, as the criteria may differ from seminar to seminar.

- scope: For each lecture a separate section will be written in the learning diary.

Length: approx. 1 page, not less
Writing time: 1-1.5 hours per lecture



5. Planning a writing project – how to do it?

The more extensive a project is, the more important planning becomes. For planning, it is important that you can assess yourself and your work process well and that you are honest.

This includes knowing what type of writer you are as well as a realistic assessment of how long you procrastinate. An overly idealistic plan that doesn't match the way you work will only because stress and can make you feel like failing.

In the following, we present to you the individual working steps, a possible working plan as well as a containment table for focusing. All materials are also available to download in our moodle course.

5.1 Working steps

(Summary based on - with slight changes: Otto Kruse, Keine Angst vor dem leeren Blatt: Ohne Schreibblockaden durchs Studium, 7. Aufl. Frankfurt am Main 1999 und Girgensohn/Sennwald (2012): Schreiben lehren, Schreiben lernen. Eine Einführung. p.102f.)

1. Orientation and planning phase:

- *reading*: topic search and initial exploration (survey of literature, research)
- *writing*: narrow topic (define research question or working hypothesis, exposé)
- *suitable writing methods*: Freewriting, cluster, journal writing
- *talking*: talking with lecturers (setting goals, discussing the question/understanding the task, clarifying the scope of the text and text genre, determining addressees, creating a time schedule)
- *writing team*: participation in the writing workshop and/or bachelor tutorial. Individual counseling with impulses and exercises for focusing.

2. Evaluation and structuring of material:

- *reading*: systematic literature, source, or data collection (excerpt, summarize, interpret).
- *writing*: excerpt, i.e., evaluate primary and secondary literature according to the research question or method, write exposé, create writing plan, revise/modify content plan if necessary.
- *suitable writing methods*: mind maps, freewriting, journal writing
- *talking*: with lecturers about the outline, with fellow students about texts
- *writing team*: participate in the writing workshop and/or bachelor tutorial.

Individual counseling with impulses and exercises for structuring.

3. Writing raw version

- *reading*: reading the excerpts and mind maps

- *writing*: formulate according to the outline - depending on the type of writing as a first draft or relatively final, possibly change the structure retrospectively, familiarize yourself with the formal guidelines (layout, font size, formality)
- *suitable writing methods*: mind maps, freewriting, journal, clusters
- *talking*: talking about the writing process with fellow students, friends, asking lecturers about formal guidelines if not already communicated in advance, and downloading the corresponding orientation guides for the final theses. You can also find the orientation guide for the Social Work course of studies in our Moodle course
- *writing team*: Participation in the writing workshop and/or bachelor tutorial.

4. Revision

- *reading*: common thread and comprehensibility, sentence structure and expression
- *writing*: review key concepts, complete argumentation and citation
- *suitable writing methods*: reflection in journal, reflecting on it while writing
- *speaking*: seek feedback, send text to people to proofread
- *writing team*: participate in the writing workshop and/or bachelor tutorial. Text feedback with focus on transitions and stringency, especially for non-native speakers of German.

5. Correction

Proofreading by others if possible, and final correction

- *reading*: proofreading (by others if possible - feel free to give assignments for this, e.g., 1 person pays attention to grammar and spelling, 1 person pays attention to transitions and logical stringency, 1 person pays attention to expression and citation)
- *writing*: incorporate feedback, continue writing if deemed useful
- *speaking*: discussions with persons giving feedback and after submission with lecturers
- *writing team*: participate in writing workshop and/or bachelor tutorial. Text feedback with focus on grammar and spelling, especially for non-native speakers of German.

In their book „Schreiben lehren, Schreiben lernen,“ Katrin Girgensohn and Nadja Sennwald assign the individual working steps to the sub-items *reading*, *writing*, and *speaking*. This illustrates that sharing one's own work process is important and part of writing. By talking about what we are doing, we reflect on our work process, talk through questions and doubts and gather feedback. *Talking* prevents us from completely retreating in the writing process and remaining alone with our questions. Therefore: talk about what you are doing: With your lecturers, with fellow students and friends and with us.



The plan also depends on your writing type. For example, writers who are very structured and plan everything precisely will probably spend more time on point 2, structuring and planning, than version writers. They will need more time for revision and completion and probably less time writing the raw text(s).

Advice:
 If, for example, the word *working schedule* causes you stress, try renaming it: how about a recipe for *my writing project*? The *working phase* would then be the *list of ingredients*, the duration in weeks can be replaced by the baking time.

5.3 Containment table

(Containment table from Ella Grieshammer et. al. (2013): Zukunftsmodell Schreibberatung. Eine Anleitung zur Begleitung von Schreibenden im Studium, Schneider Verlag Hohengehren, p. 176f.)

According to Ella Grieshammer, this table can help you to further focus the research question. Think of the funnel principle: We usually approach a topic from broad to narrow. First there is an idea, a fascination for or interest in a topic. We think big and broad. But the scope of a term paper and later of theses (bachelor and master) is always limited. So, we have to consider which aspect of the topic interests us most, where can we become more specific, where are opportunities to focus in on? These considerations are called containment. Our first, spontaneously written down question is narrowed down step by step until the scope can be managed within the framework of a term paper (10-15 pages) or a bachelor thesis (40-60 pages).

Academic writing and research does not mean to put everything I read into a paper, but to consider exactly what is important for my specific research question and to put this question in relation to the number of pages available. This containment also makes it possible to take a closer look at individual points. In other words, we go from breadth to depth.

The table below is an example of many possible containment criteria. You don't have to choose all of them, just use the ones that make sense for you and your topic. You can also find a blank template of the table to print out on moodle in our *ASH writing team moodle course*.

Containment criteria	Concrete containment possibilities
Selected aspect	• e.g. stress in social professions
Time containment	• Age of employees • Investigation period
Local containment (cities, countries facilities...)	• In Berlin • In Europe • In rural regions
Setting priorities/ With special consideration of...	• ... Lack of employees • ... Work/private life
By groups of people	• Educators
By discipline and research methods	• Literature research • Statistical comparison • Qualitative investigation/analysis
Source containment	• German literature only • As of 2.000 • Specific research direction, research on burnout • Expert interviews
By theory approaches, authors	• Psychosomatic complaints • With special consideration of the work XY
Establish relationships/ comparisons	• In comparison to healthy educators • In intercultural comparison
Emphasize individual case/example	• Case Study

Fig. 6: Slightly changed and shortened based on Grieshammer (2013)



6.1 Writing impulses

Here we introduce you to some writing methods and impulses that you can use in the writing process, as a loosening exercise, for finding ideas, or for containing. Writing down helps to sort your thoughts and to become aware of correlations.

1. Get into writing and find ideas through freewriting:

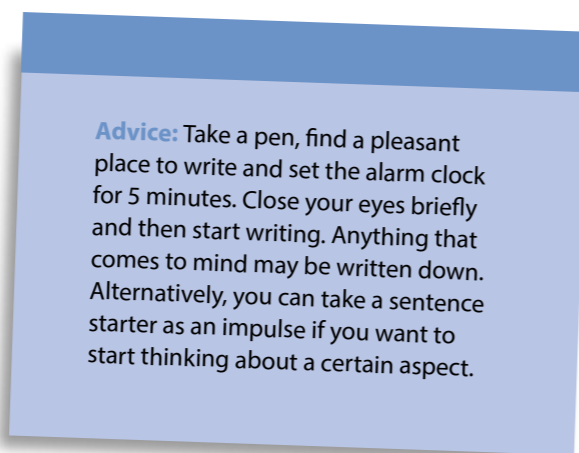
Freewriting as a method was developed in the 1970s by Peter Elbow.

Freewriting means:

- writing on the fly
- concentrating on content and not on formulations
- writing, not stopping. If no new thought comes, write that down and keep writing until new thoughts come.
- Freewriting is writing down the stream of consciousness. It strengthens the right, creative/conceptual half of the brain and pushes back the left, detail-oriented half (cf. Wolfsberger 2021, p.141).

It is best to set an alarm clock for 5–10 minutes. The clear time limit is important in order to be able to write in a concentrated manner and not to get too deeply involved in an emotion if it arises during writing.

Freewriting can be used to find ideas, to get into writing and also to better deal with stressful emotions, for example exam anxiety. By writing freely, thoughts fall relatively unfiltered onto the paper, which can have a very relieving effect.



Examples:

→ When I think about my term paper, I ...

→ This morning I woke up and I ...

→ My pen doesn't really want to write today because ...

The basic form of *freewriting* has been modified in many ways to suit the particular purpose.

Some examples are:

→ One-Minute-Papers: are written after a seminar or lecture and are used to answer the following questions:

1. What was important for me today?

2. What would I like to know more about?

One-minute papers thus serve to reflect on and deepen what has been learned and to raise awareness for questions (cf. Girgensohn/Sennewald 2012, p.105).

→ Schreibdenken (means: thinking while writing) according to Ulrike Scheuermann with the exercise „In die Tiefe schreiben mit der Schreibstaffel“ (it's an exercise, where you practice *freewriting* in a row, taking an impulse from the text you have just written to start a new one. In this way, you can slowly go deeper into your thoughts and develop ideas that were not there before):

Ulrike Scheuermann recommends *freewriting* as a daily ritual to gradually become clear about one's own way of thinking. Impulses from the texts are always taken as a starting point for further texts. Detailed instructions can be found via this link: <https://ulrike-scheuermann.de/tieferdenken/>

Finding ideas:

Clustering according to Gabriele Rico: Clustering is a brainstorming method based on the insight that different brain regions perform different tasks. The cluster is designed to be both figurative (through the shape) and conceptual (the words), thereby activating different brain regions. The method has something playful, pictorial and convinces above all by the proximity to the writing learning process (cf. Bräuer 1998, p.62). In contrast to the mind map, the cluster does not serve the structuring of already existing ideas but the free, associative collection of ideas (cf. Girgensohn/Sennewald 2012, p.105).

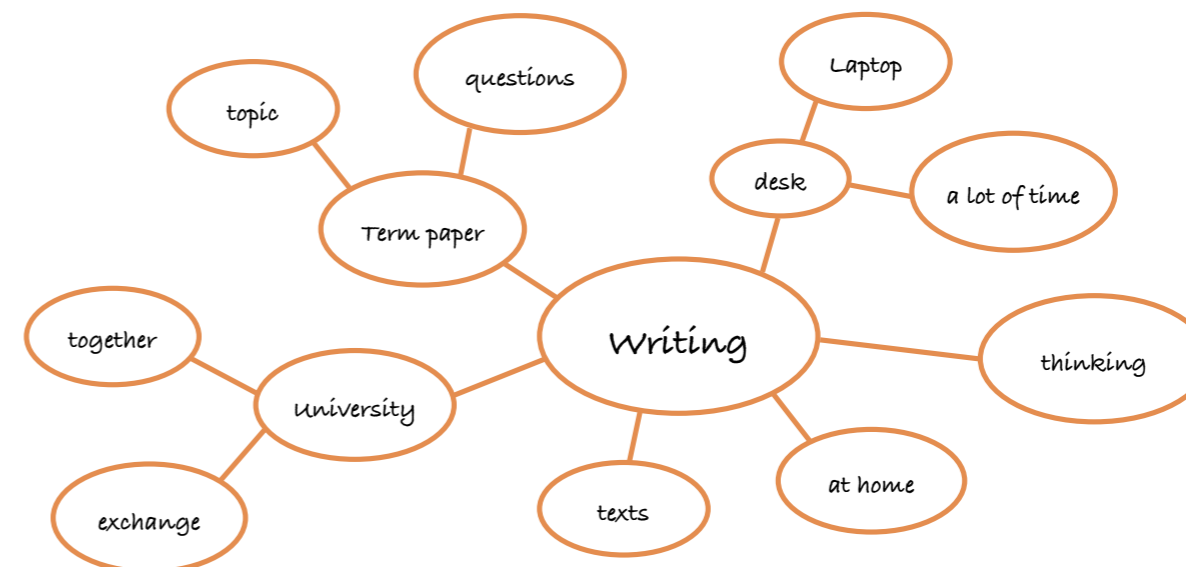


Fig. 7: Example of a Cluster according to Gabriele Rico in: Wolfsberger, Judith (2021, S. 94)



7. Counseling possibilities at ASH

Promoting writing and study skills:

<https://www.ash-berlin.eu/en/study/guidance-and-support/development-of-writing-and-academic-skills/>

- Writing workshop: schreibberatung@ash-berlin.eu (Lea and Hearn)
- Bachelor Tutoring: schreibtutorium@ash-berlin.eu (Vero and Antea)
- Moodlecourse of the ASH-writing team: schreibtutorium@ash-berlin.eu
- Science Coaching and text feedback with a focus on non-first language learners
German: abendschein@ash-berlin.eu (Silke)
- Workshops: marlen.stritzel@googlemail.com (Marlen)

We offer study materials, text feedback (grammar and spelling), one-on-one consultations, writing coaching, workshops on study organization and time management, seminar visits, a weekly writing workshop, and a bi-weekly bachelor tutorial. Our newsletter is published once a month.

Student Advisory Service:

<https://www.ash-berlin.eu/en/study/guidance-and-support/student-advisory-service/>

Contact and consultation:

Anna Kuhlage (room 329)
phone: +49 30 99245-125
studienberatung@ash-berlin.eu

Phone office hours:

Wednesday 1-3 pm, Thursday 12-2 pm
Tuesday and Thursday 7-9 pm (please arrange the appointment by mail)

Online Consultation:

Wednesday 9-11 am, Consultation appointments outside office hours possible.
Requests by mail with consultation request and available times.

Family Office at ASH Berlin:

<https://www.ash-berlin.eu/en/study/guidance-and-support/family-at-ash-berlin/>

Contact and consultation: Cindy Lautenbach (room 312)

(Family Office, Representative for the Concerns of Students with Chronic Illnesses and Mental Impairments, Initial Counselor in Discrimination Matters)
familienbuero@ash-berlin.eu

For all questions about studying with children, childcare, care for dependents alice barrier-free:

<https://www.ash-berlin.eu/en/study/guidance-and-support/alice-barrier-free/>

Contact and consultation: Cindy Lautenbach (room 312)

(Representative for students with disabilities, chronic illnesses and psych. impairments, initial advisor in case of discrimination)
barrierefrei@ash-berlin.eu

and Laura Lipinski (Student employee, initial advisor in discrimination cases)

Laura.Lipinski@ash-berlin.eu

Personal advice and information about studying with a disability, chronic illness and/or mental impairment.

EmpA - Antiracism und Empowerment:

<https://www.ash-berlin.eu/en/ash-international/empa-anti-racism-and-empowerment-at-ashberlin/>

Contact and consultation: Dr. Aki Krishnamurthy

(Anti-racism and empowerment officer: anti-racist opening of the university/ empowerment offers and advice for students with experience of racism: networking and community building/ raising awareness of racist discrimination) Office hours by appointment: krishnamurthy@ash-berlin.eu / empowerment@ash-berlin.eu

Consultations are also possible with the EmpA tutors:

Jenifa Simon: jenifa.simon@ash-berlin.eu

Very Arias: ariasv@ash-berlin.eu

On the website you will also find a form to report incidents of discrimination and all EmpA offers and workshops.

Advice for women* and trans*:

<https://www.ash-berlin.eu/en/study/guidance-and-support/advice-for-women-and-trans/>

Contact and consultation: Nina Lawrenz (room 322)

(Women's* and Equal Opportunity Officer, initial counselor in cases of (sexualized) discrimination and violence)

Dates by arrangement: frauenbeauftragte@ash-berlin.eu

Phone: 030 - 992 45 322

Help with discrimination:

<https://www.ash-berlin.eu/en/study/guidance-and-support/dealing-with-sexual-harassment-1/>

Contact and consultation: Peps Gutsche (room 320)

(Anti-discrimination officer)

Monday till Thursday: 030 - 992 45 321

antidiskriminierung@ash-berlin.eu

The website provides an overview of initial counseling in cases of discrimination as well as further links to anti-discrimination counselors at ASH and to external counseling centers.

Support and networking opportunities for ASH students:

<https://www.ash-berlin.eu/studieren/unterstuetzen-und-vernetzen/>

Overview page of all offers in the introductory study phase and for higher semesters.



EDP courses:

Free courses on PC usage, word processors, Zotero, spreadsheets, Power Point, SPSS, MAXQDA

<https://www.ash-berlin.eu/en/study/service-departments/it-centre/workshops/>

Citavi courses are offered by the library:

<https://www.ash-berlin.eu/en/study/service-departments/library/library-services/>

8. Further offers and contact points

MAXQDA courses:

<https://www.maxqda.com/de/webinars-workshops>

Software for coding and categorization in the context of qualitative and mixed methods research. Some of the courses offered on the site are free and there are also numerous video tutorials to get you started.

Offers of the StudierendenWERK:

<https://www.stw.berlin/en/counselling.html>

On this page you will find an overview of the counseling services offered by the Studierenden- WERK for all questions concerning studies and all event offers in German and English.

<https://www.stw.berlin/en/counselling/psychologic-counselling/>

This page provides an overview of all psychotherapeutic counseling services. There are group and individual counseling options in person and online.

Anonymous advice hotline for concerns about studying and beyond:

<https://berlin.nightlines.eu/>

Website only available in German.

Berlin Crisis Service:

<https://www.berliner-krisendienst.de/>

Help with psychosocial crises to acute mental and psychiatric emergencies (available in German only).

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List of Figures

Abb. 1: Spreadsheet writing feeling and writing purpose (Page 4)

Abb. 2: Writing Journey outline (Page 8)

Abb. 3: Screenshot webOPAC of the ASH Berlin (Page 13)

Abb. 4: Screenshot webOPAC der ASH Berlin, Keyword search (Page 14)

Abb. 5: Workplan of Judith Wolfsberger (Page 25)

Abb. 6: Containment table - slightly changed and shortened according to Grieshammer (2013) (Page 27)

Abb. 7: Example of a Cluster according to Gabriele Rico in Wolfsberger (2021) (Page 30)



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