The Six Phases of Academic Writing Projects

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The following overview shows six phases of the writing process and the corresponding tasks of an academic writing project, from its conception to the final revisions before handing in the paper. Please note that, while this model may appear very linear, the reality is often a little bit more 'messy'. For example, tasks within a phase may overlap each other, and it might be necessary to skip back (or forward) to accommodate changes. This is a natural part of the process.

If you conduct your own qualitative or quantitative research, allow for more time in the second and third phase of your writing process.

	 I. Orientation and planning Checking expectations directed at the writing assignment and the formal requirements needed to begin writing Planning the writing process Searching for and finding a topic: activating your own knowledge and beginning to phrase questions about the topic Conducting initial research (library, online databases etc.) Clarifying the topic and specifying the main objective Defining the research question, methodology and procedure Writing the research proposal (exposé) Finding supervisors (in case of a bachelor/master thesis)
\leftarrow similar in length \rightarrow	 II. Research and preparation of material 9. Conducting systematic research (library, online databases etc.) 10. Collecting relevant data, sources and materials; creating and updating the bibliography from the previous stage of preliminary research 11. Reading and taking notes; evaluating sources according to methodology and research question
	 III. Structuring the material 12. Ordering, differentiating and documenting the material 13. Creating an outline for your paper (or updating your draft outline fror the exposé in the first stage)
	 IV. Drafting the paper 14. Writing a rough draft of the paper 15. If applicable: editing the outline 16. Asking for feedback (to be incorporated in the next phase)
	 V. Revising the paper 17. Editing the argumentation: checking the relevance of all components for answering the research question; checking for completeness, consistency in logic and reader-friendly transitions in the text 18. Editing the academic style (checking for correct use of source references and completeness of the bibliography) 19. Editing the sentence structure and use of academic language
shorter than previous phases	 VI. Concluding work on the paper 20. Proofreading: eliminating errors in grammar and spelling; adherence to style sheet and formatting 21. Checking for completeness of all components of the paper 22. Submitting the paper

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