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# THESIS ROAD MAP

UNFINISHED LECTURE NOTES

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*Last update, April 2026*

*"LET OTHERS FOLLOW, IF THEY CAN! LET THEM A JOURNEY NEW BEGIN."*

*BILBO BAGGINS*



# *Introduction*

YOU HAVE VERY LITTLE TIME to write your thesis and complete the required development and research. Alongside that, there is bureaucracy and paperwork to handle.

THIS ROADMAP aims to simplify the process by providing clear steps, points of contact, and the key information you need. It outlines the thesis process from eligibility to defense. Think of this as a hub, with spokes leading to more detailed resources.

FEEDBACK IS INVALUABLE in this process. Names, links, procedures, and requirements may change over time. If you have suggestions, corrections, or additional tips, please contribute. This helps keep the roadmap accurate and useful for everyone. As many did before you, pay it forward.

CONTRIBUTE - This project is open for contributions, via GitHub <https://github.com/Quillstacks/ThesisWork/ThesisRoadmap> to report issues, suggest improvements, and submit pull requests.



# Roadmap for Bachelor's Thesis

## Overview of the Artifacts

THREE ARTIFACTS SCAFFOLD THE 12-WEEK WRITING PERIOD from the beginning of May until the end of July. Each artifact is a milestone that structures your progress and feeds directly into the final thesis.

1. **Research Proposal** (prior to final topic registration) – Literature research and problem statement. Introduction, motivation, gap in the state of the art, research questions, and timeline. Must be handed in before the thesis topic is finally registered.
2. **Midterm Report** (mid June) – Thesis overview and proof of concept. Status against plan, overview figure of methods or architecture, prototype, and early challenges.
3. **Submission Ready** (mid July) – Guidelines and checklists. Structure, formatting, reproducibility, ethics, and scholarly writing verified before final submission.

**Timeline:** May 1 – July 31.

[Artifact 1 Template](#)

[Artifact 2 Template](#)

[Artifact 3 Template](#)

## Eligibility and Initial Planning

CLARIFY INTERNALLY WITHIN YOUR COMPANY whether a thesis topic is desired and feasible during the upcoming 12-week practice phase.

**Tip:** Discuss early with your manager.

## Topic Coordination with Company and DHBW

DEFINE A PRELIMINARY TOPIC TOGETHER WITH YOUR COMPANY. The topic should address a real business problem and be feasible within 12 weeks.

**Note:** Ensure alignment with DHBW professors.

Alternatively, a topic may originate from DHBW projects. In this case, ensure approval by your company, as the thesis is written during the practice phase.

Identify and approach suitable DHBW professors whose expertise aligns with your topic. Apply for supervision early.

### *Registration of the Thesis*

REGISTER YOUR THESIS VIA THE DHBW MOODLE SYSTEM.

The provisional title must be submitted no earlier than one month before the official start date and no later than the beginning of the 12-week writing period.

BEFORE THE TOPIC IS FINALLY REGISTERED, hand in the research proposal (Artifact 1). It anchors the topic in literature and a clear problem statement, and gives your DHBW supervisor the basis to approve the final registration. The official start date marks the beginning of your writing period.

### *Supervision and Writing Phase*

DURING THE 12-WEEK WRITING PERIOD, work closely with:

- A company supervisor (technical support, no grading authority)
- A DHBW academic supervisor (responsible for evaluation and academic guidance)

Ensure regular alignment meetings and early clarification of expectations regarding structure, methodology, and scope.

If sensitive company data is used, clarify the need for a confidentiality notice (Sperrvermerk) with your company supervisor.

### *Communication Rhythm with me (Academic Side)*

THROUGHOUT THE 12-WEEK WRITING PERIOD, expect a light but consistent communication cadence with your DHBW supervisor. The flow alternates artifact announcements and touch-point meetings, with a weekly check-in running in parallel.

1. **Artifact 1 – Research Proposal** announcement email introducing the first milestone, with a link to the template and the inputs expected (motivation, gap, research question, methodology sketch, timeline).

**Supervisor note (self):** Push the company to issue a Letter of Intent to the student, signaling interest and intent to continue collaboration beyond the thesis. Non-binding, but a strong signal of commitment. Raise it during topic coordination, not after submission.

**Timeline:** Submit title 1 month before start.

**Scientific Publication:** If co-authoring a scientific paper from the thesis matters to you, ask your company and industrial supervisor about options and how open they are if the work is exceptionally good. A conference or journal submission touches data, methods, and IP they may want to gate, and the writing itself extends past the submission deadline. It adds effort on all three sides, so only push for it if it is something you want for yourself.

**Tip:** Schedule regular meetings with your industrial supervisor.

**Flow:** Artifact 1 – Kickoff – Artifact 2 – Interim – Artifact 3 – Defense.

2. **Kickoff meeting** – align topic, scope, and milestones; bring a 3–5 sentence pitch and one sharp research question.
3. **Artifact 2 – Midterm Report** announcement email at mid-term, framing the report as an honest status update (plan vs. reality, prototype, first results, open risks).
4. **Interim meeting** – reconcile status against the plan, show the prototype in five minutes, and adjust focus for the second half.
5. **Artifact 3 – Submission Ready** announcement email for the final stretch, walking through the submission checklists (formatting, citations, reproducibility, Sperrvermerk, language).
6. **Day of defense** – a short message on the morning of the colloquium with logistics and encouragement. By then, the hard work is done.

In parallel, a **weekly check-in** email carries a link to a short feedback survey. Two minutes from your side helps tailor supervision to what you actually need.

### *Submission*

SUBMIT THE THESIS DIGITALLY VIA THE OFFICIAL EXAMINATION MOODLE.

**Warning:** Late submission = automatic failure.

### *Defense (Colloquium)*

PRESENT AND DEFEND YOUR THESIS in a colloquium. The minimum passing grade is 4.0.

**Format:** 20 min presentation, 10 min discussion.

## *Apply for Thesis Awards*

**STRONG THESIS WORK DESERVES RECOGNITION BEYOND THE GRADE.** Several awards honor outstanding Bachelor's theses. A successful application sharpens your CV, opens doors to professional networks, and often carries prize money.

**TIMING MATTERS.** Most awards have fixed annual deadlines, often months after submission. Prepare while the work is fresh. A typical application package bundles the thesis PDF, a one to two page abstract, your CV, and at least one supervisor endorsement.

**CHECK YOUR NDA AND SPERRVERMERK FIRST.** Many award procedures require submitting the full thesis PDF, and some publish the winning work. If your thesis is under a non-disclosure agreement with your industrial partner, confirm in writing that the agreement is permissive enough for the specific venue you are targeting. That includes scope, audience, and any publication by the award organizer. When in doubt, ask the partner's legal contact before you apply.

**TALK TO ME BEFORE YOU APPLY.** I can help identify the right venues for your topic, write the supervisor endorsement, and flag whether your industrial partner has a parallel internal route. If your work is strong, put it forward. Don't self-censor.

**HALL OF FAME.** Students who won an award on their thesis work appear in the margin. If that's you, please add yourself by pull request. Future cohorts see what's possible, and you get credit where it's due.

**Potential venues:** Curated directory across German awards: [e-fellows.net Preise für Abschlussarbeiten](https://e-fellows.net/Preise-fur-Abschlussarbeiten).

*You applied at a specific venue, let the future kids know! Please add a link here via a pull request. This list lives from student contributions.*

**Reach out early:** the endorsement letter alone usually needs one to two weeks of lead time.

**Hall of fame** (name, year, thesis, company, venue):

- *Your entry could live here.*

*Won an award on your thesis? Please add yourself via a pull request.*