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Connecting with Nature for the Benefit of Mankind –
For more than 185 years.

Scientific Writing

An orientation

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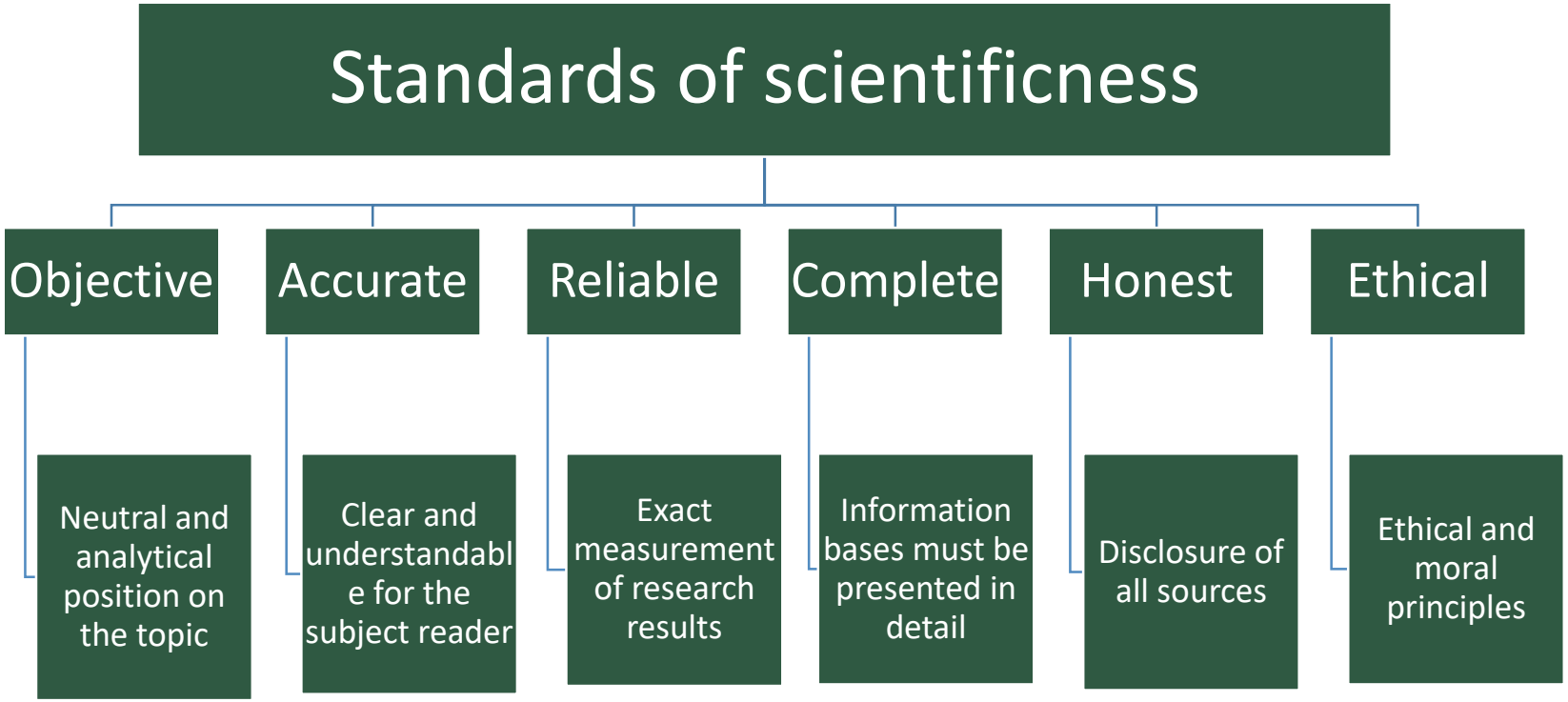
This orientation

- This orientation conveys important basics for scientific writing without claiming completeness.
- **Please observe the guidelines and instructions of the supervising faculty or professor. These have priority!**
- There is not the «absolutely correct and functional» formal structure of a scientific work, but a series of alternative scientific schemes.
- The guidelines of various universities and specialist literature have been taken into account in the preparation of this orientation.
- Please note that scientific work in English may be different from scientific work in German. In this orientation only the German version is covered. Ask your professor about possible guidelines.

What is scientific writing?



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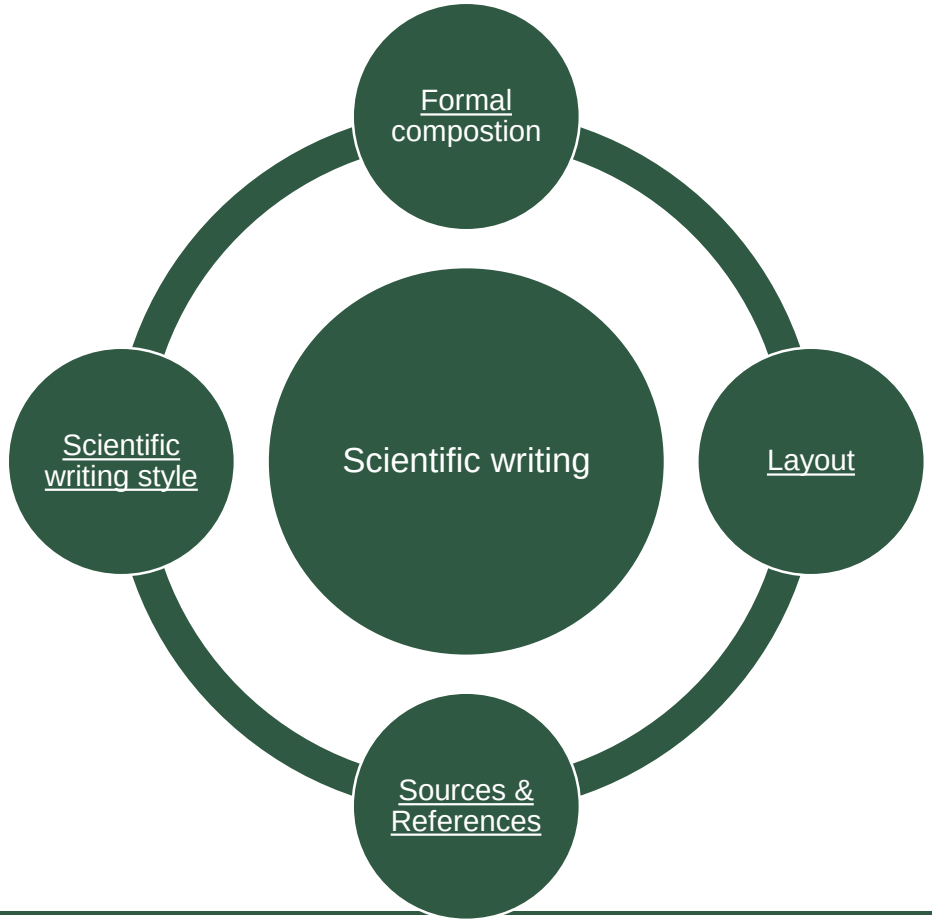
The formalities of the scientific writing



By clicking on the small boxes you get to the corresponding topic!

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Formal composition - structure (1/4)

- Outline is logical structure of work
- Outline items should fit the overall theme of the work
- Hierarchical classification of the individual outline items corresponds to their relevance for the topic
- Outline points on the same outline level do not overlap
- Where a subchapter is created for an upper chapter, at least a second subchapter must also exist
- Structuring points are meaningful and understandable and are not formulated in sentence or question form
- Subdivision points are called differently from breakdown points

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Formal composition - structure (2/4)

- Cover page
- Table of contents
- Abstract
- List of abbreviations
- Figure/table directory
- Introduction
- Main part
- Conclusion
- Bibliography
- Appendix
- Affidavit

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Formal composition - structure (2/4)

Introduction

- [ ] Why is this topic important? What is special about my topic?
- [ ] What are the goals of the work?
- [ ] What did I examine?
- [ ] How did I proceed?
- [ ] How is the work structured?

Main part

- [ ] Where do I get my statements from?
- [ ] Do I argue logically from the general to the specific?
- [ ] Do my thoughts, insights and results follow a common thread?
- [ ] What results have I come to?
- [ ] Are all aspects really relevant or can I delete things for a better focus?

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Formal composition - structure (2/4)

Conclusion

- [ ] Do I summarize the conclusions of my work and do not use new aspects and sources?
- [ ] Am I answering my research question here?

Appendix

- [ ] Additional information
- [ ] Only relevant things like questionnaires, interviews, etc.

Layout (1/2)

- Distances to margins, font type, font size, line spacing, correctness and completeness of directories, etc. → Please note the specifications of the supervising faculty!

- **Numbering of the pages:**
  - Roman numerals (I, II, III, IV etc.) from title page to first page of text
  - Title page counts as first page, but you don't specify the number
  - Use Arabic numerals (1,2,3 etc.) from first page of text
  - No page reference on declaration in oath
  - Pages are only printed on one side and only printed pages are counted

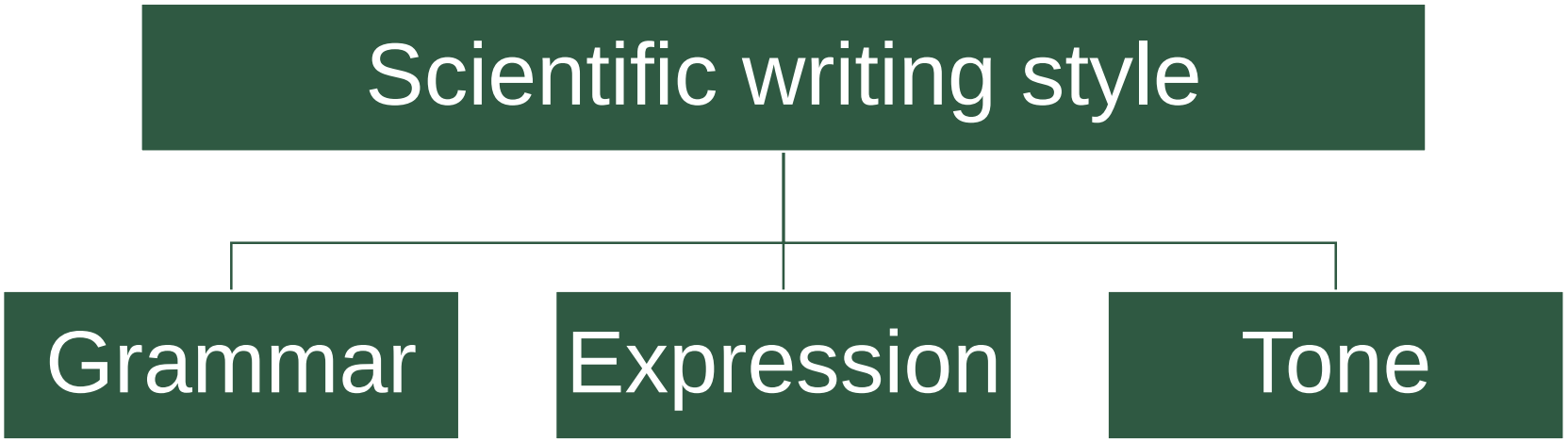
Layout (2/2)

- **Graphs and tables:**
  - Communicating complex facts in a reader-friendly way and thus increasing understanding
  - Text direction as horizontal as possible
  - Limit only to the essentials
  - Should be self-explanatory even without text (use legends, unique designation, axis labeling etc.)
  - Number sequentially and create your own directory for illustrations and tables.

Sources and references

Please note our guide «Quoting correctly»

Scientific writing style (1/4)



Scientific writing style (2/4)

- Scientific texts are usually written in the contemporary form
- Perfect grammar and spelling are mandatory
- Do not take an "I" form to maintain objectivity
- Do not form nested sets
- Understandable, but nevertheless precise / concrete formulation
- Do not use filler words
- Use adjectives sparingly
- Use terminology
- Avoid repetition (except for terminology)
- No subjective statements

Scientific writing style (3/4)

- **Numbers and symbols:**
  - Numbers from zero to twelve are written as words, from 13 on you write numbers
  - However, digits are written when
    - You give statistics,
    - You write down formulas,
    - The word "number" precedes,
    - Smaller and larger numbers in a common context
  - Several numbers should not follow each other directly

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Scientific writing style (4/4)

- **Symbols:**
  - As a rule, no symbols such as «→» or «&» are used in a scientific text
  - Exceptions are currency symbols, the paragraph symbol and the percentage/per mil sign
  - Symbols can be used in graphics, illustrations and diagrams.

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Avoid typical mistakes

- Formalities are not observed
- No schedule created
- Too little focused due to too much distraction
- Literature research finds no end
- Text files not formatted correctly
- No red thread available
- Merely what has been read is strung together without critical reflection
- made a mistake in quoting
- Writing process is chaotic
- Time for proofreading underestimated

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