

REQUIREMENTS FOR GRADUATION THESIS AND THE DEFENCE PROCEDURE IN THE FACULTY OF ARTS AND HUMANITIES OF THE UNIVERSITY OF TARTU

Adopted by the Faculty of Arts and Humanities council resolution no. 11 of 17 February 2016.
Changed with the Faculty of Arts and Humanities council resolution no. 40 of
20 November 2019.

1. Requirements for graduation theses

1.1. The bachelor's thesis is a research paper, which can be a preliminary stage of the future master's thesis. The aim of the thesis is to discuss a specialised topic that is worth exploring, using thematic literature. The requirements for the volume of a bachelor's thesis are as follows:

1.1.1. the body text of a bachelor's thesis (6 ECTS) must be approximately 20–30 standard pages (1800 characters with spaces);

1.1.2. the body text of a bachelor's thesis (12 ECTS) must be approximately 30–40 standard pages (1800 characters with spaces). In creative disciplines the bachelor's thesis consists of creative work and art-theoretical analysis.

1.2. In professional higher education, the final thesis is a study or applied project in two possible formats: 1) a theoretical-applied final thesis studies theoretical or applied problems and offers reasoned solutions to them, 2) a creative-practical final thesis is a project which involves the practical application and testing of the result. Requirements for the volume of a final thesis in professional higher education are the following:

1.2.1. the body text of a theoretical-applied final thesis (15 ECTS) is approximately 30–50 standard pages (1800 characters with spaces);

1.2.2. the creative-practical final thesis (15 ECTS) consists of two parts: a) the written part, which includes analysis and reasoning and the main goal of which is to provide a methodological basis for the practical part or a wider context to the creative project, to systematise and analyse information and experiences related with the practical part, b) the creative-practical part (project, methodological tool, invention, creation etc.) together with its application and/or testing. The body text of the written part of the creative-practical thesis must be approximately 15 standard pages (1800 characters with spaces). In a collective creative-practical thesis, the personal contribution of the student defending the thesis must be specified in detail in the written part.

1.3. The master's thesis is a research paper, which provides an innovative solution to a specialised issue, proceeding from earlier study. The master's thesis is a research or applied project in three possible formats: 1) theoretical study, 2) theoretical-applied study, 3) creative-practical project. Requirements for the volume of master's thesis are the following:

1.3.1. the body text of a theoretical and theoretical-applied master's thesis (15 ECTS) must be approximately 30–50 standard pages (1800 characters with spaces);

1.3.2. the body text of a theoretical and theoretical-practical master's thesis (30 ECTS) must be approximately 40–80 standard pages (1800 characters with spaces);

1.3.3. the body text of the written part of a creative-practical master's thesis (30 ECTS) must be approximately 40–60 standard pages (1800 characters with spaces). In a collective

creative-practical thesis the personal contribution of the student defending the thesis must be specified in detail in the written part.

1.4. The master's project (15 ECTS) is a practical study that aims to solve a certain problem or topic with the help of specialised knowledge and involves an applied result. The master's project consists of three parts: a) practical part, b) theoretical-methodological framework, c) documentation of the workflow of the project. The practical part is an independent part, the format and volume of which comply with the aims of the master's project. The body text of the theoretical-methodological part must be 15–20 standard pages (1800 characters with spaces).

1.5. Specific requirements for the contents and format of the graduation thesis are approved by the institute managing the curriculum, or if there are more managers, the institute coordinating the management of the curriculum. The requirements are published in the study information system and additionally, in the website of the institute.

2. Procedure for forming the defence committee

2.1. Defence dates and the composition of the defence committee(s) are approved by the head of the institute managing the curriculum, or if there are more managers, the head of the institute coordinating the management of the curriculum, not later than a month before the exam. If the person completing the curriculum is granted a qualification, the composition of the defence committee must be coordinated with the qualification committee.

2.2. The defence committee consists of at least three voting members. If the supervisor of a graduation thesis is a member of the defence committee, he/she participates in discussing the assessment of such thesis with the right to speak but not vote.

3. Procedure for defence of the graduation thesis

3.1. The prerequisite for allowing a graduation thesis to be defended is that the student has completed all the other courses, unless the curriculum provides otherwise.

3.2. The graduation thesis must be submitted to the defence committee at least one week before the date of defence in a duly formalised electronic version. The council of the institute may also establish a procedure according to which the graduation paper is also submitted on paper.

3.2.1. It is recommended to check the thesis with a plagiarism detection system in cooperation with the supervisor before submitting it to the defence committee. [effective as of 20 November 2019]

3.3. The graduation thesis submitted for defence includes the following parts: a) at the end of the thesis, a separate document including a non-exclusive license with which the author grants the university a right to reproduce the thesis, for the purpose of preservation and making available to the public, and to make the thesis available to the public via the web environment of the university; b) declaration signed by the author of the thesis that he/she has written the thesis independently; c) consent signed by the supervisor that the thesis is allowed to the defence. The student defending the thesis may also present other materials characterising the scientific and practical value of the graduation thesis.

3.4. The graduation thesis and multimedia files that form a part of the thesis are made available to the public via the web environment of the University of Tartu. If the thesis cannot be made public electronically due to the proprietary rights belonging to third persons, Personal Data Protection Act, state or trade secrets or other confidential information, the author submits a reasoned request to the vice dean for academic affairs to impose restrictions on the publication of the thesis. The thesis on paper will be retained as an archival document in the library of the institute.

3.5. The defence committee appoints a reviewer for the graduation thesis. The reviewer must be a graduate of at least the same level of study and competent in the problems of the field of research.

3.6. The reviewer submits a written review of the graduation thesis to the committee and the student preferably three days before the defence, or at least one working day before the defence at the latest. The review must include an analysis of the thesis and start a discussion with the author of the thesis, characterise the thesis both in terms of contents and format and give a reasoned evaluation to the graduation thesis. [effective as of 20 November 2019]

3.7. The graduation thesis is assessed at the public defence. To protect the confidentiality of personal data, state or business secrets or a technological solution, the vice dean for academic affairs may, based on a reasoned request of the author of the thesis, declare the defence closed for the public. The supervisor and the reviewer of the thesis participate in the defence, except if they have a good reason not to participate in the defence. On the basis of a reasoned request, the chair of the defence committee may allow participation in the defence by means of two-way audio-visual communication (e.g. Skype, video conference, etc.). If the reviewer or supervisor cannot participate in the defence, the chair of the defence committee will read out their opinion of the thesis.

3.8. The main stages in the defence are: a) presentation by the author of the graduation thesis, in which he/she gives a brief introduction of the main points of the thesis; b) academic discussion between the author and the reviewer; d) closing words by the author; e) committee discussion and making the decision on the grade. If necessary, also the supervisor is given the floor.

3.9. The graduation thesis is assessed by the defence committee, taking into account the suggestion of the reviewer, the estimate given to the thesis and the defence by the defence committee, and the opinion of the supervisor. The defence committee is competent to make the decision on the grade, if more than a half of the members of the defence committee are present.

3.10. The result of the defence of the graduation thesis is announced immediately after the defence record has been signed, but not later than one working day after the defence.

3.11. Repeat defence of the graduation thesis can take place in the following semester at the earliest. The repeat defence is conducted pursuant to these procedures established by the faculty council.