



Faculty of Humanities

# **Thesis Regulations Master's Programmes**

**Graduate School of Humanities**

## Introduction

These MA thesis regulations apply to all Master's programmes (one year, professional and research) of the Graduate School of Humanities. Every degree programme determines additional guidelines in a separate thesis manual. The topics dealt with in this thesis manual include: the procedures pertaining to designating a thesis supervisor and second assessor; submitting a thesis proposal and work outline; submission periods; general editorial and style guidelines and assessment criteria.

## General criteria

1. The thesis counts for 18 ECTS and is generally comprised of no less and no more than 15,000 and 23,000 words respectively (excluding notes, bibliography and attachments).
2. The thesis is a written report about a research project which has been conducted independently by a student under the guidance of a thesis supervisor. The thesis should clearly show that the student is capable of:
  - a. studying and evaluating the relevant literature in his/her academic discipline;
  - b. formulating a research plan;
  - c. conducting research in an academically acceptable manner and reporting on said research in a way that satisfies the specified requirements of the academic discipline;
  - d. thinking in a critical and creative way;
  - e. correct formulation.
3. The thesis should in any event contain the following elements:
  - a. a research question;
  - b. a justification for the theoretical and/or historical framework wherein research has been conducted, as well as an outline of the used methodology;
  - c. a critical relay and evaluation of the (for the research question) relevant literature and documentation;
  - d. an own contribution by the student, e.g. providing an own interpretation, evaluating the current state of affairs concerning the research area, publishing new facts and details or developing a new theoretical insight;
  - e. substantiated conclusions with regard to the research question;
  - f. a consistently applied style with regard to referencing and bibliographical details.
4. The thesis must be written in the official language of instruction of the programme as specified in the Teaching and Examination Regulations Part B Article 1.2. As determined in clause 3 of Article 1.2 of the Teaching and Examination Regulations Part B, a deviation in the language of the thesis is possible. To request a deviation from the official language of instruction, the student must submit a motivation to the Examinations Board of the GSH demonstrating that:
  - a. at least 30 ECTS of the study programme will be obtained in the official language;
  - b. there are academic grounds for the deviation from the official language (The language of source material does not provide sufficient grounds);
  - c. permission has been granted by the supervisor and the second assessor and, where necessary, the Master's Coordinator.
  - d. the supervisor and second assessor declare that they are sufficiently proficient in the language of the thesis to evaluate the quality of language use in the thesis.

## Supervision

As for requesting supervision, the student is required to follow the guidelines outlined in the programme thesis manual.

The thesis supervisor is an examiner as specified in article VI of the Rules and Guidelines of the Examinations Board Graduate School of Humanities of the University of Amsterdam.

The degree programme can limit the total number of hours that a supervisor is made available for thesis supervision.

The act of receiving thesis supervision is deemed a provision of education. This means that a student must be enrolled in order to be entitled to education.

The student is entitled to adequate supervision and feedback as regards to submitted work up and till the moment a thesis is assessed.

The supervisor must have adequately taken note of the different sections which make up the thesis before assessing the final draft. Under no circumstances can a completed thesis be handed to a supervisor without his/her prior knowledge and input.

Some of the issues on which student and supervisor should consult one another include:

- a. the choice and delineation of the research topic, research plan and research question, sources and material;
- b. the work plan, which contains the agreed timeframe as regards submission and discussion of the various thesis sections;
- c. the student's progress;
- d. the final draft of the thesis, in which the thesis assessment is announced and explained.

The thesis must be concluded within 12 months following the initial request supervision, as outlined in the thesis manual.

The supervisor is entitled to terminate his/her supervising responsibilities after the expiration of the allotted supervision hours and/or when the timeframe for completion exceeds 12 months. In such an event, the supervisor must inform the master's coordinator and student of his/her intention to do so. If the student hereafter once again seeks supervision, he/she must officially request so in accordance with the regulations outlined in the thesis manual.

### **Second assessor**

A second assessor will either be appointed by the Master's Coordinator of the corresponding degree programme, or by another academic staff member as stated in the thesis manual. Both student and supervisor will be notified once such a decision has been made.

The second assessor must be an examiner in accordance with article VI of the Rules and Guidelines of the Examinations Board GSH of the University of Amsterdam.

The second assessor will not take over any of the supervisor's formal duties, but will assess the thesis in accordance with generally accepted academic standards. The second assessor is for all intents and purposes only accountable to the Examinations Board.

### **Assessment**

The final version of the thesis should be submitted to the supervisor and second assessor and on the Canvas Thesis Site of the relevant programme. When applying for the degree certificate, the student will need to submit the form 'Thesis submission' and upload a digital copy of the thesis. The thesis is subsequently archived in the library's digital database, UvA Scripties Online.

The thesis will be assessed within 20 workdays of the final draft being submitted. More specific regulations pertaining to assessment can be formulated in the thesis manual, especially with regard to lecture-free periods and holidays.

The final mark given to the thesis is determined in consultation between the supervisor and second assessor. In doing so they will at least make use of the assessment form provided by the Examinations Board as stated on the staff website of the Faculty of Humanities (via A-Z > Thesis). Degree programmes are permitted to include additions in the 'Criteria' and 'Comments' columns as well as add new columns. The instructions in the assessment form must always be maintained. The assessment form used by the programme must be included in the thesis manual.

If no final mark can be agreed upon, the supervisor may request mediation by the Examinations Board.

**Retake**

If the thesis is given a fail, the student will receive one opportunity to revise and resubmit an improved draft within a reasonable timeframe (to be agreed upon by the thesis supervisor). If the improved draft is not submitted within the allotted timeframe, the thesis will be awarded a fail for a second time. If the revised thesis is once again deemed not to have met the specified requirements, the student will have to write a completely new thesis and formally request supervision according to the regulations outlined in the relevant thesis manual.

**Regulation changes**

The Examinations Board of the Graduate School of Humanities has the authority to change these regulations if it so wishes.

**Disclaimer**

This MA thesis regulations document is a translation of the ‘Scriptiereglement Masteropleidingen Graduate School of Humanities’. In the event of any discrepancy between the two, the text of the Dutch original shall prevail.

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