

Workshop on Master Thesis Research - Handout-

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Scope and type of the master examination

A Master's examination contains:

1. The examination performances according to the regulations of this Examination Regulations Statute
2. Master Thesis (80%)
3. The Oral Thesis Defence (20%).

100%: Mark of the Master Thesis Project

In the thesis, graduating students have to show that they are able to work independently on a problem of their field of expertise according to **scientific methods** (check the hand out on how to write a Master Thesis) **within the deadline set**. Usually, the Master Thesis is written when all module examinations have been passed. Please consult the study secretariat when in doubt.

Topic

With the assignment of the thesis's topic **period of working time starts**. The assignment has to be legally recorded. No delay will be accepted and in case of late submission the Master Thesis will be considered as failed (mark: 5,0).

Deadlines

-the thesis has to be submitted on the 7th of August at 12 noon

-a thesis that is submitted after this deadline has to be considered as failed (mark: 5.0)

Extension of working time

The examination board accepts extension of working time only in exceptional cases. Exceptional cases are those, which are out of control of the individual student, e.g. when cooperation partners fail to cooperate, or when the thesis has been assigned on wrong assumptions). After this deadline extension can only be granted in case of sickness that prevents the candidate from working on the thesis. **Application for extension has to be submitted at latest two months before the previously set submission date**. Additional working time **cannot exceed more than three months**. In case of sickness, graduates have to **present a medical certificate immediately, at the latest three days after onset of the sickness**.

Submission of Master Thesis

The graduate must certify, that the Master Thesis has been compiled independently and no material was used other than that referred to. Sources directly quoted and ideas used, including figures, tables, sketches, drawings and photos, have been correctly denoted.

Repetition of Master Thesis

A Master Thesis that has been evaluated as failed can only be **repeated once**. If the deadline of repetition has been exceeded, the Master Thesis is evaluated as failed definitely. If repetition is not possible anymore, Master Thesis is evaluated as failed. It is not possible to repeat a passed Master Exam.

Oral Thesis Defence

The Oral Thesis Defence consists of **20 minutes of oral presentation** of the Master Thesis (contains a summary of the whole research project, especially results, conclusion, recommendations, might also include questions for discussion at the end) and **10 minutes of discussion with the public** that is allowed to join the presentation (usually students, employees from the university). Then, there is an **oral examination of 30 minutes** with the two supervisors. The public is excluded here. The examination will have its focus on research done (e.g. methodology applied, results, conclusion, recommendations, background information,...) but the graduate must also be able to answer questions that go beyond the research topic of the Master Thesis. However, all these kind of questions are somehow linked to the research of the Master Thesis. It is **not possible to repeat a passed Oral Thesis Defence** .

Supervisors

If you **need any kind of support** related to your research do not hesitate to contact your supervisors **as early as possible**. Actually, this is our job. We are there to support you and to help you with any kind of problems that might arise concerning your research project. Don't fear to discuss with us. We all learn from each other.

With submission of the thesis proposal you can propose two lecturers as supervisors of your thesis. If you are in doubt who could be the best supervisor for your topic, please contact your lecturers.

The first supervisor is your main contact person, the second supervisor will usually only read the thesis after submission. However, the first supervisor can advise you to contact the second supervisor if his or her specific expertise is required. This is particularly the case when your topic has a strong multidisciplinary character.

We expect **a regular update on the status and development of your research** (every two weeks). Updates may be given by email, in **a personal meeting** or a **call**, whereby we expect that you hand in **in advance the progress of your work and your questions (at last two days before the meeting)**, which allows the supervisors to prepare this meeting and their comments. The supervisors will discuss your questions with you and will give you advise in case of problems or doubts. In an early stage of your research and on your request the supervisor may read parts of your thesis draft and give you hints how you can improve it. However, the supervisor will not proofread your thesis and he or she will not read whole chapters after a deadline of 6 weeks before submission. In this finally phase of your thesis you should only raise concrete questions and issues related to your research. It is also recommendable but voluntary to show that you consider the comments done by your supervisors, which is reflected in the progress of your work. .

General remarks

Time planning: **Make sure that you are able to manage the targets set.** This is why it is of essential importance to **prepare a detailed time schedule** before you start your research. In case of doubt discuss it with your supervisors if it is manageable.

Keep always in mind your major research question. Which questions do you want to answer? Why is it useful to do this research and what information is needed to answer this question (these questions)? Try to focus on that and not to lose your track. This will save you a lot of time. Again, please consult your supervisor if changes in the original scope are planned, or if there is doubt about the direction of the thesis.

Most of you are not native English speakers and we don't expect that your thesis is written in perfect English. However, if sentences are not clear, can be misunderstood or cannot be understood at all this will have an impact on your grade. Therefore make sure that your thesis is written in clear and understandable English language.