



THESIS REGULATION MASTER OF THEOLOGY (GENERAL / MINISTRY PROGRAMMES)

NB: Wherever 'student', 'lecturer', 'he' and 'his' are mentioned in this regulation, female students and lecturers are also to be understood.

GENERAL

Article 1 *Graduation period*

Each student concludes his Master's Degree Programme with a final graduation thesis. A study load of a maximum of 12 weeks (16.5 ECTS credits) has been allocated for this. Directly after this, the student is given one week (1 ECTS credits) to prepare the Graduation Presentation.

In this Regulation, these 13 weeks are referred to as the Graduation Period

PREPARATION

Article 2 *Module 'Methodology'*

The student is obliged to have completed the joint module 'Methodology' before the start of the Graduation Period. Among other things, this course offers a fundamental preparation on planning and tackling the writing of a thesis and the study required for this.

Article 3 *Subject*

The subject for the thesis is determined by the lecturer of the discipline in which the student desires to graduate (the study coordinator) after consultation with the student. The subject must be in alignment with the graduation project that has been determined for that discipline for that academic year.

The determination of the subject area and the research topic takes place during the second phase of the Graduation Programme, and occurs, at the latest, in the first week of the Graduation Period

Article 4 *Research proposal*

As soon as possible thereafter, but at the latest in the fourth week of the Graduation period, the student will submit a research proposal (including a time schedule), indicating what he wishes to research, why, how and when. When assessing this proposal, the study coordinator will take special note of a concrete and feasible objective.

THE STUDY FOR, AND WORK ON, THE THESIS

Article 5 *Contact opportunities*

From the determination of subject area and research topic up to the eighth week of the Graduation Period, there is, in principle, opportunity for weekly contact with the study coordinator.

The student can consult the study coordinator and the lecturer can offer feedback and advice to the student.

Article 6 *Graduation Group*

All students who are graduating in a certain discipline, together with the lecturer(s), form a graduation group. Should the graduation group become too small in a certain year, a combination will be made with another discipline.

The graduation group will meet once every two weeks during the whole Graduation Period. In certain cases, it can be decided to meet more often in the beginning of the period, as long as the average number of meetings during the whole period remains the same.

In the Graduation Group, subjects from the discipline and the graduation subjects are discussed, as well as summaries of literature, research plans, thesis outlines and draft texts of (components of) the theses.

The lecturer(s) of the discipline concerned and the participating students give feedback on the presented proposals.

Article 7 **Date list**

The study coordinator provides the Graduation Group with a list of dates for the work discussions and dates for submission of various components of the progress reports.

Article 8 **Outline**

In the eighth week of the Graduation Period, the student will present an outline of his thesis. He will also define the research proposal and will present a formulation of the research question resulting from it. In addition, he will present a time schedule to show his planning for the coming four weeks. All this is discussed with the study coordinator and in the graduation group and, if necessary, adjusted.

Conceiving and writing the thesis

In the following four weeks, the student will direct himself towards conceiving and writing the thesis. Drafts (of components) will be presented and discussed in the Graduation Group. Besides this, the study coordinator will only still give feedback, advice or commentary upon request.

Article 10 **Scope and design**

The scope of the thesis can amount to a maximum of 50 to 60 pages in A4-format (25.000 - 30.000 words). In the case of a historical thesis, the scope can be larger, namely a maximum of 70 to 80 pages A4 (35.000 - 40.000 words).

The thesis must comply with the directives in the 'Turabian Guide for Citing Sources' which is to be found on the website.

Article 11 **Diverging regulation**

Should a lecturer wish to diverge from one or two of the time scales mentioned in Articles 3 up to and including 5, 8 and 9, he must include the divergent regulation for the time scales for the aforementioned Articles in the Date list referred to in Article 7.

FINALIZING THE THESIS

Article 12 **Acceptance**

Once the student has completed his thesis, he will submit a draft thesis to the study coordinator for assessment. This draft version must be as complete as possible, including conclusions, references, literature list and table of contents.

The study coordinator will assess as soon as possible, but at the latest within 10 working days, whether the thesis can be accepted. Should the study coordinator not have communicated his assessment to the student within this period (subject to particular circumstances, to be judged by the Examination Review Committee), the student may assume that the thesis has been accepted.

The study coordinator will involve in his assessment:

- the question if the contents of the thesis are in agreement with the foundations of the university;
- all that is mentioned in Article 10 of this regulation;
- the objective and final attainment levels of the master's programme, which function as a frame of reference;
- the degree to which the student has adhered to the time allocated;
- his assessment of the extent to which the student has worked independently.

In a personal conversation he will communicate to the student whether he considers the draft thesis to be satisfactory or unsatisfactory and will provide criticism and comments.

If the draft thesis is accepted, the student still has the opportunity, if he so wishes, to introduce certain modifications.

Article 13 **New version**

Should the study coordinator be of the opinion that the concept thesis cannot (yet) be accepted, he will discuss his criticism and remarks/objections with the student and indicate as precisely as possible, which components desire or demand improvement.

The student will be offered the opportunity to prepare a new draft version of the thesis, based on the study coordinator's comments.

Once this version has been handed in, Article 12 applies accordingly.

Article 14 *Duplication*

Once the study coordinator has accepted the draft thesis, the student must submit the digital version (PDF) of the thesis, as well as proof of acceptance by the study coordinator, to the Student Administration Desk. He will also submit to Student Administration five hard copy versions for the Assessment Committee (3) and library (2, of which one in a ring binder)

The student is himself responsible for printing and duplicating the thesis and for the (digital) distribution of the thesis to the study coordinator, the Thesis Committee and the Graduation Group.

Article 15 *Thesis Committee*

Within five working days after the moment of handing in the definite thesis, the study coordinator will invite (preferably from his own section) two other lecturers to sit with him on the Thesis Committee.

He then provides them with the thesis, mentioning thereby how long the student has taken to produce his thesis. The latter is necessary because (substantial) exceeding of the allocated time is taken into account in this assessment.

ASSESSMENT OF THE THESIS

Article 16 *Assessment by the co-readers*

Within ten working days after receiving the thesis, both members of the Thesis Committee (the 'co-readers') will form a judgement. They involve in their judgement:

- the question whether the contents of the thesis are in agreement with the foundations of the university;
- the quality of the work, with the final attainment levels of the master programme as a frame of reference;
- all that is mentioned in Article 10 of this regulation;
- the degree to which the student has adhered to the time allocated;

Article 17 *Difference of appraisal*

If one or both the co-readers is/are of the opinion that the thesis cannot be judged 'sufficient', then the study coordinator will be informed directly and a consultation will be arranged as soon as possible, but at the latest within five working days, between the members of the Thesis Committee.

In the case that the Thesis Committee, even after repeated consultations, cannot be come to terms, the matter will be reported to the Examination Review Committee, which can appoint two other members to the Thesis Committee.

Should there still be no agreement, then the extended Thesis Committee will decide by majority of votes.

Article 18 *Determining the date of the Graduation Presentation*

If no response has been received from the co-readers within ten working days, then the study coordinator can assume that both the co-readers share his judgement.

At the latest within three working days hereafter, or within three working days after the determination of the mutual assessment referred to in Article 17, the study coordinator will, in consultation with the student, the co-readers and the student administration desk, set the date and time for the graduation presentation.

Article 19 *Establishing the assessment and mark for the thesis*

In good time before the moment at which the graduation presentation is to be held, the Thesis Committee will meet to determine the assessment of the thesis and the mark to be awarded.

The study coordinator will submit a written proposal to this end, which forms the main point for discussion.

When mutual assessment and marking has been reached, these will be recorded in writing on the therefore intended form.

THE GRADUATION PRESENTATION

Article 20 *Presentation*

The student will give a presentation of a minimum of 20 minutes on his thesis to members of the Thesis Committee and the members of the Graduation Group. The presentation is of a public nature and can be attended by interested parties from inside an outside the university.

Attention can be paid to the set-up, objective and relevance of the research, the literature examined, the methods followed and the outcomes of the research.

This component will be marked separately, with attention paid to:

- the level of the content;

- the manner of presentation.

This mark constitutes half the marks of the graduation presentation as a whole.

Presentation and discussion together last a maximum of 60 minutes.

Article 21 Discussion

Subsequently, the student members of the Graduation Group and the involved lecturers will be given the opportunity to ask the student questions about the thesis and the given presentation. The study coordinator will lead the discussion, which lasts a minimum of 30 minutes. He can also give other people present the opportunity to ask questions.

This component, too, will be marked separately, with attention paid to:

- the degree of mastery of the content;
- the capacity to give to-the-point replies to questions and criticism;
- the ability to make connections between other subjects and/or disciplines.

This mark constitutes half of the mark for the graduation presentation as a whole.

Presentation and discussion together last a maximum of 60 minutes.

Article 22 Assessment of graduation presentation

After the presentation and the discussion of questions, the Thesis Committee will withdraw for the assessment and marking of the two components and the determination of the mark for the graduation presentation as a whole. This last mark is obtained by averaging the two component marks. This is then rounded to one figure after the point. If the second figure after the point is a 5 or higher, it will be rounded up.

A short summary of the assessment and a motivation for the mark awarded is recorded in writing on the form intended for this.

CONCLUDING CONVERSATIONS

Article 23 Communication of result

In connection with that is mentioned in Article 22, the final mark and the assessment of the separate components will be communicated to the student by the Committee in a personal conversation. This takes place in the form of an explanation of the recorded assessment and marks of thesis and graduation presentation, of which the student will receive a copy.

After the conversation, the study coordinator will ensure that a copy of the written assessment is submitted to the student administration desk, who will file it in the archive and present it to the library.

Article 24 Concluding conversation

The student is entitled to a concluding conversation with his study coordinator. If he so desires, he can communicate this to the study coordinator. The conversation will take place, at the latest, within three working days after the graduation presentation.

OBJECTION

Article 25 Objection

Should a student have objections against the proceedings during the graduation period or against the assessment of his thesis and/or graduation presentation, he can submit a complaint up to ten working days, at the latest, after the date of the graduation presentation to the Examination Review Committee of the university.

An appeal can be made against the ruling of the Examination Review Committee before the Examination Appeals Board.

DISTRIBUTION/PUBLICATION

Article 26 Distribution and/or publication

After the graduation, the thesis will be incorporated into the university library and can be consulted by interested parties. Should a student wish to distribute his thesis on a more wide-spread basis than within the circle mentioned in Article 14, and/or in the case that the student wishes in any manner to publish, or present for publication, his thesis, he will require written permission from the university's Examination Review Committee.

Should the Examination Review Committee withhold permission, this must be motivated in writing.

Against a negative decision by the Examination Review Committee appeal can be made before the Board of Governors of the university.