



THESIS REGULATION MASTER OF THEOLOGY GENERAL

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 17 ECTS credits has been allocated for this. Directly after this, the student is given 1 ECTS credit (a study load of 28 hours) to prepare the Graduation Presentation. In principle, a full-time student has 12 weeks to write the thesis. A part-time student (PT) has twice as long a time to graduate; 24 weeks for writing the thesis and 2 weeks for the graduation presentation. In this Regulation, these 13, respectively 26, weeks are called the Graduation Period. A shorter or longer graduation period can be chosen in consultation with the study coordinator.

PREPARATION

Article 2 *Requirements*

In general, the student is obliged to have completed all the preceding modules of the Master's Programme before starting the Graduation Period, with the exception of the subsidiary subject/minor. The thesis is then the final part of the programme. The study coordinator assesses whether the student may embark on the thesis and can decide otherwise.

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, the student will submit a research proposal (including a time schedule), indicating what he/she 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 the subject field and research topic up to the eighth (PT: sixteenth) week of the Graduation Period, the student is granted the opportunity to have contact with the study coordinator every two weeks. The student can consult the study coordinator and this lecturer can offer feedback and advice to the student.

Article 6 *Outline*

In the eighth (PT: sixteenth) week of the Graduation Period the student will present a rough outline of his/her thesis. He/she will also define the research proposal and will present a formulation of the research question resulting from it. In addition, he/she will present a time schedule to show his/her planning for the coming four (PT: eight) weeks. All this will be discussed with the study coordinator and, if necessary, adjusted.

Article 7 *Conceiving and Writing the Thesis*

In the following four (PT: eight) weeks, the student will direct him/herself mainly towards conceiving and writing the thesis. The study coordinator will now only give feedback, advice or commentary upon request.

Article 8 **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, or a thesis with empirical research, 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 Chicago Manual of Style (most recent edition). In addition, the student must adhere to the 'Guidelines and rules for written assignments', which can be found on Sakai.

Article 9 **Deviant regulation**

Should a study coordinator and a student wish to deviate from one or two of the time periods mentioned in Articles 3 up to and including 8, a deviant date list is to be made as part of the time schedule of the research plan.

FINALIZING THE THESIS

Article 10 **Acceptance**

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

- what is dictated in Article 9 of this regulation;
- the objective and final attainment levels of the master's programme, which function as a frame of reference;
- the assessment categories for master's theses, namely:
 1. academic attitude
 2. academic process and product
 3. processing of source references
 4. handling of theological concepts
 5. Incorporation of other academic disciplines
 6. connecting knowledge and insight with a Reformed perspective
 7. practical relevance
- the degree to which the student has adhered to the time allocated;
- the extent to which the student has worked independently.

In a personal conversation, the study coordinator 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 so desired, to introduce certain modifications.

Article 11 **New version**

Should the study coordinator be of the opinion that the concept thesis cannot (yet) be accepted, he/she 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 10 applies accordingly.

Article 12 **Submission of Thesis and Filing**

Students submit the final version of their thesis digitally through Sakai to the Student Administration Desk, whereas the **study coordinator** delivers the filled-in assessment forms and the protocol to the Student Administration Desk. The Student Administration Desk files away the thesis, the assessment form and the protocol; in the student's digital archive.

Article 13 **Assessment Committee**

Within five working days after the moment of handing in the definite thesis, the study coordinator will invite at least one other lecturer to sit with him on the Assessment Committee. It is advisable to ask an external expert, especially if there is no specific knowledge of the thesis subject inside the university. If the thesis has a multi-disciplinary character, the assessment committee will generally be expanded to three persons. An internal lecturer will then function as a co-reader during the origination process of the thesis.

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

ASSESSMENT OF THE THESIS

Article 14 *Assessment by the Co-readers*

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

- 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 8 of this regulation;
- the degree to which the student has adhered to the time allocated;

Article 15 *Differences in the appraisal*

If one or both of the co-readers is/are of the opinion that the thesis cannot be assessed as '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 Assessment Committee.

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

Should there still be no agreement, then the expanded Assessment Committee will decide by a majority of votes. In the case of an 'insufficient', the student will be given one chance to rewrite the thesis and submit it anew.

Article 16 *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 16, 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. It is also possible to determine a provisional graduation date earlier in the process.

Article 17 *Establishing the Assessment of the Thesis*

In good time before the moment at which the graduation presentation is to be held, the Assessment 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 have been reached, these will be recorded in writing on the therefore intended 'Assessment Form Thesis and Graduation Presentation'.

THE GRADUATION PRESENTATION

Article 18 *Presentation*

The student will give a presentation of a minimum of 15 minutes on his thesis to members of the Assessment Committee and others present. The presentation is of a public nature and can be attended by interested parties from inside and 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 19 **Discussion**

Subsequently, the involved lecturers will be given the opportunity to ask the student questions pertaining to the thesis and the given presentation. The study coordinator will lead the discussion, which lasts a minimum of 30 minutes. The study coordinator 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 20 **Assessment of graduation presentation**

After the presentation (P) and the discussion (D) of questions, the Assessment Committee will withdraw for the assessment and marking of the two components and the determination of the mark for the graduation presentation (GP) as a whole. This last mark is obtained by averaging the marks of the two components. This is then rounded to one digit after the point. If the second digit after the point is a 5 or higher, it will be rounded up. $(GP=P+D/2)$

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

CONCLUDING CONVERSATIONS

Article 21 **Communication of result**

In connection with that which is mentioned in Article 20, 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 the marks of the thesis and the 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 archives and present it to the library.

The assessment of the Thesis (T) weighs three times and the assessment of the Graduation Presentation (GP) as a whole once. The mark is rounded to one digit after the point.

Final mark = $(T*3+GP*1)/4$.

Article 22 **Concluding conversation**

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

OBJECTION

Article 23 **Objection**

Should a student have objections towards the proceedings during the graduation period or towards 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 24 **Distribution and/or publication**

After graduation, the thesis will (possibly after an embargo) with the permission of the student and study coordinator, be made available online through the library repository. The student and study coordinator sign the declaration 'Form Inspection Thesis Library'. In the case of disagreement between the study coordinator and the student on the digital availability of the thesis, the Examination Review Committee will decide.

Determined by the Board of Directors on 1 December 2020