MASTER'S THESIS GUIDE
SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION 3

THESIS PROCESS RELATED ROLES AND TERMS 4

THESIS EXAMINERS AND THESIS SUPERVISION 5

THESIS TOPIC 5

FORM AND STRUCTURE OF A MASTER'S THESIS 6

PROFICIENCY TEST 6

THE MASTER'S THESIS EVALUATION PROCESS 7

SUBMITTING THE THESIS 7

Dates and Deadlines 7

Turnitin Originality Check 7

Submitting the Thesis and Exhibition Material 7

MASTER'S THESIS SEMINAR 8

GRADING 9

GRADUATION AND DEGREE CERTIFICATE 10

MASTER'S THESIS AND GRADUATION - CHECKLIST 11

MASTER'S THESIS EXAMINERS (SUPERVISORS) 12

INTRODUCTION

All master degree students prepare a master's thesis to demonstrate their proficiency and competence in their chosen field of study. As a master's thesis is prepared as an indicator of scientific maturity, you have the ultimate responsibility for the form and content of your thesis. You may start working on your master's degree, when you have finished most of your mandatory courses, usually at the end of the first semester of the second year of the master's degree.

This document is a guide to the master's thesis process at Tampere University's School of Architecture. It offers instructions for the preparation and submission of master's theses and provides an overview of the thesis evaluation and graduation processes.

We also recommend the Tampere University's Thesis Writing Guide of Technical Fields (See Student's Guide page "Master's Thesis in Technology/Architecture"). It is intended for all of the university's engineering and architecture students and includes helpful information on preparing written reports.

THESIS PROCESS RELATED ROLES AND TERMS

SUPERVISORS / EXAMINERS
You'll have a main supervisor during your master's thesis process, who will then be one of the thesis examiners (examiner 1). You may also have co-supervisors, one of them might also function as the second examiner for your thesis (examiner 2). If you only have one supervisor, the examiner 2 will be named after you've submitted your thesis for examination.

MASTER'S THESIS SEMINAR
All students present their thesis publicly at the master's thesis seminar. Seminars are organized twice every semester.

DEGREE PROGRAMME COMMITTEE
After the master's thesis seminar, the Degree Programme Committee gathers and decides upon a proposal for a grade for the master's thesis.

DEAN OF THE FACULTY
The Dean officially appoints the examiners of the master's theses, approves the theses and confirms the proposed grades and the degrees.

TURNITIN ORIGINALITY CHECK
All theses have to be handed in for an originality check before thesis submission.

PROFICIENCY TEST
Usually the abstract of your thesis serves as the mandatory proficiency test. In some cases supervisors might require the student to write a separate proficiency test. In this case it is an essay-type paper that demonstrates your conversance with the topic of the thesis.

Don't forget these:

EDUCATION SPECIALIST
The academic officer guides you through the process and approves the study plan (PSP).

STUDENT SERVICES ASSISTANT
The student services assistant takes care of the official paperwork related to the master's thesis and graduation.

The contact email-address for both is ben.studies.tau@tuni.fi.

THESIS SUPERVISION AND THESIS EXAMINERS

To start working on your master's thesis, you need a supervisor, who must be a professor or staff member with a doctoral degree at the School of Architecture, who represents the field of the thesis (see list at the end of the guide). To find a supervisor for your thesis, please contact a professor/teacher form the examiners list, who represents your area of interest and discuss your topic or topic ideas with him/her. He/she will also advise you, if someone else would be a better examiner for your thesis.

You may also have co-supervisors for your thesis. For example, if the master's thesis is commissioned by a company, you can have a co-supervisor at the company. The co-supervisor can help you with outlining the thesis subject, with possible problems during the process and with supervising the schedule. Also faculty staff members may act as your co-supervisors.

Your main supervisor will also act as one of the examiners of your thesis (examiner 1), who will evaluate your thesis at the end of the thesis process. If you have a co-supervisor, who is formally qualified as an examiner, he/she will act the second examiner (examiner 2). If you only have one supervisor, the examiner 2 will be named by the Dean after you've submitted your thesis for examination. Based on the evaluation of the thesis, the examiners write a common statement to the knowledge of the Dean.

At the beginning of the thesis work, you and your examiner prepare a thesis supervision plan with the help of the relevant form ("Thesis supervision plan and examiners"). Please note that the form must also be signed by the supervisor/examiner 1! Pages 1-2 of the form are submitted to the study services assistant (ben.studies.tau@tuni.fi). Please also check that your study plan is up to date. The Dean officially appoints the examiner.

THESIS TOPIC

When choosing a topic for your thesis, we recommend choosing a topic with which you are already familiar. You are free to decide on the topic of your thesis, provided that it falls within the professional sphere of an architect and is approved by your examiner. Furthermore, the thesis must be in accordance with the master's thesis criteria. You should discuss the criteria in advance with your examiner. The master's thesis criteria can be found in the Student's Guide, page "Master's Thesis in Technology/Architecture".

A master's thesis in the field of architecture may be research-oriented, design-oriented or a combination of both. In the latter case, you must draw a clear distinction between the research-oriented and design-oriented sections and indicate their respective weightings. Whether the thesis is design or research based, depends on the topic.

A master's thesis may be based on an architectural competition, but also in this case, the topic and content of the thesis must be pre-approved by the examiner. Confidentiality clauses and other regulations of the competition must be taken into consideration.

A master's thesis may be commissioned by a company, in which case you are paid for writing the thesis. However, it is important to remember that also a commissioned master's thesis is, first and foremost, a scholarly work and an academic research paper. This is why you must again discuss the topic, the implementation of the project and the publication of the results with your examiner. You are advised to agree on the topic, schedule, supervisory arrangements and possible confidentiality obligations and fees in writing. You can find a checklist for the discussion with the company on in the Student's Guide (see page "Master's Thesis in Technology/Architecture").

FORM AND STRUCTURE OF A MASTER'S THESIS

The form of the thesis must always be discussed with the examiner. Since master's thesis in architecture may be design based, you don't necessarily have to use the Tampere University thesis templates. The international students write their master's thesis in English.

A design based master's thesis is usually presented through presentation boards and/or scale models as well as in a written document (here: book), that should provide a clear overview of the contents and framework of the design. The book, which may be the only document that remains of the thesis, must be A4 size and as comprehensive and detailed as possible. Students must pay special attention to the size, format, length and readability (down-scaling, font type and size, etc.).

The book may be handed in only in electronic form A printed and bound version of the thesis is only necessary if your examiner decides that a printed version is crucial for the evaluation of the thesis. You have the option to have your thesis printed and bound for evaluation, but it is not mandatory.

For the book and for research based theses, please follow the guidelines set forth in the Thesis Writing Guide of Technical Fields to obtain information, among others, on the proper use of citations and references as well as copyright issues. The School of Architecture recommends students to use the Harvard Referencing System. For information on the title page and other "good to know" information, please visit the library pages (libguides.tuni.fi/theses).

Every master's thesis has to include an abstract written according to the Thesis Writing Guide. The written abstract (in English) to be submitted is stored in national and international abstracts databases. The purpose of the abstract is to present essential information and give the reader an overview of the entire thesis. An abstract is not the same as a table of contents. Abstracts may include pictures that illustrate the arguments and they may not exceed one A4 page.

PROFICIENCY TEST

In addition to preparing a master's thesis, you must complete a proficiency test. The abstract of your thesis usually serves as the proficiency test, but supervisors have the right to require a separate proficiency test. In this case the test is an essay-type paper that demonstrates your conversance with the topic of your thesis and is taken in the electronic Exam before the master's thesis seminar. You must agree on taking the proficiency test with your examiner. Proficiency tests are graded on a pass/fail basis.

THE MASTER'S THESIS EVALUATION PROCESS

All master's theses in architecture are presented in the master's thesis seminar. The theses are also put on public display in the lobby of Rakennustalo two weeks before the master's thesis seminar. The seminars are organized a few times a year and are open to the public. It is highly recommended that you visit at least one master's thesis seminar during your studies. You will receive interesting information about other people's work, but you'll also be better prepared for your own presentation at the master's thesis seminar. Finnish architecture students usually give their presentations in Finnish.

It is advisable to register for the master's thesis seminar and prepare the public presentation well in advance. Up to six master's theses can be presented during one seminar day. The seminar may last 1-3 days, depending on the number of presenting students.

SUBMITTING THE THESIS

A master's thesis may be presented in at the master's thesis seminar and examined by the Degree Programme Committee, when the following requirements have been met:

- The student has received the examiner's permission to present his or her thesis at a seminar and submit it to the Degree Programme Committee for examination.
- The thesis has been submitted to Turnitin and has passed the originality check.
- The student has submitted his/her thesis to Trepo (and in printed form to the faculty's student services assistant, if necessary).
- The student has sent the Trepo-link of the thesis to the supervisor
- The student has signed up for the master's thesis seminar on time with the student services assistant and has submitted all presentation material for the thesis exhibition to the School of Architecture
- The thesis has been on public display at least 14 days before the master's thesis seminar.

Dates and Deadlines

The master's thesis seminar is organized twice every semester. You'll find the dates and deadlines in the Student's Guide, page "Master's Thesis in Technology/Architecture". 14 days before the seminar you will have to:

- sign up to the seminar (ARK.550 Master's Thesis Seminar in Architecture)
- submit your thesis to Trepo, wait for the libraries confirmation and send the Trepo-link to the supervisor
- hand in exhibition material (if necessary)
- agree with your examiner on writing the proficiency test before the master's thesis seminar

Turnitin Originality Check

Before a thesis can be handed in for evaluation, it has to be submitted into the Turnitin web-based tool for assessing the originality of texts. The Turnitin originality check report is considered as a part of the evaluation of the thesis. Only text has to be submitted for originality check, pictures can be left out. The texts will we submitted in PDF-format through the thesis examiner's Turnitin-area in Moodle.

Submitting the Thesis and Exhibition Material

Every master's thesis has to be submitted in PDF/A-format to the institutional repository Trepo (https://libguides.tuni.fi/theses). The book and possible presentation boards should be submitted in separate files. After

submitting the thesis, wait for the confirmation email of the library and **immediately forward the Trepo-link of your thesis to your supervisor. (**You'll receive the confirmation email with 1-2 days.)

If there is a printed version of the thesis, please submit three copies to the student services assistant. Also in the case of a printed thesis, it has to be submitted to Trepo for the evaluation process. After a master's thesis has been approved by the Dean, the master's theses are published either openly on the Internet or alternatively in a collection which can be accessed only in the University Library.

All master's theses in architecture are put on public display in the Rakennustalo lobby for two weeks before the master's thesis seminar. Discuss the necessary display material (presentation boards, scale models, printed thesis/book) with the examiner and submit it to the Faculty Office 14 days prior to the master's thesis seminar. If you don't hand in any (physical) material, the thesis will we be displayed in electronic form.

MASTER'S THESIS SEMINAR

Please sign up to the seminar via Sisu (course code ARK.550) by the given deadline. If there are more than six participants, presentations will be held during several consecutive days. If you have timetable restrictions, please inform the student services assistant. You will receive information on the final timetable for the seminar by email. The seminars are public and are held in RO105 or RO107 of the School of Architecture and begin at 10:15 (unless otherwise notified). A coffee- or lunchbreak is usually held during longer seminars.

You can present your thesis, for example, in as a PowerPoint or in PDF-format using an overhead projector. A data projector and a computer with the common programs used for presentations (Adobe Reader (PDF), Media Player, QuickTime and MS Office incl. PowerPoint) are available for presenting the theses at the seminar. The computer's resolution is XGA (1024 x 768). The presentations will be loaded on the computer and tested before the seminar begins. Please contact the laboratory technician Arto Jalonen (arto.jalonen@tuni.fi) at the School of Architecture for more information on presentation equipment. If the examiner agrees to it, you may invite experts to attend their presentations.

The seminar begins with your brief and concise introduction to your thesis. Next, there will be a moderated discussion on your thesis and members of the audience may ask questions about the thesis or the thesis process. The discussion will last for max. 20 minutes, so the time reserved for one thesis is max. 35 minutes.

- Your presentation may not exceed 15 minutes.
- Prepare your presentation carefully and practice by reading it out loud.
- State the key points and ideas of your thesis.
- Consider the points that someone who is not familiar with your thesis would be interested in knowing and incorporate them in your presentation.
- Pictures say more than a thousand words!

After the seminar, the Degree Programme Committee will discuss the grades of the theses presented. All seminar participants will then be called in to hear the grades the committee will recommend for the theses, so please make sure that you have some free time after your presentation.

GRADING

Grading refers to the qualitative evaluation of a master's thesis. Master's theses are evaluated in terms of the final results, clarity of the objectives, the student's methodological skills, writing style and possible special considerations. Furthermore the materials that were on public display, the points that came up during the seminar and the examiners' statement are taken into account. Approved master's theses are graded on the following scale in accordance with Tampere University's Degree Regulations: Sufficient (1), satisfactory (2), good (3), very good (4) and excellent (5).

The Degree Programme Committee will assemble just after the last thesis presentation to discuss the grades to be proposed for the presented theses. Should the need arise, you must be available to provide additional information to the Degree Programme Committee. You will be called in to the meeting to hear the grade to be proposed. This grade will be submitted to the Dean for consideration.

The Head of the Degree Programme Committee will also inform you, if you are expected to amend or modify the thesis before it can be approved. A modified thesis may be re-examined without a public presentation and the examiner is not expected to prepare another statement. The Head of the Committee will also inform you, if your thesis is rejected. A master's thesis that is rejected must the prepared for re-examination.

After the seminar, you will receive the examiners' statement by email. You'll be asked to approve the statement or to send a response to the statement, if you're not satisfied.

GRADUATION AND DEGREE CERTIFICATE

You'll graduate by applying for a degree certificate after your master's thesis has been approved and all the required studies and the proficiency test have been successfully completed and registered.

Please see the Student's Guide, pages Degree Certificates and Check-list for Graduation for instructions on the process.

Graduates are conferred a certificate that lists the completed studies. The extent of the degree, grade point average (GPA) and the name and grade of the master's thesis are also shown on the degree certificate. The degree certificate is enclosed with transcripts in Finnish and in English.

The Industrial Research Fund of Tampere University grants 500 euros to MSc students who complete a master's degree with distinction. The grants are automatically awarded to applicants fulfilling the criteria. Graduation awards can only be paid into a Finnish bank account.

You can pick up your certificate at the Student Affairs Office at the Hervanta or Central Campus. The certificate can also be sent to you by postal delivery, but at your own risk.

Graduation ceremonies take place in June and December. For information on the ceremonies, please see the Student's Guide, page Graduation Ceremony.

MASTER'S THESIS AND GRADUATION - CHECKLIST

Starting the process

- ☐ You have completed most of the courses
- ☐ You have a topic or some topic ideas for the thesis
- ☐ Discuss your topic/topic ideas with a potential examiner (supervisor)
- ☐ An examiner agrees to supervise your thesis and he/she approves of the topic
- ☐ You may also have additional supervisors for your thesis

Thesis Supervision Plan

- ☐ Form: Thesis supervision plan (NOTE! examiner's signature needed)
- ☐ Check, that your study plan is up to date
- ☐ Fill in form with examiner and hand in form (pages 1-2) to the student services assistant (ben.studies.tau@tuni.fi)

Preparing the thesis

- ☐ Work on your thesis independently, with regular meetings with your thesis supervisor(s), possibly also other teachers and experts in the field
- ☐ Discuss the form and presentation as well as possible printing of your thesis with your examiner

Proficiency test

- ☐ Usually the abstract of your thesis will serve as the proficiency test. In some situations the test has to be taken as an electronic exam (in Tuni Exam). For instructions on writing the abstract, please see the Thesis Writing Guidelines for Technical Fields to be found here: https://www.tuni.fi/studentsguide/handbook/uni/4680/4702?page=3110

Master's thesis seminar and grading of your thesis

- ☐ Your thesis examiner has agreed that your thesis is ready for display
- ☐ Prepare the presentation boards and other display material, have thesis printed if necessary
- ☐ Deliver your thesis in electronic form (PDF) to Turnitin (see thesis examiner's Turnitin course in Moodle)
- ☐ **By the given deadline**
  - Deliver your thesis in electronic form (PDF/A) to Trepo (https://libguides.tuni.fi/theses).
  - Wait for the library to confirm your submission and forward the link to the thesis to your thesis examiner as soon as possible
  - Sign up for the master's thesis seminar via Sisu (course code ARK.550)
  - Hand in possible presentation boards, small scale models etc. to the School of Architecture
  - If you have had the thesis printed and bound, hand in 3 copies to the School of Architecture
- ☐ Prepare your seminar presentation (max. 15 min.)
- ☐ Present your thesis at the seminar.
- ☐ Receive the examiners' statement for your information, accept the statement or send a response, if you have comments

Graduation

- ☐ See Degree Certificates and Check-list for Graduation –pages in the Student's Guide
- ☐ When all courses are completed and registered, get a transcript of your studies from the study services office or print it out via Sisu
- ☐ If you have any questions, please contact study services assistant (ben.studies.tau@tuni.fi)

MASTER'S THESIS EXAMINERS (SUPERVISORS)

SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE

Management of Built Heritage
Associate prof. (tenure track) Markku Karjalainen
Prof. Olli-Paavo Koponen
University researcher Satu Huuhka

Architectural Design
Prof. Ilmari Lahdelma
Assistant prof. Sofie Pelsmakers
Associate prof. Fernando Nieto
University lecturer Pekka Passinmäki

Urban Planning and Design
Prof. Ari Hynynen
Prof. Panu Lehtovuori
Prof. Juho Rajaniemi
University lecturer Minna Chudoba

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