

Evaluation criteria of theses for undergraduate degrees and other theses in the Philosophical Faculty

The Board of the University of Eastern Finland has adopted new Study Regulations for the university in its meeting of 21 May 2019. Section 33 of the Study Regulations stipulates that theses in advanced studies shall be evaluated on a scale from 0 to 5. The Faculty Council of the Philosophical Faculty decided on the evaluation criteria of theses in advanced studies on 18 June 2019. Authorised by the Faculty Council, the Dean has approved the evaluation criteria on 27 June 2019. The changes apply to theses in advanced studies submitted for evaluation after 1 August 2019.

Separate guidelines for the supervision, submission, storage and examination of Bachelor's and Master's theses, 'Perustutkintokoulutuksen opinnäytetyöt filosofisessa tiedekunnassa' (Theses for undergraduate degrees in the Philosophical Faculty), were approved by the Faculty Council on 21 May 2014. As applicable, the guidelines are also applied to the supervision of other theses as well as their submission, storage and examination.

EVALUATION AND GRADING OF BACHELOR'S THESES AND THESES IN ADVANCED STUDIES

General evaluation criteria

The purpose of the general evaluation criteria of the Philosophical Faculty is to specify the evaluation criteria and their connections to the grade given for the thesis. For students, the criteria indicate what types of things should be taken into consideration when writing the thesis. Common criteria ratified by the Faculty are perforce general in nature and can be specified further through detailed criteria approved by schools or subjects.

In their theses, students are expected to demonstrate their knowledge of scientific thinking and practices in their field. The author of the thesis must be capable of literary work within the scope of the research problem. The author must display command of a research method and the basic knowledge and skills required for research. The thesis is primarily a work carried out in connection with a seminar in which the student receives guidance from the Bachelor's thesis supervisor. A thesis can also be written by two students in collaboration, provided that the division of work between the students can be demonstrated and evaluated. In the Philosophical Faculty, the collaboration between students can also be demonstrated during the supervision process (Decision of the Faculty Council, 21 May 2014)

Theses are graded with the verbal scores satisfactory (numerical grade 1), fair (2), good (3), very good (4) and excellent (5). The general evaluation criteria consist of familiarity with the field of research, choice and application of literature, framing and definition of the problem or question, the material and analysis methods, results and their discussion, conclusions and their discussion, presentation and ethical principles.

The Bachelor's degree evaluation form (see Appendix 1) can be used to support evaluation. The form has the following grading scale: 0=fail, 1=satisfactory, 2=fair, 3=good, 4=very good, 5=excellent. The form includes seven considerations that are taken into account when determining the grade. The final grade is not necessarily the average of these seven parts, rounded up to the nearest integer. Aspects such as the difficulty of the subject or other weighty matters that favour the granting of a higher or lower grade than that calculated from the

components will be taken into account in the evaluation. If any of the sections receives a grade of 0, the thesis cannot be approved.

Evaluated sections

1. Familiarity with the field of research, and choice and application of literature

The subject of evaluation is the command and application of the concepts in the student's field: are concepts used in an expert manner that is fitting and appropriate to the matter being discussed? Simple summaries of literature will not suffice for a good or higher grade. An ability to engage in dialogue with and between the sources is an indication of a meritorious thesis. The use of sources and source criticism will also be evaluated.

2. Framing and definition of the problem or question

The success and clarity of framing the research problem are evaluated in this section. The purpose and goals of the thesis must be framed and its subject defined. The thesis must be based on appropriate and up-to-date material. The research problem determines whether or not the thesis will constitute a structured whole.

3. Materials and analysis method

The acquisition and sufficiency of material as well as the analysis methods and their applicability and use are evaluated in this section. This section is of particular importance in empirical theses. The appropriateness, justification and expertise of the chosen method's application are evaluated in this section.

4. Results and their discussion

The quantity and quality of reporting on results are evaluated in this section. The subjects of evaluation include sufficiency, appropriateness, technical implementation, applicability to the basis (theory) and research problem, trustworthiness and credibility of interpretations and, ultimately, the results as a whole.

5. Conclusions and their discussion

The examiner will pay attention to the conclusions drawn from the results and the discussion of these conclusions. The conclusions' consistency, link to the theoretical basis and results, and argumentation are key considerations in the evaluation of this section. The assessment of the trustworthiness in addition to the strong and weak points of the thesis also play a role in the evaluation of this section. A critical examination of the research process as a whole is the hallmark of a good thesis.

6. Presentation

The areas evaluated in this section include language, scholarliness, conformance to academic practice in the field, finishing, references, and bibliography. The flow of the text and stylistic matters also influence the quality and success of the result.

7. Ethical principles

The thesis must be ethically sound in all respects. The planning, implementation and reporting of the study must comply with the ethical principles of research.

EVALUATION AND GRADING OF THESES IN ADVANCED STUDIES

The thesis evaluation criteria are as follows:

Research topic and the purpose of the thesis
Research literature and familiarity with the theory
Research method and materials
Research results and the way they are reported
Discussion and conclusions
Structure and presentation

The merits and shortcomings of the thesis are considered as a whole. The emphasis of different evaluation criteria may vary in the different disciplines of the Philosophical Faculty depending on the type of research used. Strengths in one evaluation criterion may compensate for shortcomings in another criterion. The overall grade is not the average of the different evaluation criteria. The criteria are used in the evaluation of theses in advanced studies in the form of articles as well as monographs.

Fail (0): The requirements of the thesis evaluation criteria are not acceptably fulfilled. In order to receive a passing grade, the thesis must receive at least a satisfactory (1) grade for each evaluation criterion.

Satisfactory (1): The thesis fulfils the minimum requirements set for a thesis in advanced studies.

Fair (2): The thesis exceeds the minimum requirements set for a thesis in advanced studies, but some parts of the thesis have significant shortcomings and incompleteness, and it does not constitute a sufficiently logical whole.

Good (3): The thesis meets the requirements set for a thesis in advanced studies well in most of the areas being evaluated and it constitutes a consistent whole.

Very good (4): The thesis meets the requirements set for a thesis in advanced studies very well in most of the areas being evaluated, and it constitutes a consistent whole that demonstrates familiarity, maturity and a critical approach.

Excellent (5): The thesis meets the requirements set for a thesis in advanced studies in an excellent manner in most of the areas being evaluated. In addition to the requirements of the grade 'very good', the thesis is innovative and has scientific importance.

	1 = satisfactory	2 = fair	3 = good	4 = very good	5 = excellent
<p>Research topic and the purpose of the thesis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> research topic and its importance choice and definition of the topic justifications for the research task and the research problem/question 	<p>The importance of the research topic is minor. The justification for the choice and significance of the topic is inadequate.</p> <p>Very few reasons have been given for the choice of topic.</p> <p>The framing of the questions in the thesis is unimpressive, and there are significant shortcomings in its definition.</p>	<p>The research topic is conventional, and its choice and importance are presented in a satisfactory manner.</p> <p>The objectives of the thesis have not been properly justified or defined.</p> <p>The justifications for the research task and problems are vague.</p>	<p>The research topic may be conventional, but it is relevant. The justification for the choice and significance of the topic is clear.</p> <p>The research topic and objectives are defined well.</p> <p>The research problems are justified appropriately and linked to the theoretical basis and previous research.</p>	<p>The research topic is significant socially, scientifically or with regard to practice, for example.</p> <p>The setting of goals is justified carefully and in a variety of ways in relation to the research topic.</p> <p>The research problems are linked to the theoretical basis and previous research skilfully.</p>	<p>The research topic is challenging and the setting of goals seeks a clear novelty value for the work.</p> <p>The thesis focuses on an essential research problem that has been interpreted in a new way in some way.</p> <p>The framing of the research problem and the definition of the study demonstrate an independent and critical research approach.</p>
<p>Research literature and familiarity with the theory</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> familiarity with domestic and international research and literature on the topic critical evaluation of the research literature and applying it to one's own research task definition of the concepts 	<p>The concepts and theoretical approach selected are a poor match to the research task.</p> <p>The use of sources is limited and uncritical and focuses too much on secondary sources.</p>	<p>The theoretical approach and concepts are loosely related to the research task.</p> <p>The number of sources is reasonable, but they are simply summarised.</p>	<p>The selected concepts and theoretical approach are appropriately described and demonstrate a sufficient familiarity with the literature.</p> <p>The sources are well-suited to the chosen topic, and their number and quality are sufficient.</p>	<p>The concepts and theory or framework selected are presented and used skilfully.</p> <p>The use of sources is skilful and demonstrates a wide familiarity with the research topic.</p>	<p>The theoretical approach is consistent and commendable. The use of theoretical concepts is accurate, creative and analytical.</p> <p>The sources have been used insightfully while demonstrating a deep understanding of the research topic.</p>

<p>Research method and materials</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • methodological suitability • acquisition of material, its sufficiency and suitability • mastery of the material analysis methods and justification of the interpretation 	<p>The presentation of the research methodology is unimpressive and unconnected to the research task.</p> <p>There are serious shortcomings in the acquisition of material, its sufficiency or suitability.</p> <p>Mastery of the material analysis methods and justification of the interpretation are inconsistent.</p>	<p>The methodology is relatively unorganised considering the research task.</p> <p>There are shortcomings in the acquisition of material, its sufficiency or suitability.</p> <p>Mastery of the material analysis methods and justification of the interpretation are primarily consistent.</p>	<p>The methodology is appropriate for the research task.</p> <p>The material is sufficient and well-suited to resolving the research task.</p> <p>Mastery of the material analysis methods and justification of the interpretation are flawless.</p>	<p>The research methodology has been justified proficiently.</p> <p>The material is of high quality and enables deep analysis.</p> <p>The analysis and interpretation of the material are skilful and proficient.</p>	<p>The methodological construction of the thesis is commendable.</p> <p>The acquisition of the material is insightful and the material is very well-suited for the purpose of the study.</p> <p>Mastery of the material analysis methods and justification of the interpretation are exceptionally skilful, and open up new perspectives.</p>
<p>Research results and the way they are reported</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • resolving the research task and research questions/problems • logic and clarity of the presentation of results • illustration of the results • trustworthiness of the results 	<p>The research task and questions are resolved in a superficial and inadequate manner.</p> <p>The presentation of results contains a lack of logic, ambiguities and errors.</p> <p>The illustration of results is partially inadequate or erroneous.</p> <p>The assessment of the trustworthiness of research results is inadequate.</p>	<p>The research task and questions are resolved in a superficial manner</p> <p>The results are mainly presented logically and flawlessly, but they are only loosely connected to the theoretical basis.</p> <p>The illustration of the results is conventional.</p> <p>The assessment of the trustworthiness of research results is superficial.</p>	<p>The results resolve the research questions/problems set.</p> <p>The results are presented logically and are linked to the theoretical basis.</p> <p>The results have been illustrated appropriately.</p> <p>The assessment of the trustworthiness of research results is appropriate.</p>	<p>The research task and research questions/problems are resolved precisely.</p> <p>The results are presented clearly and systematically in relation to the research questions, material and theoretical basis.</p> <p>The results have been illustrated skilfully.</p> <p>The assessment of the trustworthiness of research results demonstrates a mastery of methodology.</p>	<p>The research task and research questions/problems are resolved skilfully and commendably.</p> <p>The presentation of the results is excellent and insightful in relation to the research questions, material and theoretical basis.</p> <p>The results have been illustrated insightfully.</p> <p>The assessment of the trustworthiness of research results is methodologically</p>

					comprehensive and commendable.
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<p>Discussion and conclusions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • assessing the key results of the thesis and discussing them in relation to the previous research and theory • argumentation and critical reflection • importance of the results and discussion on their applicability • ethical sustainability of the research and its evaluation with regard to research ethics 	<p>The discussion of the research results and their links to previous research and the theoretical basis are sparse and unclear.</p> <p>The argumentation is tentative and the conclusions are not justified.</p> <p>Reflection on the research and discussion of its applicability are superficial.</p> <p>The research is ethically sustainable, but the examination of research ethics is inadequate.</p>	<p>The research results are discussed and linked to previous research and the theoretical basis in a haphazard manner.</p> <p>The argumentation is partially logical, but some of the conclusions are thinly justified.</p> <p>The research is reflected on and its suitability is assessed to some degree.</p> <p>The research is ethically sustainable, but the examination of research ethics is superficial.</p>	<p>The research results are reflected on and discussed in relation to previous research and the theoretical basis well.</p> <p>The argumentation is clear. The conclusions arise from the research results and they are justified well.</p> <p>The research is reflected on critically and the discussion of its suitability is apt.</p> <p>The research is ethically sustainable and the examination of research ethics is appropriate.</p>	<p>The research results are discussed skilfully and are linked clearly to previous research and the theoretical basis.</p> <p>The argumentation and justification of the conclusions are commendable.</p> <p>The research is reflected on critically and its suitability is assessed very skilfully.</p> <p>The research is ethically sustainable and the examination of research ethics is well-rounded.</p>	<p>The research results are discussed very skilfully and insightfully. The discussion is clearly and analytically linked to previous research and the theoretical basis.</p> <p>The argumentation is clear and systematic. The justifications for the conclusions are excellent.</p> <p>The research is reflected on critically and in depth, and its suitability is assessed extremely skilfully.</p> <p>The research is ethically sustainable and the examination of research ethics is thorough.</p>
<p>Structure and presentation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • academic and discipline-specific references and sources • organisation and consistency of the structure • academic presentation, 	<p>The references and sources have clear shortcomings and inconsistencies.</p> <p>The structure is unorganised.</p> <p>The thesis has a large number of linguistic and terminological problems that make it more difficult to understand.</p>	<p>The references and sources have slight shortcomings and inconsistencies.</p> <p>The structure is fairly consistent.</p> <p>The thesis contains linguistic and terminological problems that make it less readable.</p>	<p>The references and sources are consistent and nearly flawless.</p> <p>The structure is consistent and forms a clear whole.</p> <p>The thesis is linguistically and terminologically fluent.</p>	<p>The references and sources are consistent and flawless.</p> <p>The structure is consistent and coherent.</p> <p>The language of the thesis and the use of terms are flawless.</p> <p>The layout is finished and conforms to the reporting practices of the field. The</p>	<p>The references demonstrate scientific accuracy and the sources are flawless.</p> <p>The structure is logical and inventive.</p> <p>The presentation and terminology of the thesis are confident and consistent and they</p>

<p>linguistic form and linguistic fluency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Layout 	<p>The layout is sloppy and it contains solutions that are not typical of an academic presentation.</p>	<p>On the whole, the layout conforms to the reporting practices of the field, but it is unfinished in some respects.</p>	<p>The layout is finished and conforms to the reporting practices of the field.</p>	<p>illustration works well and improves readability.</p>	<p>conform to the practices of the discipline.</p> <p>The thesis conforms to the reporting practices of the field in every respect, it has been illustrated skilfully and innovatively, and it is finished carefully.</p>
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