



AALBORG UNIVERSITY
DENMARK

Study Board of Energy
Department of Energy Technology
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Guidelines for the Thesis Contract

These guidelines for filling in the thesis contract for Master's Theses and final projects are based on Section 22 in the University Programme Order (Ministerial Order no. 1328 of 15 November 2016) and Section 14 in the Examination Order (Ministerial Order no. 1062 of 30 June 2016) regarding Master's Theses, and the Joint Programme Regulations section 2.4.

Section 22 [...] (University Programme Order)

- (6) The Master's Thesis must document skills in applying scientific theories and methodologies to a clearly defined academic topic. The thesis is written in the last year of the Master's degree programme.
- (7) The university approves the problem formulation for the Master's Thesis and lays down a deadline for submission of the thesis and a plan for thesis supervision at the same time. The thesis must be completed and submitted within the time frame stipulated in the curriculum for the individual programme and which applies to full time programmes, cf. section 22(3), item 1 and 22(4-5).
- (8) If the student does not submit the thesis within the time frame specified in subsection (7), the university approves a modified problem formulation within the same field and lays down a new three-month deadline for submission at the same time. For Master's degree programmes in subsections (4-5) the university may lay down a deadline between six weeks and three months. If the student does not submit the thesis by the new deadline, the student may be granted a third examination attempt, cf. the Examination Order (*Eksamensbekendtgørelsen*), in accordance with the same rules, which applied to the second examination attempt.

Section 14 [...] (Examination Order)

- (3) When the university has stipulated a deadline for submission of the Master's Thesis, cf. the University Programme Order, withdrawal of registration is not possible, and students who fail to submit their thesis within the deadline have used an examination attempt, cf. section 13(2), unless the university has granted an exemption pursuant to section 14 (5-6).
- (5) The university may grant exemptions from the rules set out in section 14 (1-3) if the student is an elite athlete or in case of special circumstances, such as functional impairment.

Section 2.4. [...] (Joint Programme Regulations)

The thesis is written in the last year of the programme. The study board can stipulate in the curriculum that the thesis is to be written in the final semester of the programme. The head of studies approves the formulation of the topic for the Master's Thesis and at the same time sets a deadline for the thesis and a plan for supervision of the student.

Project Description

A topic of the final project is selected by the student(s) and approved by the Head of Studies. The approval must consider:

- that the topic enables the student(s) to work at a sufficiently high level
- that the topic is relevant for the specialisation in question
- that the project can be completed within the available time
- that necessary supervision and other resources are available
- submission date, see below

Time Frame

Ordinary start date and submission date are given in the table below, cf. Section 22 (7) in the University Programme Order. The purpose of the dates is to provide:

- equal treatment of all students
- two weekends for the external examiner to read the thesis¹
- possibility of participation in graduation ceremony
- study efficiency

	Autumn semester		Spring semester	
	Start date	Submission	Start date	Submission
Master's Thesis short (30 ECTS)	1 September*	5 to 10 January*	1 February	28 May to 4 June
Master's Thesis long (45-60 ECTS)	1 September	28 May to 4 June	1 February*	5 to 10 January*

*This start and submission date are only in case of individual study plan approved by the Study Board of Energy

The agreed-upon submission date is added to the thesis contract.

If the submission date is exceeded, the student has used one examination attempt. The student cannot withdraw from the upcoming defence of the Master's Thesis when a submission date has been set.

However, there may be made an exemption from the submission date² if there are exceptional circumstances³ and if it is possible to change the date of the project defence. July is not included when calculating the submission date of a new thesis contract and the final submission date for the Master's Thesis.

1) The external examiner needs at least two weekends to read the thesis.

2) The three months are calculated from the approval date of the revised project description. The students are expected to continue working on their thesis in immediate continuation of the exceeded submission date, i.e. while their application for an extension is considered by the Study Board of Energy.

3) In forwarding letter of 20 December 2013 with various Ministerial Orders the Danish Agency for Higher Education specifies: "It should be noted that 'exceptional circumstances' are specific, individual circumstances concerning the individual student. It could for instance be documented illness of the student or an immediate family member, death in the closest family or other circumstances which concern the individual student, and for which the student most often cannot be blamed, i.e. lack of possibilities of childcare for small children. Furthermore, public duty as, for instance, a lay judge or a juror could be an 'exceptional circumstance'.

Long thesis is relevant for projects of experimental character.

Plan for Master's Thesis Supervision and Laboratory Work

The supervision plan contains at least a supervision frequency, e.g. supervisor meetings, weekly or every other week. The plan can be supplemented with a timescale e.g. literature study, experimental work, report writing, status seminar.

The purpose of the plan is to ensure progression in the thesis or project work and to minimise the risk of students being trapped in a "thesis morass".

Approval

The thesis contract must be submitted for approval within one month of project start, i.e. usually 1 October or 1 March.