

Appendix b.

Thesis Regulations

Research Master
Archaeology



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1. **Definition and learning outcomes**

a. *Definition*

The Research Master's thesis (thesis) is one of the most important instruments for determining whether a student has achieved the learning outcomes for the Research Master's programme. The students put what they have learned (knowledge, understanding and skills in their subject area) into practice by setting up and carrying out a substantial and academically sound research project. For this purpose, an unambiguous problem definition is formulated (also known as the research question or central question), which can be split into subquestions if necessary. A well-formulated problem definition is essential to the success of a research project. It gives direction to the research and determines which material needs to be studied. The subquestions give structure to the research and determine how the thesis is subdivided.

The most relevant secondary and primary literature, sources and/or research data are identified and analysed in order to answer the research question as well as the subquestions. The answers are then presented in the form of an analytical argument, substantiated with sources or data that support the argument. The academic research is carried out in accordance with the conventions for the subject area. Students conduct the research independently. Their work constitutes an original contribution to the development of the subject and/or to the application of ideas within it.

The thesis should demonstrate knowledge of current research on the chosen subject. It should contain a critical reflection on the theoretical perspectives and methods used. The relevant sources, arguments, views and conclusions must be assessed in terms of their value and validity, and where necessary compared.

The thesis thus demonstrates the student's ability, based on subject knowledge, to analyse and critically appraise his/her own research results and what others have written on the subject. The thesis describes how the research makes a new contribution to the discipline.

The thesis forms the proof that a student can actually carry out independent research on a level that demonstrates his/her capacities to participate in the international debate on his/her topic. The level of the argumentation and the mastery of the relevant literature should be such that the thesis could be re-worked into an article that could be submitted to an academic journal.

b. Learning outcomes Research Master thesis as defined in OER

<i>Description of Master's level according to the descriptors of the Qualifications Framework for the European Higher Education Area (Dublin descriptors)</i>	<i>Intended learning outcomes of the Research Master's Programme in Archaeology</i> Graduates are expected to have achieved the following:
<p>1. Knowledge and Understanding Students have demonstrable knowledge and understanding that is founded upon and extends and/or enhances that typically associated with Bachelor's level, and that provides a basis or opportunity for originality in developing and/or applying ideas, often within a research context</p>	<p>1.1 have a thorough and up-to-date knowledge of at least one branch of the discipline. 1.3 have knowledge and understanding of the research methodologies and theories currently used in archaeology.</p>
<p>2. Applying knowledge and understanding Students can apply their knowledge, understanding and problem-solving abilities in new or unfamiliar environments within broader (or multidisciplinary) contexts related to their field of study</p>	<p>2.2 have the skills to apply research results in order to develop advanced ideas and practical applications.</p>
<p>3. Making judgements Students have the ability to integrate knowledge and handle complexity, and formulate judgements with incomplete or limited information, but that include reflecting on social and ethical responsibilities linked to the application of their knowledge and judgements</p>	<p>3.1 are able to critically evaluate the methodologies and theories currently used in their specialization. 3.2 show originality and creativity when dealing with at least one branch of the chosen discipline. 3.4 are aware of social and ethical responsibilities of research and publication in the chosen discipline and act accordingly.</p>
<p>4. Communication Students can communicate their conclusions, and the knowledge and rationale underpinning these, to specialist and non-specialist audiences clearly and unambiguously</p>	<p>4.2 are able to participate in academic debate in the chosen area of specialization and to present an academic problem convincingly, both orally and in writing. 4.3 are able to present the results of academic research to both an academic audience and interested lay people, both orally and in writing, while making appropriate use of visual material, including digital aids.</p>

<p>5. Learning skills Students have the learning skills to allow them to continue to study in a manner that may be largely self-directed or autonomous</p>	<p>5.1 are able to formulate a research proposal independently. 5.2 are able to write a publishable article independently in accordance with current academic norms. 5.4 are able to reflect critically on one's own papers, presentations and general functioning in groups, and be able to accept and use to advantage the criticism of others.</p>
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2. Instructions

a. *Language of the thesis*

The thesis must be written in English. Another language may only be used with the explicit authorization of the Director of Studies (DoS) and the supervisors. If a thesis is written in another language than English, the supervisor and the DoS have to make sure that there is a second supervisor available, who is sufficiently fluent in that language to assess the quality of the work.

The style of writing should be of an acceptable academic level.

b. *Length of the thesis*

The thesis must be between 20,000 and 30,000, excluding appendices, footnotes, tables and figures and bibliography. A different word length may be agreed between student and supervisor, if the type of research demands this. Assuming there are approximately 450-500 words on a page, this is 30-60 pages. These figures are based on the following calculation: the thesis is worth 30 ECTS credit points = 840 hours that is an effort of 21 full-time weeks.

c. *Format of the thesis*

Each thesis should have a title page, stating name, study programme and degree programme and student number, submission date, name of the supervisor(s) and, of course, the title. The thesis should be formatted with a line distance of 1 1/2, in a standard 12 point font. The thesis must be uploaded in PDF format in the following link: <https://arts.studenttheses.ub.rug.nl/form/>
See also Appendix c. *Planning Schedule Graduation*.

d. *PhD research proposal*

In an appendix the student may present a PhD research proposal in the format presented in Appendix d. *Format Research Proposal* (NWO format). Writing a PhD research proposal is not mandatory.

3. Procedure

The student is advised to start as early as the third semester (i.e., the first semester of the second year) with his or her orientation on a suitable topic and the available literature. (S)he is also advised to approach potential supervisors in an early stage.

a. Admission

The thesis is the final and all-inclusive assessment of the programme. Consequently, the student is allowed to start with the thesis only after the first year of the Research Master has been completed entirely, after a supervisor has been appointed, and after the thesis proposal has been approved by the supervisor and the Director of Studies.

b. Supervision

An individual supervisor will be appointed to each student by the DoS. Students will have the opportunity to suggest the choice of supervisor with the DoS, who will have to approve their choice. The supervisor will normally be chosen from the degree programme. A second supervisor may be appointed if this is appropriate for the subject of the thesis. External supervisors need to be informed about the thesis regulations, and sent the assessment form (see below) in advance.

Students should be aware that the supervisor has only a limited number of hours available for thesis supervision, but have the right to at least four supervision meetings:

1. an exploratory discussion to choose a subject;
2. discussion of the research setup and planning;
3. discussion of the first version of the thesis;
4. discussion of the final version of the thesis.

c. Thesis contract

One month after the beginning of the semester the student hands in a thesis contract of at least two pages signed by student and the supervisor to the DoS for approval.

A thesis contract (see Appendix b. *Thesis Contract*) should contain the following information:

- Working title
- Provisional table of contents
- Research question
- Provisional list of literature and sources
- Discussion of used methods
- Detailed time schedule, including appointments with supervisor
- If applicable, explicit agreement with respect to the availability of necessary research facilities such as computer software or hardware, lab time, etc.

d. Career Skills module, Research Master Thesis Class and Research Seminars

The student will take part in the compulsory Career Skills module (5 ECTS), which is given in the second year of the programme across both semesters. The Career Skills

module contains the Research Master Thesis class, which alternates with career skills sessions and the Research Seminars.

Each student:

- Attends, participates and presents research progress in the Thesis Class.
- Attends, participates and prepares the assignments in the career skills sessions.
- Attends at least 10 Research Seminars over the duration of the REMA (2 years).
- Gives an oral presentation based on his/her thesis research in the presence of staff and students during a Research Seminar.

4. **Assessment and assessment criteria**

The thesis is assessed by two examiners: the main assessor is the thesis supervisor (who has to take into account the advice of any co-supervisors). The second, independent, examiner is appointed by the Research Master Thesis Class coordinator. The examiners first make their own individual assessment, which they then discuss together in order to decide on a final grade, justified explicitly on the assessment form.

The mark for a thesis is based on the quality of the research setup, the quality of the research itself, and the quality of the reporting on the research. The following criteria are used (see Appendix a. *Assessment Forms*):

Topic:

1. Difficulty
2. Originality

Process:

3. Independence and creativity Originality of the research
4. Planning, punctuality, communication

Quality of content:

5. Knowledge of literature
6. Critical reflection on state of question skills
7. Theoretical approach
8. Methodological approach
9. Quality of analysis
10. Use of sources
11. Structure and strength of argument
12. Awareness of social / ethical issues

Presentation:

13. Length
14. Structure, clarity
15. Annotation
16. Language, style
17. Illustrations and data presentation

The final mark is awarded by means of the thesis assessment form.

If the two grades differ more than 1.0, a third examiner (member of the Archaeology teaching staff) has to be appointed by the Board of Examiners, Expertise Team REMA.

If the student does not agree with the assessment, it is possible to seek the opinion of a third expert. This is done via the Board of Examiners, Expertise Team REMA.

5. Archiving and free access

Students must provide a digital version (in PDF format) of the thesis for the degree programme's archive. This should be submitted via the delivery portal of the Office for Student Affairs. The thesis is stored in the University of Groningen repository, the digital archive of University publications.

Theses in the repository can be freely accessed (from within and outside the University) if the student and supervisor give permission. Students can indicate 'freely accessible – yes/no' on the form. 'Yes' means that the student states that the supervisor has also given permission, in accordance with the Rules and Regulations of the Boards of Examiners that apply within the Faculty of Arts. Before answering 'yes' on the form, the student must check that the lecturer also agrees to the thesis being freely accessible.

6. Rights and obligations of students

Students have the right to thesis supervision as described in Section 3. In addition, the student is required to gather material in the correct way – i.e. independently – and use it to write a thesis in accordance with the regulations and conventions of the degree programme. See also the section relating to cheating and plagiarism in the relevant Teaching and Examination Regulations.

Cheating and plagiarism carry severe penalties, because it must be clear at all times that the student is the actual author of the thesis in all respects. Partial or inaccurate source references and deliberate false references will count against the student. The thesis must be the result of independent academic research. Copying or too closely paraphrasing consulted works does not comply with this. The lecturer has the right to examine the consulted sources and literature, and students must provide the lecturer with this material if required.

The copyright on a thesis is shared: both the lecturer and student have copyright on the thesis. This means that neither the supervisor nor the student can publish on the results reported in the thesis unless they have the permission of the other.

7. Final provisions

In cases not covered by these regulations, the Director of Studies shall have the final say.

Disputes concerning the provisions of these thesis regulations will first be brought before the Board of Examiners of the degree programme, who will take a decision that can in turn be appealed against.

Sofia Voutsaki
June 2020

8. Appendices

a. Assessment forms

RESEARCH MASTER ARCHAEOLOGY THESIS ASSESSMENT - 1st Reader

to be handed to student and archived by Secretariat

Submission date								
Assessment date								
Name of student								
Student number								
Title of thesis								
1st Reader / Supervisor		Name						
		Signature						
Assessment Criteria		Assessment						
		In-sufficient (≤5.5)	Weak (≤6.0)	Sufficient (≤7.0)	Good (≤8.0)	Very Good (≤9.0)	Excellent (≤10.0)	
30%	Topic	Difficulty						
		Originality						
		Comments						
	Process	Independence and creativity						
		Planning, punctuality, communication						
Comments								
50%	Quality of content	Knowledge of literature						
		Critical reflection on state of question						
		Theoretical approach						
		Methodological approach						
		Use of sources						
		Quality of analysis						
		Structure and strength of argument						
		Awareness of social/ethical issues						
Comments								
20%	Presen-tation	Length						
		Structure, clarity						
		Annotation						
		Language, style						
		Illustrations and data presentation						
Comments								
Grade								
Justification								

Final grade	
Justification	

**RESEARCH MASTER ARCHAEOLOGY
THESIS ASSESSMENT - 2nd Reader**

to be handed to student and archived by Secretariat

Submission date							
Assessment date							
Name of student							
Student number							
Title of thesis							
2nd Reader		Name					
		Signature					
Assessment Criteria		Assessment					
		In-sufficient (≤5.5)	Weak (≤6.0)	Sufficient (≤7.0)	Good (≤8.0)	Very Good (≤9.0)	Excellent (≤10.0)
10%	Topic	Difficulty					
		Originality					
		Comments					
60%	Quality of content	Knowledge of literature					
		Critical reflection on state of question					
		Theoretical approach					
		Methodological approach					
		Use of sources					
		Quality of analysis					
		Structure and strength of argument					
		Awareness of social/ethical issues					
		Comments					
30%	Present-ation	Length					
		Structure, clarity					
		Annotation					
		Language, style					
		Illustrations and data presentation					
		Comments					
Grade		<input type="checkbox"/> 5 to 6 <input type="checkbox"/> 6 to 7 <input type="checkbox"/> 7 to 8 <input type="checkbox"/> 8 to 9 <input type="checkbox"/> 9 tot 10					
Justification							

b. Explanation of assessment criteria

Topic	Difficulty	<i>How difficult is the topic for a REMA student, taking into account their study as a whole?</i>
	Originality	<i>How original is the question and the approach?</i>
	Comments	Justify.
Process	Independence and creativity	<i>How independently has the student worked? How creative have they been in seeking solutions for problems?</i>
	Planning, punctuality, communication	<i>Have they adhered to planning? Have they submitted on time? Have they communicated any problems on time?</i>
	Comments	Justify. Present also any mitigating circumstances (with respect for privacy)
Quality of content	Knowledge of literature	<i>Does the student muster the necessary for this branch of the discipline? (i.e. period/region, type of evidence)</i>
	Critical reflection on state of question	<i>Do they contextualise their research question, and present its rationale? Are they aware of the history of research on the topic? Did they adopt a critical stance?</i>
	Theoretical approach	<i>Are they aware of theoretical assumptions underlying their research? Are they aware of theoretical debates surrounding this field? Have they formulated an adequate theoretical framework for their own study?</i>
	Methodological approach	<i>Are they aware of methodological advances in their field? Are they aware of both potential and limitations of the methods they use? Did they overcome limitations in a satisfactory way?</i>
	Use of sources	<i>Have they selected the appropriate sources of evidence? Are they aware of their biases and limitations? Did they integrate different data sets successfully?</i>
	Quality of analysis	<i>How deep, comprehensive and accurate is the analysis?</i>
	Structure and strength of argument	<i>Is their argument clear and well-structured? Is it convincing?</i>
	Awareness of social / ethical issues	<i>Are they aware of any social and ethical issues arising from their research? Do they engage with these issues?</i>
	Comments	Justify. (You can also state if thesis publishable, and propose outlets for publication.)
Presentation	Length	<i>Does the thesis adhere to prescribed length, or previous agreements?</i>
	Structure, clarity	<i>Is the thesis well structured? Is the organisation into chapters good? Are there clear research questions and conclusions?</i>
	Annotation	<i>Is the annotation system consistent? Are bibliographic conventions adhered to in a consistent way?</i>
	Language, style	<i>Is the language correct? Is the writing style elegant? Are there spelling mistakes?</i>
	Illustrations and data presentation	<i>Is the quality and quantity of illustrations adequate? Are they explained sufficiently in the text? Is the presentation of the data adequate for the purpose?</i>
	Comments	Justify.

c. Thesis contract

Thesis Contract Research Master Archaeology

Name Student:

Student number:

Name first supervisor:

A thesis contract should contain the following information:

- Working title
 - Provisional table of contents
 - Research question
 - Provisional list of literature and sources
 - Discussion of used methods
 - **Detailed time schedule, including appointments with supervisor**
 - If applicable, explicit agreement with respect to the availability of necessary research facilities such as computer software or hardware, lab time, etc.
-

Student

(name)

(signature)

(date)

Supervisor:

(name)

(signature)

(date)

Director of Studies:

(name)

(signature)

(date)

d. Planning schedule Graduation

Basic model: Step-by-Step plan for the Research Master thesis

Graduation in semester 2

Step-by-step plan	Deadline*
1. Exploratory discussion on thesis subject	September-October
2. Student submits thesis proposal to lecturer for approval and additional revisions: at least 2 A4 with justification, clearly outlined research question/hypotheses, preliminary outline of chapters with the related subquestions, a brief summary of source material and references and a planned schedule.	15 November - 15 December
3. As required, interim discussions of chapters, as agreed between supervisor and student.	January - May
4. Student submits thesis.	1 June
5. Assessment by and feedback from supervisor.	1 - 15 June
6. Student submits new version, if relevant.	15 June - 1 July
7. Supervisor and second supervisor assess final version, determine final mark and submit it for processing.	15 July
8. Final discussion between supervisor and student.	15 July
9. Student requests degree certificate ceremony online from the Office for Student Affairs: www.rug.nl/let/afstuderen	No later than 2 months before date of completing Master's programme
10. After assessment, the student must upload the thesis: https://arts.studenttheses.ub.rug.nl/form/ N.B. thesis must be uploaded in PDF format.	Immediately after final mark has been entered in Progress
11. When the final mark for the Master's degree has been registered in Progress, the student must inform the Office for Student Affairs that he/she is finished by filling out the Application Degree Certificate Form .	

* in steps 1 to 6, other dates may be agreed in consultation with the student

Basic model: Step-by-Step plan for the Research Master thesis

Graduation in semester 1

Step-by-step plan	Deadline*
1. Exploratory discussion on thesis subject.	July - August
2. One month after the beginning of the semester the student hands in a thesis contract of at least two pages signed by student and the supervisor to the DoS for approval.	1 October
3. As required, interim discussions of chapters, as agreed between supervisor and student.	September - December
4. Student submits thesis.	15 December
5. Assessment by and feedback from supervisor.	15 - 31 December
6. Student submits new version, if relevant.	1 January - 15 January
7. Supervisor and second supervisor assess final version, determine final mark and submit it for processing.	31 January
8. Final discussion between supervisor and student.	31 January
9. Student requests degree certificate ceremony online from the Office for Student Affairs: www.rug.nl/let/afstuderen	No later than 2 months before date of completing Master's programme
10. After assessment, the student must upload the thesis: https://arts.studenttheses.ub.rug.nl/form/ N.B. thesis must be uploaded in PDF format.	Immediately after final mark has been entered in Progress
11. When the final mark for the Master's degree has been registered in Progress, the student must inform the Office for Student Affairs that he/she is finished by filling out the Application Degree Certificate Form .	

* in steps 1 to 6, other dates may be agreed in consultation with the student

- e. *Format for PhD proposal based on Research Master thesis (follows NWO format)*

1. PhD candidate

Last name and initials of the PhD candidate

2. Title of research proposal

3. Summary

Please provide a brief summary (250 words maximum) of the project in English. This should explain the title of the research proposal in greater detail.

4. Curriculum Vitae PhD candidate

Provide the details of the PhD candidate according to the headings given below. Additional information, such as date and place of birth, gender, marital status, contact details and pictures of the candidate, should not be included in the file. The cv should not exceed two pages.

a) Education

List the qualifications obtained and courses followed. You should also state the graduation date for any degrees completed.

If a degree relevant to the application has not been completed yet, then a written confirmation with the graduation date should be supplied.

N.B. The candidate must have graduated before 1 September 2016.

b) Honours, prizes, scholarships and grants

State any honours, prizes and (travel) grants that have been acquired.

c) Relevant academic experience

State student assistantships, internships, international activities, board activities, etc.

d) Other relevant positions

If applicable, state any other relevant positions fulfilled.

e) Publications

State any publications (co-)authored by the candidate (not more than 10).

f) Motivation for doing PhD research

Briefly describe the PhD candidate's motivation for doing scientific research and why this person's experience is relevant for carrying out the project proposed. Where possible relate this to the points stated under 7a to 7e. The applicant or the candidate may formulate the motivation (i.e., it can be formulated in third or first-person). This brief explanation may contain a maximum of 300 words.

5. Period of funding

State the type of appointment (standard PhD, lecturer PhD), the size of the appointment in fte, the total duration of the project and the intended starting date of the research.

6. Description of the proposed research

The maximum permitted size of the text is 2500 words (excluding the list of references). State the total number of words used.

7. Research field description and code(s)

From the site www.nwo.nl/researchfields choose one main research field and subfield most relevant to your application. For interdisciplinary applications several research field(s) and/or subfield(s) can be chosen: in this case put the most important first. Provide the description of the main research field and the code and description of the subfield(s) (e.g. Religious studies and theology: 35.40.00 Bible studies, 35.20.00 History of Christianity). If applicable, provide the same for the second main research field (e.g. Language and literature: 31.15.00 Greek and Latin philology and literature).

8. Summary in keywords

State 5 keywords that in your opinion best characterise the content of the research proposal.

9. Institutional embedding and supervision

Describe the research group that the candidate will be part of and state how the day-to-day supervision of the candidate will be realised.

10. Work programme

Specify and phase the work plan for the intended duration of the grant. Please bear in mind that the writing phase for the final publication is a fundamental component of the work programme. Time required for holidays must also be allowed for. You should also allow time for the training and supervision programme.

11. Research budget

Please follow the NWO format. The research budget that can be applied for consists of (1) personnel costs, which include a benchfee of € 5000 for the entire funding period, and (2) material costs that are directly related to the research up to a maximum of € 5000 for the entire funding period. No specifications are needed for the benchfee; clear specifications are needed for the material costs.

12. Summary for non-specialists (in Dutch)

Provide a summary for non-specialists about your proposed research (in Dutch). In the event that your proposal is awarded funding, the Humanities Temporary Task Force or NWO Humanities can use this text for publicity purposes. Providing this summary is a compulsory part of your application. This summary should be 300-500 words long.

13. Summary for newsletters and website (in Dutch)

Provide a title and summary (in Dutch) that, if the application is granted, will be used in the newsletters and on the website. The summary should be 50-100 words long.