

Appendix amended and approved at the Faculty Council meeting 9 April 2019

## **ASSESSMENT OF A MASTER'S THESIS INCLUDED IN THE MASTER OF EDUCATION DEGREE**

The Academic Affairs Council of the University of Helsinki has defined the general assessment criteria and grading scale for the thesis (30 cr) included in master's degrees in the degree programmes of the University of Helsinki.

Faculties may specify the assessment criteria and grade descriptions. The Faculty of Educational Sciences specifies the assessment criteria and grade descriptions with regard to master's theses included in the Master of Education degree in the following manner starting from 1 August 2019:

### **The grading scale for the thesis (30 cr) included in a master's degree, including the Faculty of Educational Sciences' descriptions of typical features of various grades**

The learning outcomes for a thesis are described in the degree programme curriculum approved by the Faculty Council. The grading of a master's thesis follows the scale from 0 to 5, wherein 5=excellent, 4=very good, 3=good, 2=satisfactory, 1=pass, 0=fail.

**5 (excellent)** The thesis is exceptionally good. It demonstrates the author's scientific maturity, critical thinking and in-depth knowledge of the subject matter. The thesis partakes in scientific debate and produces new scientific knowledge which could/may be, for example, a research result, methodological insight or theoretical improvement. The thesis discusses the essential topics and forms a coherent, logical, clear and well-argued whole. As a whole, the thesis fulfils the requirements set for a final thesis excellently.

**4 (very good)** The thesis is very good and demonstrates the author's commendable scientific competence, critical thinking and knowledge of the subject matter. The thesis discusses the essential topics and forms a logical, clear and well-argued whole. As a whole, the thesis fulfils the requirements set for a final thesis commendably.

**3 (good)** The thesis discusses the essential topics in a logical order and forms a coherent whole. As a whole, the thesis fulfils the requirements set for a final thesis well.

**2 (satisfactory)** The thesis forms an understandable and sufficiently logical whole. As a whole, the thesis fulfils the requirements set for a final thesis satisfactorily.

**1 (pass)** The thesis contains essential topics in somewhat logical order and exceeds the pass mark. As a whole, the thesis fulfils the requirements set for a final thesis passably.

**0 (failed):** The thesis fails to form a coherent and logical whole. The requirements related to the various components of thesis assessment are not met in an acceptable manner.

## **Assessment components of the thesis (30 cr) included in a master's degree including specifications made by the Faculty of Educational Sciences**

The headings for the assessment components are on the assessment form of/in the E-thesis system. The assessment is conducted using a scale from 0 to 5. The following main issues are considered in thesis assessment:

### **1. Research topic and purpose**

- Grounds for choosing the topic and its significance
- Insight in the selection and definition of the topic
- Justified research task and goal, research problem or theme

### **2. Knowledge of the research field and related theories as well as use of literature**

- Familiarity with relevant research and literature
- Source-critical and analytic study of the perspectives presented in the source literature as well as making syntheses
- Definition of a research perspective and concepts relevant to the problem discussed

### **3. Material, acquisition of material and analyses**

- Methods suitable for solving the research problem
- Comprehensive description of the methods used (strategy, information retrieval and analysis)
- Sufficiency of material and suitability for the research problem and analytic methods
- Description and possible processing of material
- Critical and evaluative use of methods
- Attention to research ethics

### **4. Research results and reporting**

- Provision of answers to research tasks and questions
- Logical and clear reporting of the outcomes
- Utilisation of images, diagrams and tables in an appropriate manner to illustrate the text

### **5. Review of results (discussion) and conclusions**

- Crystallisation of key results and providing context for them with regard to prior research
- Review of the reliability of research process and results in accordance with the research approach, taking research ethics into account
- Discussion and presentation of new research problems
- Discussion about possible applications of the results
- Links between the conclusions drawn and the results as well as their comprehensiveness, plausibility and originality

## **6. The structure, clarity and finalisation of the thesis**

- Clear organisation suited to the subject matter and research approach
- Command of scientific writing style complying with the research approach
- Separation between information presented in a source for the thesis and the author's own interpretation and narrative clarity and fluidity of related text
- Use of grammatically correct language
- Correct and consistent notation of references
- A clear and accurate bibliography
- A clear and accurate layout of the thesis

## **7. Working during the thesis process**

- Initiative expressed during various stages of the thesis process, cooperation ability and taking independent responsibility for the process
- Adoption of theory and methods and innovation in problem solving
- Adherence to the thesis timetable

Before submitting a thesis, students must publish a "Graduparaati" ('master's theses parade') blog entry or video as required by the curriculum, the publication information of which will be entered in the assessment form field 'faculty-specific additional information'.