

STUDENT INFO

Information for students about the thesis process at Graduate School

Version 5.0 – January 2020

The online and always up-to-date version of the handbook is
available here: <https://tinyurl.com/sf8o4kb>

About this document

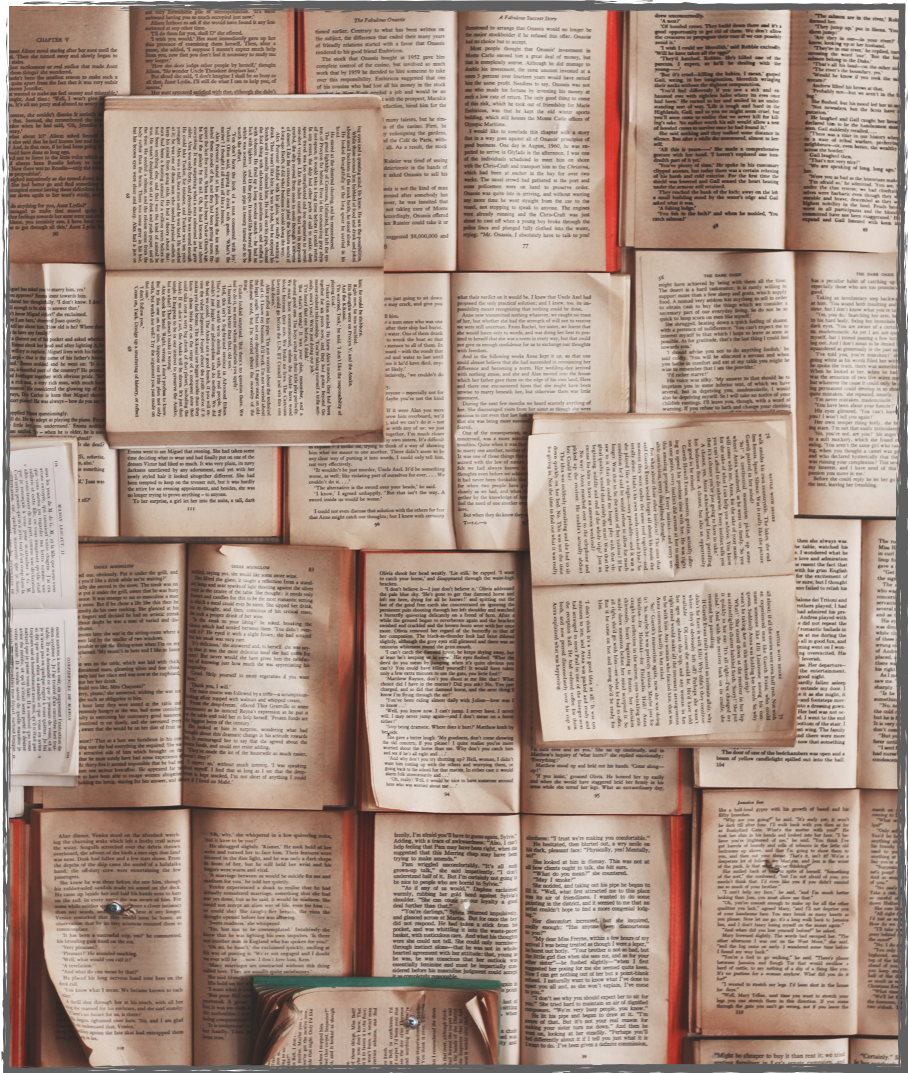
During your fourth term at Graduate School, you will write your master’s thesis, which corresponds to 30 credits. As a Graduate School student you are admitted to an interdisciplinary master’s programme in Development Studies, Global Studies, Social Studies of Gender or Middle Eastern Studies with a major, usually based on your undergraduate studies. This is the time for you to be creative and put what you have learned during the programme into your own research project!

Our ambition with this document is to provide a one-stop source of information about the entire thesis process for Graduate School students. For an online and always up-to-date version, please visit: <https://tinyurl.com/sf8o4kb>

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Overview of the Thesis Course



The Research Project

The research project is your chance to reflect on all that you have learnt throughout your master’s studies at Graduate School and to apply it to a specific topic. It is a fun way of learning more about that particular topic and it gives you the chance to shine in a specific subject. You will also learn more about other topics as you read and analyse other students’ projects during the course of your fourth term.

It really is the culmination of two years’ hard work and your stepping stone into the working world, as you reach outside of the comfort of earlier course literature into the depths of your own chosen topic. Report writing is a desirable skill in the job market and this experience will help you on your CV.

Remember, it is important that you do not get daunted by the research project - it should be a topic that interests you and that is manageable within the given timeframe. Do not bite off more than you can chew! A good thesis is a finished thesis! Your supervisor will be able to help you set the parameters of your research if it becomes unmanageable—do not be afraid to ask them for help with this as that is what they are there for.

Advice from former Graduate School students

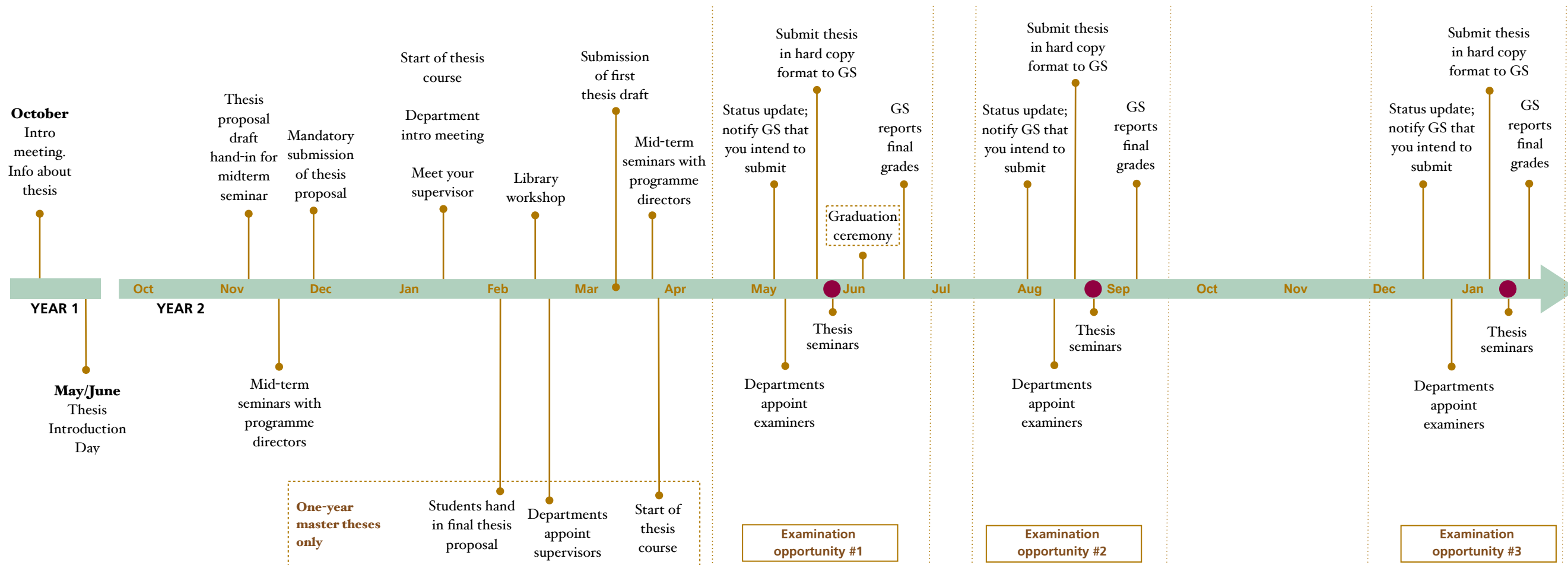
“Check different sources of academic articles and books, which means, do not limit yourself to LU Library or to Google Scholar, for example. Check the websites of the journals that are related to your research. If you find an article that you can’t get hold of, ask the Social Sciences Library through an e-mail to arrange it for you (this has actually worked for me). I also contacted one author directly and he sent me his research.”

“Write a first draft as soon as possible. As incoherent as it may have seemed then, it would have been a start. I expected perfection from penning the first word. And it took me a long time thus, to write something.”

“Don’t be scared not to write enough, it will come!

Thesis Timeline

For the exact dates, please refer to our webpage and the Graduate School Thesis Portal on Live@Lund.



Contact information

Keep yourself tuned in to the latest news about the thesis course on **Graduate School's Thesis Portal** on Live@Lund, as well as the Graduate School webpage: graduateschool.sam.lu.se/current-students/masters-thesis.

Be sure to check in regularly throughout the entire spring term so that you don't miss any important updates!

GRADUATE SCHOOL CONTACTS

1. **Katherine Anderson Ahlstedt** (Thesis Coordinator)
katherine.anderson_ahlstedt@sam.lu.se
2. **Mikael Sundström** (Director of Studies)
mikael.sundstrom@svet.lu.se
3. **Marta Kolankiewicz** (Programme Director for Social Studies of Gender)
marta.kolanciewicz@genus.lu.se
4. **Anne Jerneck** (Programme Director for Development Studies)
anne.jerneck@lucsus.lu.se
5. **Annika Bergman Rosamond** (Programme Director for Global Studies)
annika.bergman_rosamond@svet.lu.se
6. **Rola El-Husseini** (Programme Director for Middle Eastern Studies)
rola.el-husseini_dean@cme.lu.se

Our Department Contacts

MAJOR	PRIMARY CONTACT	DIRECTOR OF STUDIES
Political Science	Maria Hedlund maria.hedlund@svet.lu.se	Jakob Gustavsson jakob.gustavsson@svet.lu.se
Sociology	Bo Isenberg bo.isenberg@soc.lu.se	Jan-Olof Nilsson jan-olof.nilsson@soc.lu.se
Social Anthropology	Tove Höjdestrand tova.hojdestrand@soc.lu.se	Jan-Olof Nilsson jan-olof.nilsson@soc.lu.se
Education	n/a	Jan-Olof Nilsson jan-olof.nilsson@soc.lu.se
Social Work	Alexandru Panican alexandru.panican@soch.lu.se	Leili Laanemets leili.laanemets@soch.lu.se
Human Geography	Henrik Gutzon Larsen henrik.gutzon_larsen@keg.lu.se	Henrik Gutzon Larsen henrik.gutzon_larsen@keg.lu.se
Development Studies	Henrik Gutzon Larsen henrik.gutzon_larsen@keg.lu.se	Henrik Gutzon Larsen henrik.gutzon_larsen@keg.lu.se
Gender Studies	Rebecca Selberg rebecca.selberg@genus.lu.se	Rebecca Selberg rebecca.selberg@genus.lu.se
Sociology of Law	Ida Nafstad ida.nafstad@soclaw.lu.se	Anna Sonander anna.sonander@soclaw.lu.se
Middle Eastern Studies	Rola El-Husseini rola.el-husseini_dean@cme.lu.se	Rola El-Husseini rola.el-husseini_dean@cme.lu.se

General information

Thesis and Major

You are admitted to an interdisciplinary programme (Development Studies, Global Studies, Social Studies of Gender, or Middle Eastern Studies) with a major, usually based on your undergraduate studies*. You cannot change the major unless there are very special circumstances. A change of major must be decided by the Director of Studies.

Graduate School cooperates with the departments within the Faculty of Social Sciences for the master’s thesis course. You will write your master’s thesis at the department which corresponds to the major in your Bachelor’s degree*. The master’s thesis should reflect your programme studies and you should use theory and method from your major.

You will have a supervisor and an examiner from the department which corresponds to your major. The department will choose a supervisor for you, you do not have to find or look for a supervisor yourself.

Where will I write my master’s thesis?

MAJOR	DEPARTMENT
Political Science	Political Science
Development Studies	Human Geography (KEG)
Human Geography	
Sociology	Department of Sociology
Social Anthropology	
Education	
Social Work	Department of Social Work
Gender Studies	Department of Gender Studies
Middle Eastern Studies	Center for Middle Eastern Studies
Sociology of Law	Department of Social Law

Who to contact and when?

As mentioned above, Graduate School coordinates thesis course by working closely with with many of the departments within the Faculty of Social Sciences. If you have any questions regarding administrative matters, you should contact your thesis coordinator at Graduate School. Meanwhile, your supervisor will be your primary contact during the course, and they will address any questions that you might have about the content of your thesis.

You can find in the table below a list of what Graduate School and your home department/supervisor will be responsible for during the thesis course:

GRADUATE SCHOOL	DEPARTMENT/SUPERVISOR
Responsible for all course administration, i.e. checking eligibility, course registration, and registration of grade	Responsible for the overall content, theory, methodological approach, and format of your thesis
Arranges the midterm seminars with programme directors and English language seminars	Provides your individual schedule for your supervision including group seminars and deadlines for draft submissions
Organises the final thesis submission and thesis examination seminars	The department provides an examiner for thesis examination
Updates Thesis Portal on Live@Lund	

Admission Requirements

In order to be eligible to register for the master’s thesis course you must meet the course requirements. You must be finished with:

- Your profile courses, 30 credits
- Theory of Science and/or Research Methods, 30 credits

Requirements must be met within three weeks from the start of the Thesis Course, i.e. by the first week of February. Please contact the Graduate School Thesis Coordinator if you are unsure of your eligibility. You’ll find your course results in the Student Portal:

www.student.lu.se/uPortal/f/welcome/normal/render.uP

Registration

Before the start of the thesis course, Graduate School will check all students for eligibility. Students who are not eligible will be notified via email but we recommend you to also keep track of your results yourself.

You will be registered on a course code matching the combination of your programme and major. Therefore, students will be registered on different courses. Graduate School will do the registration for this course, you do not have to register yourself as you did for other courses. After you are registered by Graduate School to the course, you can find your course code on Ladok.

The Thesis Portal on Live@Lund (called SIMV07) will however be shared by all students writing their theses.

Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the course, you shall

Knowledge and understanding

- demonstrate knowledge and understanding of your field (Development Studies, Global Studies or Social Studies of Gender), including both broad knowledge in the field and substantially deeper knowledge of certain parts of the field, together with deeper insight in current research and development; and
- demonstrate deeper methodological knowledge.

Skills and abilities

- be able to apply their knowledge and understanding, and problem-solving abilities to contexts related to your field;
- demonstrate an ability to critically and systematically integrate knowledge and to analyse, assess and deal with complex phenomena, issues and situations, even when limited information is available in your field;
- demonstrate an ability to critically, independently and creatively identify and formulate research questions and to plan and, using appropriate methods, carry out advanced tasks within specified time limits and to evaluate this work;
- demonstrate an ability to clearly present and discuss their conclusions and the knowledge and arguments behind them, in dialogue with different groups, orally and in writing, in national and international contexts;

- demonstrate the skill required to participate in research and development work or to work independently in other advanced contexts;
- demonstrate an ability to correctly cite and refer to the literature and other relevant materials; and
- communicate scientific issues and follow the development of knowledge within your field of study.

Making judgements

- demonstrate an ability to make assessments in your field, taking into account relevant scientific, social and ethical aspects, and demonstrate an awareness of ethical aspects of research and development work;
- demonstrate insight into the potential and limitations of knowledge in the social sciences, its role in society and people's responsibility for how it is used; and
- demonstrate an ability to identify their need of further knowledge and to take responsibility for developing your knowledge.

Assessment and grading

Grading Scale

The grades awarded are A, B, C, D, E or Fail. The highest grade is A and the lowest passing grade is E. The grade for a non-passing result is Fail.

The student's performance is assessed with reference to the learning outcomes of the course.

For the grade of E the student must show acceptable results.

For the grade of D the student must show satisfactory results.

For the grade of C the student must show good results.

For the grade of B the student must show very good results.

For the grade of A the student must show excellent results.

For the grade of Fail (U) the student must have shown unacceptable results.

Grading and grade review

Grades are awarded by the examiner after careful assessment. In the Swedish tertiary education system the examiner's decision cannot be appealed. However, there are provisions for the correction and reassessment of decisions in the Swedish Administrative Procedure Act and Higher Education Ordinance. Pursuant to Ch. 6, Section 24 of the Higher Education Ordinance, an examiner is to change the grade if:

- the decision is obviously incorrect, and
- the decision can be changed quickly and easily, and
- it does not involve a lowering of the grade.

The first condition – that the decision is obviously incorrect – means that the examiner does not need to conduct any thorough scrutiny of the previously established grading decision, unless there is a special reason to do so.

The second condition – that the review can be performed quickly and easily – means that there is generally no obligation to review the decision if it requires further investigation of the matter.

Requests for grade review should be submitted in writing, where you specify anything that is obviously incorrect. The examiner will review your request and make a decision.

Students, then, cannot appeal a decision on grading, but can request that a grading decision be reconsidered. (List of Rights for students at Lund University, 5 juni 2013, REG No SU 2013/44)

Any decision on correction or alteration of a grade shall be taken by an examiner (Chapter 6 Section 23-24, Higher Education Ordinance (HEO)).

However, regulations regarding the rectification and retesting can be found in the decision of the Higher Education Ordinance (HEO 6:23-24). Before a grading decision will be reported in some form, for instance published in LADOK or in an official transcript, which will be sent to the student, or published on the course page, or published on a list that is handed out, etc., the examiner is free to change the grade. In order to change the decision of a grade thereafter, a juridical justification is required, which can be based on regulations in the Higher Education Ordinance, the administration act, jurisprudence or juridical literature.

Regarding the Higher Education Ordinance (2006:1053), the following applies:

6 Ch. Section 23 A decision with regards to 26§ administration act (1986:223) concerning the correction of typing errors, calculation errors or similar oversight in the case of a rating can be taken by an examiner

6 Ch. Section 24 If an examiner concludes that a decision on a grade is obviously incorrect because of new circumstances or the decision is obviously incorrect for any other reason, he or she may change the decision if this can be done quickly and easily and if it does not involve lowering the grade.

6 Ch. Section 23 Higher Education Ordinance in reference to the Administrative Procedure Act Section 26: A decision that contains a manifest error in writing, calculation or any other similar oversight by the authority or someone else may be corrected by the authority, which made the decision. Before a correction takes place the authority shall give the parties an opportunity to express themselves on the issue, provided that the matter concerns the exercise of public power in relation to someone and the measure is not unnecessary (Act (1990:456)).

Regarding Chapter 6 Section 24, if new circumstances have occurred or the examiner has realised that the grade awarded was obviously incorrect for some other reason, the grade should be changed quickly and easily and without the grade being lowered. It is the decision of the examiner whether or not a reconsideration of the grade should be made. Unless the examiner finds new facts or realises that the grade awarded was obviously incorrect, the examiner does not need to reconsider the grade. In general,

there is no obligation to review a decision of a grade, nor to further investigation. (*Förvaltningslagen* 1986:223§27, prop. 1985/86:80§27-28).

Students cannot demand to have a grade changed from pass to fail

If a student has received a passing grade (A-E), that grade must never be changed to a Fail based on a request of a student (perhaps hoping that a second chance will yield a better grade). Formally, a passing grade is viewed as a positive decision by the authority, and any change as a negative decision. This is the legal reason why the grade must not be changed, as a positive decision should never be altered (*Rättssäker examination, andra omarbetade upplagan*, 2008: 36R, p.68).

In fact, even if the student should by rights have received a Fail, but there has been some mistake on the part of the examiner so that a passing grade (A-E) has been awarded, this decision is a positive one that cannot be changed unless the student consents to this change!

In certain defined cases it may still be possible to change an already rendered decision to the disadvantage of a student, e.g., if the student has cheated or when the academic examiner comes to the conclusion that the student has obtained the erroneous ratings decision by misleading information (prop. 1985/86 80 p.39). Before such a decision is rendered, the student shall have the possibility to comment on the situation.

Limitation of the right to request a change of a grade

Students do not automatically lose their right to request a review of a grading decision, and there should thus not be set a delimitation to that effect. However, it can be difficult to ask for a reconsideration of the grade, if the decision has been made some considerable time earlier. It is recommended that a student does not wait too long to ask for a reconsideration, even though he or she does not in fact lose the right to ask for one (*Rättssäker examination, andra omarbetade upplagan*, 2008: 36R, p.68f.)

Important!

Students are never allowed an option to “upgrade” pass grades after the seminar (e.g., a “D” to a higher grade because of post-seminar manuscript improvements) – grading is based solely on the quality of the thesis + defence as exhibited in the thesis seminar.

Ethical guidelines

Academic Writing and Plagiarism

Academic honesty means that you as an author are responsible for your work and that you must be able to support the statements you make. Likewise, citation and referencing must be done correctly and it is never allowed to copy, fabricate or manipulate your data. This means that everything you hand in has to be made and written by you and nobody else. If that is not the case you can be accused of plagiarism, a serious offence. The penalties for plagiarism at LU are for example suspension between 2 weeks and 6 months.

If you copy, paraphrase or translate materials from websites, or library or other sources in your written assignments or thesis without giving full and proper credit to the original author(s), you are committing plagiarism. Accusations concerning plagiarism are taken very seriously and the consequences for your academic career and professional future may be disastrous, involving not only the loss of credit for courses in which the offence occurred, but even suspension for a certain time from your degree programme, not to mention having to live with a lingering reputation for dishonesty. Submitting the work of others as if it were your own is unacceptable. Plagiarism must be understood and avoided at all costs.

Students should expect to have their theses checked for plagiarism electronically. Whenever you use the words or ideas of others, fair academic practice requires that you identify your sources fully and accurately. Simply mentioning an author’s work at the beginning of a paper does not mean that you are then free to copy or paraphrase from that work; specific references must be given each time you quote or paraphrase. The fair use of evidence from primary and secondary sources is the basis of academic discourse, and abuse of this fairness undermines the very nature of scholarly research. Although plagiarism is not always illegal (since copyright laws usually presume a financial motive), it is nevertheless a form of intellectual theft and fraud. By committing plagiarism you show disrespect for the fundamental values of the academic community.

If you find yourself in doubt about quotations or your use of sources, it is always a good idea to provide full information. To learn more about LU policy on Academic integrity visit LU’s page on Academic Writing in English:

awelu.srv.lu.se/academic-integrity/academic-integrity-and-writing/

Before the thesis course starts



Your first term: Thesis Prep Track

Preparation for your thesis term starts in your first term with a collection of activities such as lectures, workshops and information meetings, namely the Thesis Preparation Track, which aims to prepare the students at Graduate School for writing their master's thesis, by providing everyone with a shared set of skills. This is achieved through activities led by instructors from the Social Sciences Faculty Library and the Academic Support Centre, scheduled when the skills are needed for coursework and assignments during your first profile and methods courses. The track offers activities, such as lectures and workshops, on several different topics:

- **Strategies for Getting Started on Your Final Paper:** In this workshop, you learn about the academic writing process, including strategies for getting words on the page, organising your ideas and the literature, crafting an academic argument, and connecting theory with empirical material! Come prepared to develop your final paper topics and arguments.
- **Effective reading strategies:** This lecture gives you strategies for reading academic literature to help you better understand and remember what you read, including advice for tackling long reading lists and for taking better notes.
- **Searching for and evaluating literature:** Introduction to library resources in September of the first semester, for all new students. Find out how to use the online search tools, databases and resources available through Lund University Libraries. Get an overview of how our library system works and what the most common rules/regulations are. Get to know the online subject guide for your program.
- **Reference management:** Workshop with focus on support for the final paper (or other assignment such as a literature review) of the first semester. How to find, use and evaluate relevant literature for your papers. Introduction to reference management software RefWorks. Please bring any questions that you might have!

Your second term: Thesis Introduction Day

In May or June each year, Graduate School organises a Thesis Introduction Day for the first year students. This day is meant to inspire you to think about your research question and methodology and it will also be a good opportunity to give and receive feedback from peers and teachers. The Thesis Introduction Day is usually scheduled on the very final day of the spring term. You'll find the date and time in your spring term schedule.

Your third term: Thesis proposals

In the third term of your programme you will be asked to submit a formal thesis proposal. The proposal will be the basis for assigning your supervisor and the actual starting point of your thesis process. The thesis proposal should draw a connection between your academic background, i.e. your major and your programme (Development Studies, Global Studies, Social Studies of Gender). The thesis proposal should be 2,500-3,500 *characters* (not words) references excluded.

What to include in your thesis proposal

- A working title. This title should be short and concise.
- The Research Problem: Define the topic and include a brief statement of the problem as well as relevant research questions.
- Theory/mode of analysis: How will the research problem be understood in principle and how will it be structured? Specify your theoretical approach.
- Methods and empirical data: How do you intend to investigate your research problem?
- References: Here you can include some relevant literature that you will use to write your thesis. It can include sources which you have not yet had the opportunity to read as well as texts with which you are acquainted.

Advice from former Graduate School students

Tips on formulating research questions

- Write down every idea you get as soon as you get them; they might come up on the bus!
- Make sure you read widely so that you have a comprehensive understanding of the field before you decide upon a research question.
- The research question is not set in stone - it is OK to modify or refine the question during the course of study as new information/insights come to light.
- Keep it very concise. Keep it very specific. Make sure it can be answered. Try not to fit everything into one research question. Only do that which is possible through your research. Do not make it more than it is!
- Sit together with your aim and research question. Sometimes they overlap and it is important to distinguish between the two.

How to submit your thesis proposal

You should hand in your proposal via Live@Lund. As you can see in the thesis timeline, there are two rounds of submissions for thesis proposals in November. First, you have the opportunity to hand in their proposal drafts in early to mid-November, and you attend the midterm seminars the following week. The deadline for mandatory submissions of thesis proposals is usually the end of November, when we send your proposals to the departments who then assign you a supervisor.

Midterm Seminars for Thesis Proposals

Graduate School organises midterm seminars, where you will discuss your proposal with your programme directors and the fellow students from your programme after you submit your draft. In these seminars, you will have the chance to discuss your ideas and get feedback from your friends and teachers. Then you will have time to make changes to your draft according to the comments that you received and submit the final version of your thesis proposal a week after the midterm seminars.

Distance Seminars

Many students are unable to participate in the midterm seminars during November, as they might be away on a study abroad, working as an intern, or simply might not be in Lund. In order to accommodate our distance students, Graduate School organises a distance midterm seminar submission to provide peer group reviews for distance students' thesis proposal drafts.

While you are writing



Formatting Guidelines

How long should your thesis be?

The length of your thesis depends on whether you are completing the two-year program or opting for the one-year emergency option:

- Master's (One Year) Thesis, 15 credits, 25-30 pages, approximately 12 000 words
- Master's (Two Years) Thesis: 30 credits, 50 pages, approximately 20 000 words

Typographical Guidelines

Times New Roman 12

1.5 Line spacing

Page width: 3.5 cm margins on each side

Page length: 3.5 cm margins, top and bottom margins

Printing Instructions

Double-sided, stapled

Think about the environment and keep it simple: No binders or plastic folders!

Sources

Sources with another language than English can be used, but the quoted text should be translated into English, with a comment: "My translation" in parentheses. If the book also is published in English, you should use the English translation.

Important!

Please note that these are general guidelines! You should always check with your home department if they have other formatting or referencing guidelines to which you should comply. You can find more information on the websites of some departments; if that is not the case, you should ask your supervisor to give you more information.

Supervision

General

The master's thesis course constitutes your fourth term at Graduate School, and always begins around January 15-20. By the start of the course, you will know the name of the supervisor. At some departments, this information is given at mandatory introduction meetings, usually held on the first day of the term. Otherwise, the student will be given information about their supervisor at the start of the term and instructed to contact them to set up a first meeting. One exception to this is the students in the Middle Eastern Studies programme who should know who their supervisors will be before the thesis course begins. Keep in mind that you yourself are responsible for your research project and for your writing process. The supervisor can offer support and guidance, but you will have to be the driving force!

Where

The thesis course is not a distance course, so most departments and supervisors require that students are present in Lund to be able to receive supervision. Some departments arrange peer review seminars and other activities for which student attendance is also required. You cannot expect to receive distance supervision through Skype or email, although this can sometimes be agreed upon in special circumstances.

When

Supervision is only provided during the first term that you are registered for the course. We are rarely able to provide supervision outside of the normal course period, whether before you first register, or afterwards in cases of re-registration. Once registered, you need to use your supervision hours within that given term or risk losing them altogether. You cannot save supervision hours for a later date if you have been actively registered for the course for the entire term. If you start the thesis course and for some reason need to cease your studies, please make sure to contact the Graduate School thesis coordinator to formally withdraw from the course. This gives you a chance at receiving supervision for your thesis during a later term.

Fieldwork

Fieldwork should be conducted in agreement with the supervisor. If you intend on doing fieldwork we recommend that you start your fieldwork 1-2 weeks after the start of the spring semester, so you that you have a chance to attend your course introductory meetings, to meet your supervisor face-to-face, and to set up your schedule for supervision and review seminars. If you have decided to travel abroad for

your field work, make sure to contact your thesis coordinator at Graduate School to see what options you have for insurance coverage!

Graduate School's advice regarding supervision

- Depending on your department, supervisors may take the first contact and inform you about your supervision schedule. If this is not the case at your department, contact your supervisor as soon as possible and stay in touch with him/her.
- Use your time efficiently. There is a limit to the supervision resources, use it wisely. Come prepared to the meetings.
- If supervision is not working out, contact Graduate School immediately.
- Supervision is usually only available during the actual course period (mid January to early June) so make sure that you get the most out of it!
- Make sure to utilise the extra resources available to you: Graduate School's midterm seminars, library workshops, Academic Support Centre, AWELU

Advice from former Graduate School students

"Keep in constant touch with your supervisor. Keep asking for comments and a chance to interact and receive comments both verbally and in written form. Discussions are very fruitful. It helps keep the student steady and not get lost in one's own mind and words."

"Use your supervisor. They have a wealth of experience and knowledge even if they are not an expert on your topic."

Library Workshop

In February, Graduate School's librarian Maja Carlson organises library workshops as a way for you to better acquaint yourself with the tools and resources at your disposal.

For more information on what the library has to offer, please see

libguides.lub.lu.se/mastersprogrammes

Library Resources

Finding good information is essential to writing a good thesis. You can find a variety of information about how to search in databases, catalogues and ordering books from other libraries on the University Library Website and at the Social Sciences Faculty Library. The LU libraries also provide a substantial number of books, periodicals and theses in printed form.

Midterm Seminar

In addition to the supervision at your department, Graduate School offers a midterm seminar for each programme every spring in March/April. In this seminar you submit your first draft, or whatever you have written, to your programme and programme director for a peer review. This is a great opportunity to receive feedback from your teachers and from your peers. Re-registered students are welcome to participate in the Midterm seminar!

General Resources

In addition to supervision and seminars, many departments supply some supplementary resources. While you are writing, make sure to locate what resources the department has to aid you in this. And don't forget to check out Lund University's support services:

Academic Support Centre

Academic support in English is available for all International Master's students at Lund University. The service aims to support students with the academic skills necessary for success at Lund University and gives the opportunity to meet with an English language consultant for individual hands-on supervision in English on academic topics.

tinyurl.com/LUsupportcenter

AWELU

AWELU (Academic Writing in English at Lund University) is an Internet resource for both students and staff looking for help when writing academic texts in English.

AWELU is a platform containing useful and easily accessible information in English about English grammar, spelling, vocabulary, and punctuation, but also more general help with the writing process in general, referencing, quoting, and how to avoid committing plagiarism.

awelu.srv.lu.se/

Lund University Student Papers – LUP

LUP Student Papers is the institutional repository for master theses and student papers from Lund University. The full texts of the documents are made freely available when possible.

All Graduate School students are asked to upload their thesis on LUP, once it has received a passing grade. This means you can use LUP to find previous student's theses for inspiration.

lup.lub.lu.se/student-papers/search/

Methods Resources

Faculty Methods Director Chris Swader has compiled this useful list of methods resources to get you started with writing your thesis!

Writing a thesis

Eco, Umberto. How to Write a Thesis. MIT Press, 2015.

Writing research questions

- guides.library.duke.edu/c.php?g=289688&p=1930772
- masscommtheory.com/2011/05/05/writing-good-qualitative-research-questions
- Sage Research Methods Online srmo.sagepub.com
- Sage Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research Methods knowledge.sagepub.com/view/socialscience/SAGE.xml

Research Design and Methodology

Becker, Howard Saul. Tricks of the trade: how to think about your research while you're doing it. Chicago guides to writing, editing, and publishing. Chicago, Ill: University of Chicago Press, 1998.

Stinchcombe, Arthur L. (2005) The Logic of Social Research, University of Chicago Press, Chicago. Chapter 1. 21 sidor.

Qualitative Research

Burawoy, Michael. Ethnography Unbound: Power and Resistance in the Modern Metropolis. University of California Press, 1991.

Hammersley, M., and Atkinson, P. (2007) Ethnography: Principles and Practice, 3rd Edition. London: Routledge.

Hogan, Susan (2013) 'Understanding Discourse Analysis?' at www.academia.edu/3709348/Understanding_Discourse_Analysis

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Research ethics

EU Guidance Note:

ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/fp7/89867/social-sciences-humanities_en.pdf

The Swedish Council for Humanities and Social Sciences

www.codex.uu.se/en/forskninghumsam.shtml

American Anthropological Association Statement on Ethics

ethics.americananthro.org/category/statement/

Statistics tutorials

LEMMA, University of Bristol

www.bristol.ac.uk/cmm/learning/online-course/index.html

Khan academy: www.khanacademy.org/math/statistics-probability

SPSS Support

SPSS tutorial www.lse.ac.uk/methodology/tutorials/SPSS/home.aspx

Submitting and defending your thesis



How to submit your thesis

1. Contact your Supervisor

We highly recommend that you contact your supervisor before submitting your thesis, even though you might not have had contact for some time. Please note that the supervisors are not required to read your whole thesis before submission, they should however be informed. Some departments formally require that the supervisor is informed before submission, others do not.

2. Contact Graduate School

We would like to know beforehand if you plan on submitting your thesis or not. That is why we always set a date on which you need to notify us about your intent to submit, generally a couple of weeks before the submissions. The easiest way to do this is to email master@sam.lu.se.

The notification is not binding, which means that you can still submit even if you did not notify and vice versa. However, your notification helps us plan ahead for the examination seminars. Also, if you notify us, we will be contacting you to communicate necessary information about the submissions and the thesis seminars, so if you believe that you will submit your thesis, please let us know!

3. Submit your Thesis!

On the day of the submission, you should hand in two (2) paper copies of your thesis between 9:00 and 11:00. You should also upload a PDF-version in the student portal Live@Lund no later than an hour after the physical submission of your thesis. The uploading is important in order for your peers to find your thesis for the examination seminars. If you do not have access to Live@Lund, please contact us.

If you cannot be in Lund to hand in your thesis, you can send a friend to hand it in for you. You can also send it by post but it must have reached the Graduate School office by the deadline 11 am. The postal address is:

Graduate School
Faculty of Social Sciences
Box 117
SE-221 00 Lund

4. Wait for the Thesis Seminar Schedule

The seminar schedule will be sent out as soon as possible, usually within three to four days. While you wait for the schedule, you can start preparing for your own seminar presentation. Unfortunately, we cannot consider individual preferences for a specific date or time as scheduling these seminars is a complicated task. Please also bear in mind that the seminar for your thesis might be on a different day as the seminar for which you are the opponent.

Examination seminars

After submission, a schedule for examination seminars will be set up. The thesis seminars are normally scheduled within the given period of the semester, though this may not be the case in August and January. Unfortunately, there are no possibilities of re-scheduling; failure to attend your examination seminar counts as an incomplete course. We have to consider the examiners, the different majors and the localities, therefore we cannot consider individual requests for specific dates. Therefore, please refrain from making travel plans that cannot be changed until the thesis examination schedule is published! You will receive the schedule by email or on Live@Lund, as soon as it is ready. It could be that you are defending your thesis one day, and doing an opposition another day.

Two examination seminars are mandatory: the one where you defend your own work and the one where you are an opponent on the work of a peer. However, we encourage students to attend all seminars within their seminar group. After the seminar, you will most likely know if you pass or fail, but the examiner may take up to 15 working days to decide on the grade.

Important!

Keep in mind that attendance to examination seminars is mandatory; therefore, you have to be present in Lund during the examination seminars.

Before the Seminar

Before your examination seminars you should prepare your presentation of your own thesis and carefully read the thesis that you are scheduled to oppose. If you intend to use a computer-aided presentation, please prepare for eventualities, e.g. own laptop with necessary adapters for projector and a backup on a USB-stick or on a web-mail account. The time allocated to the seminar should include the presentation and defence of the thesis.

Question to former student: How did you prepare for the thesis defence and opposition?

“By the time I submitted my thesis I knew my topic inside-out anyway as I had been intensely working on my thesis for months, so all I did was prepare a short presentation to help me discuss the key points. As for the opposition I just read the paper, made some notes, and tried to offer my feedback in a constructive way.”

Thesis seminar and opposition guidelines

The Organisation of Seminars

During the examination seminars, you will defend your master's thesis and a fellow student will make an opposition on your work, and vice versa. The defendant and the opponent usually have the same major or are in the same programme.

Duration:

2Y Master's thesis: 60 min

1Y Master's thesis: 45 min.

You are expected to attend the seminars of your peers, even if you are not active as an opponent or author. It is important that you have read all of the theses in your group (usually around 4 theses) prior to the seminar. All students will be given the opportunity to comment and discuss each other's work, not just the opponents and authors. If you wish to take part in other thesis seminars you are welcome to do so – they are open to all students. The seminars are usually very instructive and it is recommended that you take part in as many as you can. Thesis seminars are led by the examiner. Supervisors may attend, but usually do not.

To be a defendant

For the examination of a two years master's thesis, the author is expected to begin the seminar with a 10 minutes presentation of the thesis. For a one-year master thesis, the presentation should be 5-10 minutes. It is recommended to use a ppt- presentation.

The authors are expected to defend their work during the seminar and answer questions posed by the opponent and other participants. To defend your thesis means to listen to the opposition and to be open for constructive criticism. Explain how you have been thinking about the problem. You do not have to agree to all the objections, but do not turn the seminar into a debate. During the opposition, you often receive valuable piece of advice for the finishing touch of your thesis. It is important to take constructive criticism to heart – it will aid you in your further academic studies and theses to come.

To be an opponent

To be an opponent means to provide an in-depth evaluation, to present and introduce the thesis for discussion after the presentation of the author. It is important that you have read the thesis thoroughly and that you have taken the time to understand the problem, thoughts and material.

The opponent should lead the discussion with the author. For an opposition to be interesting and meaningful for all participants, it is important that you have prepared yourself well. There is nothing more boring than to listen to an unprepared opposition, which is signified by the opponent sitting and browsing through the pages, questioning a comma, or other formalities, or picking a comment here and there.

An opposition means to examine and to critically evaluate the work. This means to discuss choices made and conclusions drawn (critical thinking), to find new angles of approaches on the considered material in the thesis (creative thinking), and also to see the strength and possibilities in the thesis (positive thinking).

The opponent should hand in a written summary of their discussion to the examiner and at the seminar. It should be concise, not exceeding one page (appr. 400 words) and present the most important points you will raise during the seminar.

Suggested outline for the opposition:

1. Start the opposition with a concluding description of the thesis and then make a short reflection around the formalities. Any shortcomings regarding the formalities (language, notes, references, literature lists etcetera) should be summarised in a list which, which could be handed to the author after the opposition.
2. Discuss the questions at issue and the purpose of the thesis: Is it clear what the thesis is about?
3. Review the material and method: Does the author succeed with the material? Does the method cover the questions at hand? Is it clear where the different facts come from?
4. How has the author motivated his/her choice of theoretical starting point/point of departure? Is the theory relevant and put into practice?
5. Discuss if consideration to previous/earlier research in the field is taken: Is the author aware of which discussion she/he is participating in?
6. The disposition and the implementation of the analysis: Does the title, purpose, theory, method, the empirical material and result correspond?
7. The argumentation: Is the way of thinking and reasoning valid? Is the result, alternative interpretations and conclusions, motivated and substantiated?
8. Round off with a short summary and your overall impression of the thesis.

Further examination opportunities

If you do not hand in your thesis in May, there will be two other opportunities for you to submit and defend your thesis within a year from the start of the thesis course, usually in August and January. The deadline for submissions will be announced on the Graduate School website, as well as the preliminary dates for the examination seminars. You will be asked to inform us of your intention to submit your thesis by sending an email to master@sam.lu.se.

Keep in mind that you must be in Lund during the examination seminars regardless of when you submit your thesis. If you need a visa or a residence permit to be in Sweden, you will need to make the necessary arrangements to travel to Lund.

After the seminars

Revisions

Once you know that you have passed your thesis, you may make smaller editorial revisions to your text according to the comments from your opponent and examiner. You have five working days to make these corrections.

Important!

Students are never allowed an option to “upgrade” pass grades after the seminar (e.g., a “D” to a higher grade because of post-seminar manuscript improvements) – grading is based solely on the quality of the thesis + defence as exhibited in the thesis seminar.


LUP Student Papers

After you made revisions, you should upload the revised thesis to LUP Student Papers. The student can make minor, not mandated, adjustments based on seminar comments before uploading the thesis in LUP. Once your grade is reported by the examiner and the thesis is uploaded to LUP database, your grade will be published in Ladok. Note that this process may take up to a couple of weeks.

All degree projects at the Faculty of Social Sciences are to be registered and published in LUP Student Papers. Although uploading the thesis is required, the student can choose whether or not to make it accessible to the public. Note that this is only for theses with a Pass grade. The Graduate School thesis coordinator makes sure that the theses are published on LUP.

Written assessment form

After you upload your thesis to LUP Student and your grade is published in Ladok, we will also be sending you a written feedback on your thesis. In addition to reporting your grade, examiners also fill a written assessment form with their comments about the theses that they examine. You will receive a form that will look like this:



LUND UNIVERSITY

Faculty of Social Sciences

Graduate School

May 2020

Written Assessment of Master's Thesis

Name of author:

Thesis title:

Examiner:

Date:

1. Purpose and specific research questions of the thesis are clearly stated and addressed
2. The theoretical framework is relevant to the purpose of the thesis and the empirical material presented in the analysis
3. Reference to current research: author demonstrates knowledge of the broad field which constitutes the background to the thesis.
4. The thesis constitutes an analytical piece of work in which theoretically and empirically grounded reflections underpin the analysis.
5. Critical thinking – arguments presented on the basis of complementary perspectives and empirically grounded data
6. Methodology: the specific methodology employed by the author, and the pros and cons of this methodology are discussed

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Fax +46 46 222 44 11 E-mail master@sam.lu.se Website www.sam.lu.se/ss

Apply for your degree certificate

When you are done with all of your courses, it is time to apply for your degree certificate. At Lund University, you have to apply for your degree certificate yourself. It will not be sent to you automatically.

Most students can apply for their degree certificate online, through the Student Portal or download the application form from the Degree Office's website, linked below.

At the website for the Degree Office, you will find more information about the process. It may take up to ten weeks before you receive the certificate. Remember to make sure that your correct address is registered in Ladok.

For more information, please visit this page: tinyurl.com/applyLUCertificate

Join the Alumni Network!

Stay in touch with Graduate School and Lund University after you graduate! After you graduate, the Lund University Alumni Association helps you keep in touch with the University. As an alumnus of Lund University and especially as an international student, you are an ambassador for our university all over the world and make a major contribution for us by sharing your experiences of Lund with others. Membership is free and you can register online via this link: <https://www.lunduniversity.lu.se/alumni/about-the-alumni-network>

As a registered alumnus you will receive:

- invitations to international alumni networking events
- the latest news from the University
- up-to date research news
- invitations to inspirational lectures, courses and seminars
- Graduate School Newsletter twice a year

Please also note that as part of the Graduate School alumni group, you are always welcome to join the various events we schedule in Lund, and to come and see us whenever you are in Sweden.