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MASTER'S THESIS REGULATIONS

Regulations for master's theses completed at the Faculty of Humanities and the Faculty of Social Sciences, Aalborg University, 1 February 2017

Pursuant to the Danish Ministerial Order on Bachelor's and Master's Programmes at Universities (the University Programme Order) in force, the following regulations are stipulated for all master programmes at the Faculty of Humanities and the Faculty of Social Sciences.

Available in Danish at www.retsinformation.dk/Forms/R0710.aspx?id=184781

A translated version of the 2013 University Programme Order is available in English on the Ministry's website: <http://ufm.dk/en/legislation/prevailing-laws-and-regulations/education/universities>

This ministerial order and the joint rules for course and exam registrations at Aalborg University set out the following rules for the date of submission and examination attempts for master's theses.

The University Programme Order stipulates (5.-(1)):

Bachelor's and Master's degree programmes must be structured as full-time programmes so as to allow the student to complete a Bachelor's degree programme in thirty-four months (or thirty-six months, for students beginning their studies in the spring semester) and to complete a Master's degree programme in twenty-four months where the Master's programme takes the form of an immediate continuation of a Bachelor's degree programme. If a Master's degree programme does not take the form of an immediate continuation of a Bachelor's degree programme, the Master's degree programme must be organised so as to allow students who begin their studies in the autumn semester to complete the Master's degree programme in twenty-two months and to allow students who begin their studies in the spring semester to complete their studies in twenty-four months.

Bachelor's and Master's degree programmes may also be structured as part-time study programmes; see the University Act.

At the Faculty of Humanities and the Faculty of Social Sciences, the master's thesis semester is completed during the 10th semester of the degree programme.

1. Legal requirement of master's thesis semester registration

It is mandatory for all master's students who have passed all other examinations than the master's thesis to register for the master's thesis semester.

Students who do not register themselves will be registered by the University.

Withdrawal from the first examination attempt is not possible unless exceptional circumstances apply (such as sick leave, care commitments for dependants, parental leave, adoption, military service, etc.).

In case that students fail their first examination attempt, they will be automatically registered for a second attempt; the same applies to the third attempt. In such case, the Faculty Office will confer with the relevant school and study board.

Students may register for the master's thesis semester when all other examinations have been passed; however, students who need to pass one examination of up to 10 ECTS points from a previous semester may also register for the master's thesis semester. All examinations must be passed by the end of semester 10.

http://www.fhs.aau.dk/digitalAssets/300/300229_examination-regulations.pdf

2. Thesis statement

The head of school must approve the thesis statement and a supervision plan. In accordance with the Scheme of Delegation, the head of school may delegate authority to an academic staff member who possesses the appropriate academic expertise.

At the Faculty of Humanities and the Faculty of Social Sciences at Aalborg University, the student and their study board will sign a thesis contract. A thesis contract is a binding document which includes various information such as thesis topic and supervisor.

On the basis of the approved thesis statement, the student will write a master's thesis. Students may write their thesis individually or in cooperation with one or more fellow students; individual study boards may determine the maximum number of students in a thesis group.

3. Thesis period, submission deadline and late submission

In the spring semester, master's thesis students must submit their thesis by the end of May and in the autumn semester by the end of December. The specific date of submission is determined by their study board.

When the deadline for the submission of the master's thesis has been determined (cf. section 1), this deadline will be final and binding, and students cannot withdraw their registration.

3.1 Late submission

After the submission deadline, the programme secretaries will control if any students have not submitted their thesis on time. If students fail to submit their thesis by the prescribed deadline, this will be regarded as a failed examination attempt. This is registered as 'non-attendance' in the Student Self-Service system (STADS).

In such cases, students must, in cooperation with their supervisor, complete a revised thesis statement within the same subject area. The revised thesis statement must be submitted for the approval of the head of school (or the person(s) to whom the head of studies has delegated this authority) no later than 14 days after the original deadline. In addition, a revised thesis contract must be signed and a new three-month deadline set. The three months will run from the day after the revised thesis contract has been signed.

Please note that students will not have to write a new thesis statement; they merely need to revise their original thesis statement. Thus, the revised thesis statement must require an added workload of three months, but should not require students to re-write the entire thesis.

Please note that the study boards may determine whether students are offered additional supervision in connection with a revised thesis statement. Thus, in the event of late submission, students cannot expect to be offered additional supervision.

3.2 Exceeding new submission deadlines

If students fail to submit their thesis within the new prescribed deadline, the examination result will yet again be registered in STADS as 'absent', and the students will have used two examination attempts. In accordance with the general rules on examination attempts (the Examination Order No. 1062 of 30 June 2016, 13(2)), students are entitled to a maximum of three attempts to pass their master's thesis. The third attempt to pass the master's thesis will follow the procedure outlined in section 3.1.

Students who fail the third examination have no legal right to have another examination attempt even if the first attempt was used due to the University's policy of mandatory registration.

However, in exceptional circumstances, the study board of the programme in question may grant an exemption from the rule on a maximum of three attempts. (The University Act, Act No. 261 of 18 March 2015, 18(4.4))

The programme secretaries will follow up on the status of master's thesis students and, in the event of a failed third attempt, must follow the procedure stipulated in Aalborg University's regulations for 'Termination of enrolment due to lack of participation'. Lack of participation is defined as a student being 'an inactive student [...] who has failed in a period of one year to pass an exam at Aalborg University or any other higher education institution that is a part of his or her study programme. The one-year period does not comprise periods in which the student is granted leave from the study programme in question.'¹

¹Please refer to Aalborg University's regulations for 'Termination of enrolment due to lack of participation'
http://www.aauhaandbog.aau.dk/file/9810/Exmatrikulationsregler_af_1_September_2016_ENG.pdf

In exceptional circumstances, such as sick leave, care commitments for dependants, parental leave, adoption, military service, etc., and only upon written application, the Dean of the Faculty of Humanities or the Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences may grant exemption from the rules regarding lack of participation.

4. Examination and assessment

When the thesis contract has been signed (cf. section 1), students cannot postpone their examination by failing to register for the examination or by withdrawing from the examination. The study board secretaries will check that all formal requirements regarding submission have been met in the exam registration system Digital Exam www.de.aau.dk. Students who have not registered for their examination will be registered by the University as described in section 1.

4.1 Type of examination

If no other provisions have been made by the individual study board, the following type of examination will apply:

An oral examination based on the students' written work, whether prepared individually or in cooperation with others. The examination is conducted as a conversation between the student(s), examiner and co-examiner. If the master's thesis have been written by a group of students, the group will be jointly responsible for the entire written work. The master's thesis constitutes the basis for the examination and assessment, and an overall assessment of the thesis and the oral performance will be made. At oral group examinations, the examination must be conducted in such a way that an individual assessment of each individual student's performance is ensured; cf. the Examination Order in force.

The extents to which the learning objectives of the master's thesis semester have been met are part of the overall assessment. The grade is based on an overall assessment of the thesis, the presentation, the joint discussion and the individual verbal contribution to this discussion including an assessment of the student's verbal communication skills, writing skills and language accuracy; thus, each individual student will receive one grade based on their performance as a whole.

In exceptional circumstances, the Dean may determine that an examination may be conducted in a different manner.

The duration of the examination is determined by the relevant school or study board and is stated in the programme curriculum and regulations or in the school's general examination regulations.

4.2 Assessment

Deliberations by the examiner and the co-examiner will result in a grade being awarded according to the 7-point grading scale. The examiner will announce this grade to the students shortly after the examination.

Students will not receive a written assessment of their master's thesis.

5. If students do not pass their master's thesis

Students who do not pass their master's thesis submitted within the prescribed deadline, are invited to meet with their supervisor, who will elaborate on the grade awarded and provide supervision as to the special focus areas to be considered in their revision of the thesis.

The programme secretary will determine the submission deadline for the revised thesis report and set the date for a new oral examination. The revised report must include a preface in which the student provides an overall description of the alterations made to the original report. In the event that the initial grade was based solely on the oral examination (see above), the submission of a revised master's thesis may be purely formal and the student may submit an identical thesis report. In any such cases, this must be specified in the added preface.

If students fail to submit their revised thesis report by the prescribed deadline, this will be regarded as a failed examination, and a new problem formulation must be approved, and a new submission three-month deadline is set, cf. the regulations stipulated in section 3.2.

6. Leave of absence during the master's thesis period

As a general rule, students may not take leave of absence during their thesis period; however, exceptions apply in the case of sick leave, maternity leave (documented by a medical certificate), leave to care for dependants, mandatory military or UN mission service, etc.

The Faculty Office of Humanities and Social Sciences
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