**Guideline for reviewing**

**School of Natural Sciences and health**

The guideline “**Formatting Requirements for Theses and Student Papers of the School of Natural Sciences and Health**” is available [here](https://www.tlu.ee/en/lti/opingud/documents-and-guidelines). It includes the general requirements for reviews.

The field-specific instructions for reviewers in the natural sciences can be found in the appendix of the current guideline.

**Review**

A written review is provided as an evaluation of the thesis. The reviewer’s educational background must comply with the requirements set forth in Section 27(4) of the Standard of Higher Education. When appointing a reviewer, conflicts of interest should be avoided, but the reviewer’s education and expertise in the field of the thesis are taken into account.

The academic unit verifies students' theses using plagiarism detection software and shares the results with the reviewer and the defense committee.

The review (preferably up to two pages) includes a general assessment of the objective, the alignment of the theoretical part and chosen methodology, the results and conclusions, and the formatting of the thesis. The review may include questions for the student defending the thesis. The reviewer may use these questions as a basis for academic discussion. When providing an evaluation, the reviewer must consider the scope of the thesis and adhere to the applicable formatting guidelines. In cases not covered by the guidelines, international best practices should be followed.

The student receives the review no later than one working day (24 hours) before the defense. The review does not include a recommendation regarding the student's grade.

The review may be more detailed and comprehensive, but its presentation must remain within the agreed time limit. The reviewer should highlight the most significant observations from the written review during the oral presentation, taking into account the time allocated for academic discussion as a whole.

If academic misconduct (plagiarism) is identified in connection with the thesis before the defense, the defense committee may request explanations regarding the submitted work and decide to prohibit the student from defending the thesis. This decision must be made no later than one working day before the defense.

**Appendix**

**The review manual of the natural sciences theses of TU School of Natural sciences and Health**

This manual is a reference material for the reviewers of natural sciences Bachelor’s and Master’s theses.

Upon reviewing, please note the following:

**The aim of the thesis and its attainability**

* Is the problem and aim of the thesis clearly worded, the relevancy of the topic justified and the content in compliance with the title of the thesis?
* Are the necessary research questions, research tasks or hypotheses (depending on the thesis focus) clearly worded for achieving the aim?
* Are the conclusions in compliance with the raised research questions (with the tasks and hypotheses)?
* Have the applied (development) research results been tested in practice?

**Knowing the topic**

* Are the theoretical background of the topic and the research of other authors dealt with adequately?
* Is the selected research method valid, clearly described and expertly used?
* Are the results presented clearly and unambiguously?
* Are the discussion, conclusions and suggestions (depending on the thesis focus) sufficiently grounded (factual basis, logicality of the reasoning, compatibility with other research, etc.)?

**Formatting**

* Is the thesis structure logical and its presentation rational (e.g. order of the parts, connectedness, volumes, using drawings and tables)?
* Is the thesis compliant with the requirements described in the thesis guidelines (including formatting, referencing, linguistic correctness)?

**General evaluation**

* Do the thesis results show the author’s contribution in a way that corresponds to the content and volume of the BA/MA thesis *(1 ECTS credit = 26 hours of work)*?
* Does the thesis include other positive characteristics, questionable matters, or deficiencies that should be brought to attention?

Finally, give the thesis a summarising evaluation on the basis of the above-mentioned points, but do not offer a suggested mark. The review should not reflect the thesis structure (e.g. number of chapters, drawings, etc.).

The review should include questions to the defender that need to be answered during the defence.

The recommended length of the review written in free form is up to two pages.

In addition to the signature, please add the reviewer’s academic degree, job title, place of work and the date on the review.