

ESTABLISHED
by Resolution No. 11 of the Council of the School of January 24, 2019
AMENDED
by Resolution No. 1-6/102 of the Council of the School of May 8, 2020
by Resolution No. 1-6/56 of the Council of the School of March 25, 2021
by Resolution No. 1-6/24 of the Council of the School of February 16, 2022
by Resolution No. 1-6/60 of the Council of the School of April 27, 2023
by Resolution No. 1-6/90 of the Council of the School of May 14, 2024

Requirements for Final Theses at the School of Digital Technologies

1. General provisions

- 1.1. The general requirements for the preparation and defence of the final theses of the first and second level of higher education have been established in section 27 of the Tallinn University Study Regulations.
- 1.2. The requirements for the final theses at the School of Digital Technologies (hereinafter the *Theses Requirements*) establish the process of preparation of the final theses of the first and second level of higher education, as well as the requirements for the volume, format and review of theses.
- 1.3. The Theses Requirements consist of a general part and annexes. The annexes present study programme specific requirements for the nature, structure and volume of final theses, as well as other more detailed specialisation-specific conditions.

2. Registration of final thesis topics

- 2.1. The student shall be the active party in choosing the topic and finding a supervisor and shall contact a particular lecturer with his or her supervision request. Both the head of the study programme and the head of study area can be consulted in choosing the topic of the final thesis and the supervisor. [Entry into force 01.09.2024]
- 2.2. The topic of the final thesis shall be registered using the final thesis topic registration form published on the homepage of the School. The form, signed by the student and the supervisor(s), shall be submitted to the study counsellor. The study counsellor shall forward the final thesis topic registration to the head of the study programme for approval. [Entry into force 01.09.2024]
- 2.3. The topic and supervisor approved by the head of the study programme shall be approved by an order of the Director of the School in the study information system SIS and registered in the register of final thesis topics of the School. [Entry into force 01.09.2024]

- 2.4. The terms for registering final thesis topics shall be established every academic year separately by study programmes.
- 2.5. In justified cases, a student shall have the right to request the preparation of a final thesis in a language other than the language of the study programme, by submitting a respective application together with the final thesis topic. The application shall be approved by the head of the study programme and the head of studies of the School. [Entry into force 01.09.2024]

3. Supervision

- 3.1. The tasks of the supervisor and the student have been regulated in subsections (7) and (8) of section 27 of the Tallinn University Study Regulations.
- 3.2. The supervisor shall give the student feedback within one week after the request of the student. This period may be longer in exceptional cases (e.g. work assignments, illness, etc.). If the lecturer is not able to provide substantive feedback within that period (e.g. due to a big workload) the student shall be informed thereof and given a term by which substantive feedback can be given.

4. Format requirements of final theses

- 4.1. The mandatory parts of a final thesis are a title page, a table of contents, an introduction, the main part of the thesis, a summary, references, authors' contributions in a group thesis and an English summary for works written in Estonian. A summary in English contains the title of the thesis in English. In case of a final thesis written in English on a study programme in which the language of instruction is Estonian, the thesis includes a summary in Estonian in the volume of approximately 10% of the main text of the thesis. A summary in Estonian contains title of the thesis in Estonian, research problem, aims, methodology, overview of the research process and results. [Entry into force 01.09.2024]
- 4.2. Additional parts of a final thesis may include an abstract, keywords, a list of figures, a list of tables, a list of abbreviations, an explanation of terms, acknowledgements, an Estonian summary of a final thesis written in a foreign language, appendices, etc. [Amended 16.02.2022]
- 4.3. The requirements for the structure of the main part of a final thesis are established by study programmes.
- 4.4. The School has not established uniform format requirements for the presentation of final theses, except for the general requirements provided in subsections 4.4.1 to 4.4.5. It is important to ensure that the same style and format is used from the beginning to the end of the thesis.
 - 4.4.1. The chapters of the main part of the thesis shall be numbered using Arabian numbers, following the hierarchy of the chapters. No numbers shall be assigned to the introduction, the summary, the list of references and the English summary. All the chapters and independent structural

units of the thesis (table of contents, introduction, summary, and references) shall start on a new page in the thesis.

- 4.4.2. The main text of the thesis shall be presented using a size 12 font, line spacing 1.5, justified alignment.
- 4.4.3. The pages shall be numbered starting from the introduction. All the preceding pages shall be included in the numbering, but no numbers shall be shown.
- 4.4.4. The figures, tables, code samples, etc. presented in the main part of the thesis shall be numbered using Arabian numbers, with references to them in the text of the main part of the thesis. The tables shall have titles and the figures and code samples shall have captions.
- 4.4.5. The appendices to the thesis shall present additional materials and data which are necessary for understanding the thesis, but would disrupt the legibility of the thesis in the text with their volume or content (e.g. questionnaires, large-scale tables, etc.). The appendices shall be numbered using Arabian numbers, and equipped with titles. Every appendix shall start on a new page.
- 4.5. The thesis shall be prepared using the examples provided in the thesis formatting guidelines of the School.
- 4.6. The works and viewpoints of other authors, quotes from literature sources and elsewhere, numerical data, formulae, code samples and other such used in the thesis shall be referenced. It is recommended to use the APA referencing system, unless stated otherwise in the study programme specific requirements.

5. Submission of final theses

- 5.1. A student shall inform the study counsellor by e-mail of the intention to submit a final thesis for defence, as well as of the final title approved by the supervisor in Estonian and English two weeks before the term for the submission of the final thesis at the latest.
- 5.2. In order to request a closed defence and an access restriction to the final thesis in the case of grounds for classifying the information as intended for internal use as provided for in the Public Information Act, the author of the final thesis or another person concerned shall submit a justified application to the Director of the School one month before the term for the submission of the final thesis at the latest. In the case of classified information of institutions, enterprises or organisations, a legal or authorised representative of the institution, enterprise or organisation shall have the right to submit an application.
- 5.3. The terms for the submission of final theses shall be established every academic year by study programmes.
- 5.4. A supervisor may, without providing a reason, not allow a thesis the final version of which has not been presented to him or her one week before the term for the submission of theses at the latest for defence by refusing to sign the thesis.

- 5.5. A student shall submit the final thesis in PDF-format, its appendices, and author's declaration and non-exclusive licence for the use of the thesis in a DigiDoc container signed by the student and the supervisor (in the case of two supervisors, both supervisors). Large files included in the appendices of the thesis (e.g. videos) shall be submitted on separate data media and do not have to be digitally signed. If the student or supervisor cannot digitally sign the author's declaration and non-exclusive licence for the use of the thesis, the signed document shall be submitted on paper. The submission of theses also on paper in addition to the digital version may be established by study programmes. [Entry into force 01.09.2024]

6. Review of final theses

- 6.1. The supervisor of a final thesis may make a proposal to the head of the study programme with regard to appointing a reviewer in accordance with the requirements established for reviewers in the Tallinn University Study Regulations. [Entry into force 01.09.2024]
- 6.2. The head of the study programme shall approve the reviewers of the final theses within five working days from the term for the submission of final theses, consulting the head of studies, if necessary. [Entry into force 01.09.2024]
- 6.3. In the review, the reviewer shall present justified opinions concerning the substantive part of the thesis, the achievements of the author, and the main deficiencies of the thesis in accordance with the thesis reviewing guidelines of the School.
- 6.4. In the review of a group thesis, the reviewer refers to the specific author when highlighting the achievements and shortcomings of a particular section. [Entry into force 01.09.2024]

7. Avoidance of plagiarism

- 7.1. Plagiarism shall be classified as unintentional or intentional plagiarism, depending on the level of severity thereof. Intentional plagiarism shall be considered as a breach of academic practices and cases of plagiarism shall be processed in accordance with Subsection 25 or 25¹ of Section 27 of Tallinn University Study Regulations.
- 7.2. Referencing and quoting mistakes which are made in referencing and are not substantive are considered as unintentional plagiarism.
- 7.3. The following is considered as intentional plagiarism:
- 7.3.1. Knowingly presenting text or paragraphs word for word without correctly referencing the author or source;
 - 7.3.2. Making minor changes in the text of another author and presenting the text without complying with the quoting and referencing requirements;
 - 7.3.3. Presenting the figures or tables of another author or translations or adaptations thereof without correctly referencing the author or source;

- 7.3.4. Presenting the reasoning or ideas of another author in one's own words without correctly referencing the author or source;
- 7.3.5. Translating paragraphs of text or reasoning from a foreign-language source without correctly referencing the original source.
- 7.4. The speciality-specific forms of plagiarism and the levels of severity shall be established by study programmes.
- 7.5. Before allowing a final thesis for defence, the supervisor shall check the final thesis in a plagiarism detection system. If the supervisor is not an employee of Tallinn University, the thesis is checked for plagiarism by the head of the study programme. [Entry into force 01.09.2024]

8. Thesis Preparation as Group Work [Entry into force 01.09.2024]

- 8.1. The right to prepare a thesis as group work is determined separately by study programmes.
- 8.2. Generally, a group consists of no more than 3 students. Exceptions are approved by the head of the study programme and the head of studies of the School.
- 8.3. A thesis prepared as a group project can be submitted either as one comprehensive thesis or as separate theses for each student.
- 8.4. Students from different study programmes can prepare a thesis as group work only if they are in the same level of higher education. Theses prepared as group work by students from different study programmes must be defended separately in the defence committee of each student's respective study programme.
- 8.5. A group thesis must include a statement of authors' contributions, specifying each group member's contribution to the written part of the thesis at the subchapter level and their role in the research or development activities. Each group member's contribution to the research activities must meet the workload requirements for an individual thesis.
- 8.6. The supervisor of a group thesis has the right to decide whether individual group members are allowed to defend their thesis based on their contributions. The supervisor must notify the curriculum academic advisor, curriculum specialist, and the student in writing if the student is not permitted to defend the thesis by the thesis submission deadline.
- 8.7. If a group member who contributed to the group thesis cannot proceed to the defense due to not meeting the prerequisites outlined in Subsection 2 of Section 26 of Tallinn University Study Regulations, their name will still be included as an author on the title page, and they will sign the thesis along with the author's declaration and non-exclusive licence for the use of the thesis. A group member who cannot defend the thesis must later submit a new thesis, which may be an extension of the group thesis.
- 8.8. The planned defense time for a group thesis is generally 1.5 times longer than the defense time for an individual thesis. Exceptions are determined by the chairperson of the thesis defence committee.

ANNEX 4. Speciality-specific requirements for the Master's theses of the DTLGM.DT Digital Learning Games study programme

1. The objective of a Master's thesis of the Digital Learning Games study programme may include:
 - 1.1. The introduction and systematisation of game-related theoretical studies;
 - 1.2. The gathering and analysing of empirical data related to the development of learning games (e.g. analysis of needs, analysis of design elements and fulfilment of objectives, testing games on end users, etc.);
 - 1.3. The design and development of a game that satisfies the needs of end users, the introduction and assessment of suitability of innovative design and development methods;
 - 1.4. The design of gamified products and services and the assessment of the fulfilment of the objectives thereof;
 - 1.5. The application of existing (real life or entertainment) games in studies and the measurement of the impact of beneficial factors thereof;
 - 1.6. The combination of all or some of the aforementioned aspects.
2. The volume of a Master's thesis (without appendices) shall be 50 to 70 pages.
3. In order to avoid plagiarism, the rules established at Tallinn University shall be complied with. No texts, illustrations, codes or sounds shall be used without correctly referencing the author thereof.
4. The duration of the process of defence shall be 45 minutes for every student. This includes the student's defence speech and presentation of 15 minutes.
5. Preparing a master's thesis as group work is permitted. [Entry into force 01.09.2024]

ANNEX 5. Speciality-specific requirements for the Master's theses of the DTOSM.DT Open Society Technologies study programme

1. The objective of a Master's thesis of the Open Society Technologies study programme may include the development, piloting and assessment of intelligent software solutions (so-called social-technical knowledge systems) for a modern, inclusive and open civil society; empirical analyses of systems, services and activities and processes of the digital communities and open e-inclusion of a civil society.
2. The volume of a Master's thesis (without appendices) shall be 30 to 40 pages.
3. The duration of the process of defence shall be 45 minutes for every student. This includes the student's defence speech and presentation of 15 minutes.
4. Preparing a master's thesis as group work is permitted. [Entry into force 01.09.2024]

ANNEX 7. Speciality-specific requirements for the Master's theses of the IFIMM.DT Human-Computer Interaction study programme

1. The objective of a Master's thesis of the Human-Computer Interaction study programme may include:
 - 1.1. A discussion of modern methods and research results of human-computer interaction;
 - 1.2. Gathering and analysing empirical data concerning human-computer interaction;
 - 1.3. The design and assessment of suitability of digital artefacts that satisfy the needs of end users.
2. The volume of a Master's thesis (without appendices) shall be 50 to 70 pages. [Amended 08.05.2020]
3. Upon defending, the student shall provide a 15-minute presentation of the thesis, followed by answering questions, debating with the reviewers, the members of the defence committee and other participants in the defence meeting, and listening to the opinion of the supervisor.
4. Preparing a master's thesis as group work is permitted. [Entry into force 01.09.2024]