

Guidelines for the Master's Thesis

The guidelines apply to master's programmes administered by the Western Norway University of Applied Sciences. When cooperating with other universities and university colleges, the guidelines for the master's programme of the institution that gives the grade applies.

The master's thesis is an independent scientific work where the student must make evident a thorough understanding of current research, relevant theories and methods related to the master's thesis. It is expected that the student utilizes the scientific methods that can best highlight the topics of the thesis. The work on the master's thesis will qualify the student for further research and development work.

The master's thesis can be undertaken as a project shared by several students.

Research Ethics

Knowledge about research ethics is important when working on the master's thesis. For further information on research, see separate guidelines.

Sources

There are strict requirements for thoroughness and explicit references to the sources the master's thesis is built upon. A primary sign of quality in good research is that it is founded on well proven sources of theory and previous research, and that it utilizes the proper technique of referencing.

Research is primarily published in books and articles published by university publishers or journals. It is the method, results and discussion in the source that should be used in the thesis. It must be clear what sources that are used and quotations must be clearly marked by quotation marks or be indented.

Page numbers must be included in references both when citing, summarizing and in other cases when reference is made to a specific part of a greater source. The thesis must as a main rule refer to original sources. If a reference is made to a source cited in other sources, this must be made clear in either the formulation of the reference or by using a secondary reference as shown here (Hansen 1993:12, quoted in Pedersen 2002:365)

Scope and structure

The scope and structure of the master's thesis is stated in the course description. The thesis can be written in Norwegian or English, alternatively in Swedish or Danish.

Formal requirements

The work with the thesis is structured on the basis of a project plan that must be handed in to the supervisor within the given due date.

Further requirements:

- HVL's front page In Norwegian and English

- Table of Contents with chapters and page numbers
- References to sources and a list of literature in compliance with the style of referencing agreed upon with the supervisor
- Charts and illustrations are included in the main body of the text, given a number and a descriptive text. A table of the illustrations and charts must be inserted after the table of contents.
- Appendices must be numbered and included in the table of contents. Appendixes that have multiple pages must have page numbers.

Supervision

Supervision on the master's thesis is obligatory and the thesis must be written within the boundaries stated in the description of the subject. Supervision can be given through digital media: e-mail etc. Extra supervision can be granted to students with a minority language background.

The student and the supervisor must sign a Contract for making master thesis available in Bora-HiB. The agreement should be signed and agreed upon as soon as possible after the expected start of the master's thesis

Submission of thesis

The thesis should be submitted electronically, if no other guideline is given.

Examination Committee

The master's thesis is reviewed by a minimum of two examiners, whereof at least one is external. The committee will jointly come to agreement on the grade awarded.

Regarding rules and regulations related to cheating and plagiarism see the Norwegian Act Relating to Universities and University Colleges, sections 4-7 and section 4, and the university college's own guidelines for control of plagiarism and plagiarism and cheating in theses, exams and tests (text in Norwegian).

Electronic sharing in BORA

When the thesis is completed and approved (passed) the candidate can choose to make their thesis available in BORA, and must then sign the form Supervisory agreement for master students and send the form directly to post@hvl.no.

As soon as the deadline for appeal on the grade awarded is passed, the student administration will make the master's thesis available for the library to enter the thesis into BORA. Candidates that have a manuscript for a scientific article in their theses will not have their theses made available before the article is accepted and published in the journal it is written for.

Copyright

The master's thesis is owned by the candidate and HiB. Supervisors and others cannot demand that the thesis should be made available in libraries, on the Internet or in other places (in printed or electronic format) without the candidate, and relevant contracting party's consent. For the same reasons the candidate cannot be denied the right to publish the thesis. This right is founded on the Norwegian Copyright Act of May 12th, 1961 no. 2 ("Åndsverkloven").

Storing and archiving

The student administration will send all master's theses to post@hvl.no as soon as the deadline for appeal is past due. The Document Centre will archive the master's thesis in Public 360.