

Guideline for the Master's thesis

Important information about registering, writing and submitting your Master's thesis

Please note that the use of AI (such as ChatGPT) is prohibited in the context of term papers and theses. It is considered an unauthorized aid unless expressly permitted by the examiners.

Time of registration

Registration for the Master's thesis is possible as soon as **60 credit points** have been achieved. This should usually be the case during the third semester.

Registration and topic

Before registering for the Master's thesis, please agree on a topic with your supervisor, who usually also acts as the first supervisor. The topic is formally assigned by the Examination Office after registration.

The topic is agreed either in a personal meeting between the candidate and the supervisors as part of a course/meeting or by exchanging emails with the first and second supervisor. The topic specified in the email from the first supervisor is binding and must be transferred to the registration form.

Please submit the completed "Registration for Master's Thesis" form, signed and **dated by you and your supervisor** ("Supervisor; First Reviewer; Examiner") and the second supervisor, immediately by mail (or as a scan via the contact form) to the Examination Office. The binding notification of the topic, including the setting of a submission deadline, is then sent in writing by the Examinations Office. The submission deadline is calculated from the date the topic is issued, based on the date of the first supervisor's signature. You should therefore also endeavour to obtain the signature of the second supervisor at the same time and submit the registration form to the Examination Office immediately after finalising the topic.

If the topic was agreed by exchanging emails with the first and second supervisor, please forward the email from the first supervisor together with the email from the second supervisor and the scanned registration form (completed and signed by all parties) to the Examination Office via the contact form.

The binding notification of the topic, including the setting of a submission deadline, is then made in writing by the Examinations Office of the Faculty of Arts and Humanities. The topic is therefore formally set by the Examination Office (Examination Office, Maximilianstr 22, 53111 Bonn) following registration.

The submission deadline is calculated from the date the topic is issued based on the date of the first supervisor's signature. You should therefore also endeavour to obtain the signature of the second assessor at the same time and submit the application to the Examinations Office immediately after agreeing on the topic.

Important note: Please note that the examination regulations only recognise the term “topic”, not “title”. The topic of the thesis is therefore synonymous with the title of the thesis. The specific topic that you have indicated on the registration form and agreed with the supervisors is placed on the cover sheet and in the declaration of independence. Please refer to the separate point below under the heading ‘Changing the topic’ for the possibility of changing the topic at a later date.

You can download the registration form here: [Registration form](#)

Supervisors

In principle, all lecturers **in your subject** may act as supervisors for a Master’s thesis. Please note that at least one of the two supervisors must be a member of the University of Bonn and at least one of the two supervisors must have a doctorate. Furthermore, at least one of the supervisors must be employed at least 50% at the University of Bonn. Please also note that there is no legal entitlement to a specific supervisor.

Writing period

A **maximum period of six months** from the issuing of the topic (date of signature of the first assessor) is allowed for the writing of the provided topic & thesis. Upon justified request, the Examination Office may, in agreement with the supervisor, grant an extension of the submission deadline for the Master's thesis. An extension beyond six weeks is not possible, even in cases of illness (in these cases it is only possible to withdraw from the registered examination, see the section "Withdrawal").

Changing the topic

It is possible to **slightly** change the focus of the original topic upon written request to the Examination Office, provided that your supervisor supports the request and documents this with his/her signature. Please note that a complete change or reorientation of the topic requires a withdrawal in accordance with the regulations.

Withdrawal

There is a **one-off opportunity** to return the topic no later than two months after notification of it by the Examination Office and to document this formally with a written request to withdraw from the Master's thesis registration. In this case, the topic is deemed not to have been issued; there is therefore no failed attempt. Please note that it is no longer possible to withdraw after the two-month deadline. As an exception, this is only permitted after the deadline if there are valid reasons (in particular inability to take the examination due to illness). In both cases, the thesis must be re-registered at a later date; the newly issued topic must differ significantly in content from the originally issued topic.

Scope and requirements

The text part of the Master's thesis must contain **at least 120,000 characters** including spaces and notes (or 60 A4 pages) and may not exceed 200,000 characters including spaces and notes (or 100 A4 pages), unless otherwise specified in the programme-specific regulations. The content and form of the thesis must meet the standards of academic work at "Master of Arts" or "Master of Science" level. You should therefore enquire about the specific requirements with your academic advisor. Please also note that the regulation of registration after reaching the 60 credit points generally allows you to write the Master's thesis during your studies and to prepare it thoroughly with the necessary research and readings before registering in the course of the third semester.

Cover sheet

To ensure that all necessary information appears on the cover sheet of the Master's thesis, please follow this template: Sample cover sheet (DOCX). [Please note that it is not allowed to place the University's official seal or the Faculty's logo on this page or anywhere else. The copyrights are owned by the University and the Faculty respectively; unauthorized use may result in legal consequences.](#)

Submission

Until further notice, Master's theses must still be submitted **digitally AND by mail** (three bound copies, see below). The content of the digital version and the written copies must be identical! CD-ROMs and USB sticks no longer need to be enclosed. As usual, the Examination Office will take care of forwarding the thesis to the first supervisor and the second supervisor. Once submitted, a Master's thesis cannot be withdrawn!

The thesis must be accompanied by a written declaration ("declaration of independence") in which you affirm that you have written the thesis independently, have not used any sources and aids other than those specified, have marked quotations and have submitted identical electronic and written copies. Please note that the use of AI (applications such as ChatGPT) in the preparation of written work is prohibited! It is an unauthorised aid unless its use has been expressly permitted by the supervisors. In cases of doubt, the Examination Office may request a sworn declaration.

Please attach a declaration with the following wording, dated and with your original signature (not digital), as the last page of your thesis ([download document here](#)):

"I hereby declare that my exam1 on the topic (___) was produced by myself without any unauthorized assistance, that it has not been submitted for examination here or at any other university and that it has not been published in whole or in part. I have marked the parts – including tables, maps, illustrations, etc. – that have been taken from other works, either verbatim or in meaning, in each individual case.

If this concerns a bachelor's or master's thesis in need of submission in both print and a digital format I further declare that the content of the text file of the digital format is identical with the submitted print versions."

This declaration must be submitted together with the other parts of the thesis, such as the cover sheet, the bibliographies and any appendices, firmly attached to the rest of the thesis (no loose sheets!).

1. digital submission:

Please send the digital version as a text file (Word document or PDF) from your University of Bonn e-mail address to the Examination Office of the Faculty of Humanities or use the contact form. The handwritten and signed declaration of independence must be inserted as a scanned document into the thesis as the last page. This file of your thesis will be forwarded by the Examinations Office to the respective two supervisors; the submission deadline is met upon receipt of the electronically sent form at the Examinations Office. As we have already received

the document from you in electronic form via email/contact form, you **no longer need to send us a CD-ROM or USB stick with the thesis** until further notice.

2. submission by mail:

Your thesis must be submitted to us in triplicate by mail. Please submit each of these copies in bound form (adhesive, spiral or hardcover binding is the norm). Please also note that the indexes and appendices as well as the cover sheet and the **self-signed declaration** of independence are part of the thesis and must therefore be firmly bound.

The paper version must be submitted by post no later than one week after the submission of the digital version.

Please send the three copies to the following address:

University of Bonn
Faculty of Philosophy
Bachelor/Master Examination Board
Am Hof 1
53113 Bonn

Exceeding the submission deadline

If you **exceed** the deadline for submission, the Master's thesis must be assessed as "insufficient" (5.0). If necessary, please apply for an extension in good time before the deadline (at least **three weeks** before the deadline).

Repetition

A failed Master's thesis can be **repeated once**. Failed attempts in the same subject at other universities are recognised. In such cases, the topic may be chosen from another subject area. If the second Master's thesis is also assessed as "insufficient", the Master's examination has been failed conclusively.

De-registration

In general, you must remain enrolled even after submitting your Master's thesis or another final exam in your degree programme in accordance with § 63 Para. 1, 2nd half-sentence HG; the examination procedure is only completed when it has been determined whether it was successful or unsuccessful. Students who have not re-registered, e.g. in order to save the associated fees, although they are not expected to know their examination result at the end

of the previous semester are therefore taking a risk, especially as their uni-ID will be switched off and they will no longer have access to BASIS and their transcripts.

If you have not passed your last exam(s) and have therefore unfortunately not achieved your degree after all, you must re-enrol in order to re-sit your exams. If you have already missed the set re-registration deadline at this point, late re-registration at the Registrar's Office in accordance with Section 16 of the Enrolment Regulations can only take place later if the missed deadline is excused in writing for an important reason and proof of this is provided. You cannot register for the last outstanding exam before you are re-enrolled. It may also be the case that you can no longer be enrolled in your old examination regulations, but must continue your studies in accordance with the new examination regulations then in use, which may be followed by a time-consuming credit transfer procedure and possibly the loss of credits already earned.

However, if you have properly re-registered, you are entitled to a partial refund of the fees as soon as you have passed the final exam. You can find more information here: <https://www.uni-bonn.de/de/studium/beratung-und-service/studierendensekretariat/exmatrikulation>

Underlying provisions

The regulations for the Master's thesis can be found in the following provisions, depending on which examination regulations you are studying under:

- §§ 18 und 19 der Prüfungsordnung für die konsekutiven Masterstudiengänge vom 5. August 2013 in ihrer aktuellen Fassung (MPO 2013)
 - §§ 23 und 24 der Prüfungsordnung für die Bachelorstudiengänge und die konsekutiven Masterstudiengänge vom 17. August 2018 in ihrer aktuellen Fassung (BMPO 2018)
 - §§ 22 und 23 der Prüfungsordnung für den Bachelorstudiengang „Psychologie“ und den konsekutiven Masterstudiengang „Psychologie“ vom 17. August 2018 in ihrer aktuellen Fassung (Psychologie-BMPO 2018)
 - §§ 22 und 23 der Prüfungsordnung für den Bachelorstudiengang „Psychologie“ und den konsekutiven Masterstudiengang „Psychologie“ vom 28. August 2020 in ihrer aktuellen Fassung (Psychologie-BMPO 2020)
- §§ 20 und 21 der Prüfungsordnung für die konsekutiven Masterstudiengänge „Dependency and Slavery Studies“ und „Slavery Studies“ der Philosophischen Fakultät der Rheinischen Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität Bonn

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