

# **GUIDELINES FOR WRITING BACHELOR'S, MASTER'S & FINAL THESES**

## **DIDACTICS**

**Prior to working on the thesis the students should familiarize themselves with the Standard of Bachelor's and Master's and Final Theses in the Department of English Language and Literature.**

### **Thesis supervision (all types of theses)**

#### **What the student can expect from his/her supervisor:**

- personal, email and/or online consultations;
- help with the specification of the topic; help with the focus, organisation and choice of the research and research methodology; help and advice on the writing process;
- recommendations of literature available.

#### **What the supervisor expects from the student:**

- an active approach to writing the thesis (e.g. suggesting ideas, choosing the topic, genuine interest in the topic investigation);
- realistic time management and meeting deadlines;
- responsibility and academic integrity (acknowledging all the sources, following the general and subject specific guidelines).

### **Working on the thesis**

#### **Bachelor's thesis**

Students begin working on their Bachelor's theses in the fourth semester of their studies at the latest, which also involves taking a series of courses related to their Bachelor's thesis (see below). This means that students should choose a Bachelor's thesis topic, contact a supervisor and negotiate the topic and the details of their cooperation with the supervisor before the beginning of the fourth semester of their studies.

Students who are studying in a double-subject study programme can choose whether to write their Bachelor's thesis in the English Department, in their other subject, or in Pedagogy or Psychology. Students in the single subject programme can write the Bachelor's thesis in the English Department (strongly recommended) or in Pedagogy or Psychology.

#### **The following information applies to Bachelor's theses written in the English department.**

There is a series of courses related to writing the Bachelor's thesis in the English department. These comprise the course AJ\_BPp Bachelor's Thesis Project in the fourth semester, the course

AJ\_BP Bachelor's Thesis in the fifth semester and the course AJ\_BPd Bachelor's Thesis Completion in the sixth semester. (When writing their thesis in another department, students enrol in courses of the relevant department.)

After enrolling in the AJ\_BPp Thesis Project course, in the first half of the fourth semester at the latest, students should find and contact a supervisor to discuss the requirements, the assigned readings and the schedule of consultations including specific tasks. They submit a Thesis Project by a deadline stated by their supervisor.

During the fifth semester of their studies students enrol in the AJ\_BP Bachelor's Thesis course. They work on the thesis and consult their progress with the supervisor according to an agreed timeline.

In the sixth semester of their studies students enrol in the AJ\_BPd Bachelor's Thesis Completion course. They submit the final draft of their thesis to their supervisor before uploading it into the IS before a deadline negotiated by the student and the supervisor. The thesis must be uploaded into the IS archive by the deadline set by the Study Department. Two spiral-bound copies should be submitted to the supervisor within a week after the deadline. Two-sided print is recommended. During the COVID pandemic printed copies should not be submitted.

### **Bachelor's thesis defence**

Bachelor's theses supervised by the Department of English Language and Literature are defended on the day of the student's state examination in English. The defence takes place in a committee setting (chairperson, supervisor, and second reader) and lasts approximately 25 minutes.

At the defence the student is expected to:

- deliver a PowerPoint presentation which lasts up to 10 min. The presentation should address the reasons for choosing the topic, the aims of the work, research questions or hypothesis, the materials/data used, the methods and approaches applied, the results of the study, and the conclusions (how the aims were attained and the research questions answered);
- respond to questions raised and comments made in the reports from both the supervisor and the second reader. Here the student acts as a partner in academic discussion with all members of the committee and is encouraged to explain and defend their views but also to acknowledge alternative perspectives.

### **Thesis and defence evaluation**

The final grade is based primarily on the grades for the thesis suggested by the supervisor and the second reader. However, this can then be modified in view of the quality of the presentation, the quality of the defence and the level of the student's English.

### **Tips for the defence**

- Bring both reports with you.
- Prepare notes to which you may refer in the course of the defence.
- Be brief, organized and to-the-point. Adhere to the time limit.
- Be open to comments and questions. Argue your case where you see fit but acknowledge your mistakes if justified.

### **Master's Thesis**

Students must begin working on their Master's theses in the second semester of their studies. This means that students should choose a Master's thesis topic, contact a supervisor and negotiate the topic and the details of their cooperation with the supervisor before the beginning of the second semester of their studies.

Students who are studying in a double-subject study programme can choose whether to write their Master's thesis in the English Department, in their other subject, or in Pedagogy or Psychology. Students in the single subject programme can write the Master's thesis in the English Department (strongly recommended) or in Pedagogy or Psychology.

#### **The following information applies to Master's theses written in the English department.**

There is a series of courses related to writing the Master's thesis in the English department. These comprise the AJ\_DPp Master's Thesis – Project course, the AJ\_DP Master's Thesis course, and the AJ\_DPd Master's Thesis – Completion course.

The topic of the Master's thesis should correspond with areas covered in this study programme. Students should select a topic and contact a supervisor to negotiate the details of their cooperation. This should happen before the beginning of the second semester. The topic of the Master's thesis cannot be identical with the topic of the Bachelor's thesis submitted and defended by the student. The text of the Master's thesis cannot include parts of the Bachelor's thesis without acknowledging this as a citation.

After enrolling in the AJ\_DPp Master's Thesis – Project course, in the first half of the second semester at the latest, students contact their supervisor to discuss the requirements, the assigned readings and the schedule of consultations including specific tasks. They submit a Thesis Project by a deadline stated by their supervisor.

During the third semester of their studies students enrol in the AJ\_DPp Master's Thesis – Project course. They work on the thesis and consult their progress with the supervisor according to an agreed timeline.

In the fourth semester of their studies students enrol in the AJ\_DPd Master's Thesis – Completion course. They submit the final draft of their thesis to their supervisor before uploading it into the IS before a deadline negotiated by the student and the supervisor. The thesis must be uploaded into the IS archive by the deadline set by the Study Department. Two spiral-bound copies should be submitted to the supervisor within a week after the deadline. Two printed copies should be submitted to the supervisor within a week after the deadline. Spiral-bound copies are sufficient and two-sided print is recommended. During the COVID pandemic printed copies should not be submitted.

## **Master's thesis defence**

Master's theses supervised by the Department of English Language and Literature are defended on the day of the student's state examination in English. The defence takes place in a committee setting (chairperson, supervisor and second reader) and lasts approximately 30 minutes.

At the defence the student is expected to:

- deliver a PowerPoint presentation which lasts up to 10 min. The presentation should address the reasons for choosing the topic, the aims of the work, research questions or hypothesis, the materials/data used, the methods and approaches applied, the results of the study, and the conclusions (how the aims were attained and the research questions answered);
- respond to questions raised and comments made in the reports from both the supervisor and the second reader. Here the student acts as a partner in academic discussion with all members of the committee and is encouraged to explain and defend their views but also to acknowledge alternative perspectives.
- engage in further discussion of the topic.

## **Thesis and defence evaluation**

The final grade is based primarily on the grades for the thesis suggested by the supervisor and the second reader. However, this can then be modified in view of the quality of the defence and the level of the student's English.

## **Tips for the defence**

- Bring both reports with you.
- Prepare notes to which you may refer in the course of the defence.
- Be brief, organized and to-the-point. Adhere to the time limit.
- Be open to comments and questions. Argue your case where you see fit but acknowledge your mistakes if justified.

## **Final Thesis – lifelong programmes (CŽV)**

Students should choose a topic related to one of the courses offered in their study programme, contact a supervisor and negotiate the topic and the details of their cooperation with the supervisor. This should be done at least 2 semesters before the end of the course of studies; in the Anglický jazyk pro SŠ programme, students should begin looking for a supervisor and choosing a Final thesis topic as early as possible in the first semester.

The thesis must be written in English. The only exception concerns Final theses written by students of the Lifelong Extension Programme for Primary Teachers of English (Anglický jazyk pro 1. stupeň ZŠ); however, the theoretical part of their theses may be written in Czech.

Students should submit the final draft of their thesis to their supervisor before uploading it into the IS before a deadline negotiated by the student and the supervisor. The thesis must be uploaded into the IS archive by the deadline set by the Study Department. Two printed, spiral-bound copies should be submitted to the supervisor within a week after the deadline. Two-sided print is recommended. During the COVID pandemic printed copies should not be submitted.

## **Final thesis defence**

Final theses supervised by the Department of English Language and Literature are defended on the day of the student's state examination in English. The defence takes place in a committee setting (chair, supervisor and second reader) and lasts approximately 15 minutes.

At the defence the student is expected to:

- briefly introduce the topic, aims and main outcomes of the thesis (without a PowerPoint presentation);
- respond to questions raised and comments made in the reports from both the supervisor and the second reader. Here the student acts as a partner in academic discussion and is encouraged to explain and defend their expertise but also to acknowledge alternative perspectives;
- engage in further discussion of the topic.

## **Thesis and defence evaluation**

The final grade is based primarily on the grades for the thesis suggested by the supervisor and the second reader. However, this can then be modified in view of the quality of the defence and the level of the student's English.

## **Didactics theses**

The instructions below concern just the specific guidelines and requirements for theses written in the area of didactics.

ELT Didactics is an interdisciplinary field. Writing a thesis in the section of ELT Didactics, students should think about integrating their knowledge from the other fields studied at the faculty (esp. psychology, pedagogy, general didactics, teaching practice, linguistics, literature, culture studies). Students should then select and contact a supervisor to discuss the topic and negotiate the details of their cooperation. This should happen at the start of the fourth semester at the latest in case of Bachelor's theses.

The topic of the Master's thesis should correspond with areas covered in this study programme. Students should select a supervisor to contact and negotiate the details of their cooperation. This should happen at the start of the second semester. The topic of the Master's thesis cannot be identical with the topic of the Bachelor's thesis submitted and defended by the student. The text of the Master's thesis cannot include parts of the Bachelor's thesis without acknowledging this as a citation.

For Final theses students should choose a topic related to one of the courses offered in their study programme. Students should select and contact a supervisor. The thesis must be written in English. The only exception concerns final theses written by students of the Lifelong Extension Programme for Primary Teachers of English (Anglický jazyk pro 1. stupeň ZŠ). The theoretical part of their theses may be written in Czech.

### **Thesis structure**

The Final theses supervised within the Didactics Section of the English Department follow preferably the theoretical – empirical part structure.

### **Below is a simplified outline of a didactics thesis:**

#### **1. Introduction**

The thesis opens with an Introduction, which motivates the choice of topic, states the aims of the thesis, indicates ways to fulfil these aims, formulates research questions (or hypotheses in the case of statistical or experimental methods of research) and outlines the structure of the thesis. The clearly stated aim/s of the thesis should be addressed in the Conclusion.

## **2. Theoretical part**

Theoretical part is structured in a logical way to elaborate on the chosen topic (in several subchapters, with definitions of the main concepts, critical review of literature relevant to the topic, possible outcomes for the empirical part should be stated). In each chapter it should be clearly explained how it is connected with the research field. Students do not just describe problems and ideas; they discuss and assess them critically.

## **3. Empirical part**

Empirical part describes research aims, briefly justifies the chosen research method, research sample, explains procedure of the research and presents the findings, analysis and interpretations, all of it should demonstrate the students' understanding, analysis and evaluation of the concepts dealt with in the Theoretical part.

## **4. Conclusion**

In the Conclusion students discuss what they have written about, explain why it was worth writing about it, discuss how appropriate the methodology and approach they have opted for were. The limitations of the study can be mentioned as well. They clearly state what their research results are in relation to their research aims, questions or hypotheses stated in the Introduction. They highlight the possible contribution of their research in the context of the field of study/issue they have written about. They may outline future research perspectives.

## **5. References**

The recommended number of reference list items is 20 for Bachelor's and Final theses and 30 for Master's theses. The range of sources should include books, journal articles and other reliable sources. Students are advised to consult the sources used with their supervisor.

Works Cited: Students acknowledge ALL quotes and paraphrases. Secondary and primary sources should be listed separately.

If they do not quote directly but reproduce or sum up what has been written elsewhere, this too, must be acknowledged.

## **6. Appendices**

Text material of excessive length is to be confined to the Appendix, which is situated at the end of the thesis; it does not count to the overall number of pages of the work. Only individual charts (tables) and text samples may be incorporated within the body of the thesis, representing its integral part.

## Citation style

Didactics-oriented theses should use the APA citation style. You should follow the latest version of the APA Publication Manual, which is the 7th edition. You can check the following websites for more detail:

<https://apastyle.apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines/references/examples>

[https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research\\_and\\_citation/apa\\_style/apa\\_formatting\\_and\\_style\\_guide/general\\_for\\_mat.html](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_formatting_and_style_guide/general_for_mat.html)

<https://columbiacollege-ca.libguides.com/apa/websites>

<https://www.scribbr.com/apa-examples/>

Basic principles:

### 1) In-text citations (<https://apastyle.apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines/citations>)

a) parenthetical = the author name and publication date appear in parentheses; can appear within or at the end of a sentence; the author and the date are separated by a comma:

Falsely balanced news coverage can distort the public's perception of expert consensus on an issue (**Koehler, 2016**).

b) narrative = the author name is incorporated into the text as part of the sentence and the year follows in parentheses:

**Koehler (2016)** noted the dangers of falsely balanced news coverage.

c) paraphrasing = restating another author's idea in your own words; when you paraphrase, cite the original work using either a) parenthetical or b) narrative citation format (see above).

Although it is not required to provide a page or paragraph number in the citation, you may include one (in addition to the author and year):

**Webster-Stratton (2016)** described a case example of a 4-year-old girl who showed an insecure attachment to her mother; in working with the family dyad, the therapist focused on increasing the mother's empathy for her child (**pp. 152–153**).

d) direct quotations = reproducing words verbatim from another work or from your own previously published work

- short quotations = fewer than 40 words; add quotation marks around the words and incorporate the quote into your own text:

Effective teams can be difficult to describe because “high performance along one domain does not translate to high performance along another” (**Ervin et al., 2018, p. 470**).

- block quotations = 40 words or more; do not use quotation marks; start a block quotation on a new line and indent the whole block 0.5 in. from the left margin; double-space the entire block quotation; see

<https://apastyle.apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines/citations/quotations> for more detail



**2) References** = the list of all works (books, articles) cited in the text (= in your thesis); consistency is crucial; see <https://apastyle.apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines/references>

Examples:

Whole authored book, see <https://apastyle.apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines/references/examples/book-references#1>

Whole edited book, see <https://apastyle.apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines/references/examples/book-references#2>

Journal article, see <https://apastyle.apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines/references/examples/journal-article-references>

Chapter in an edited book, see <https://apastyle.apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines/references/examples/edited-book-chapter-references#1>

Dictionary entry, see <https://apastyle.apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines/references/examples/dictionary-entry-references>

*Wikipedia* entry, see <https://apastyle.apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines/references/examples/wikipedia-references>