

COMPLETING A DOCTORAL THESIS AT TSE

- The doctoral thesis shall demonstrate the candidate's deep understanding of the research topic and their ability to produce new scientific knowledge independently.
- It is completed under the guidance of one or more supervisors, possibly representing different disciplines. One supervisor is normally a professor in the candidate's major discipline.
- A doctoral thesis may be a monograph or a compilation thesis.

A compilation thesis

- A compilation thesis comprises a set of interrelated *studies* preceded by a *synthesis*. It must deal with one coherent scientific problem or a set of interrelated problems.
- The *synthesis*, written by the doctoral candidate, motivates the thesis and positions it in a particular research area, formulates the research problem and objectives both of the thesis as a whole and of the interrelated studies, specifies the role of the individual studies in the thesis, justifies the data and methods employed, and outlines the results and contribution of the studies and the thesis as a whole.
- A *study* may be a published scientific article, an article manuscript approved for publication, a chapter in a book or conference volume, a publication in, for example, a series of a university or research institute, or an unpublished article manuscript intended for publication. Parts of a previously published doctoral thesis cannot be included in another thesis by the same author. Three to five studies are typical in a compilation thesis, the number being less significant than the scientific contribution made by the thesis as a whole.
- Joint research results can be included in a compilation thesis if the candidate has contributed independently to their production. The candidate's role in the research must be demonstrated in a written statement signed by the co-author(s). The statement shall be addressed to the Steering Committee of the Doctoral Programme of Turku School of Economics on requesting the assignment of preliminary examiners, to whom it will then be forwarded. A doctoral thesis is evaluated as the candidate's individual accomplishment and, hence, the candidate's own overall accomplishment must meet the requirements set for a doctoral thesis.
- The candidate must obtain written permission from the respective publishers in order to print published articles in a doctoral thesis.

PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION OF THE DOCTORAL THESIS

Procedure prior to preliminary examination

- Following the supervisor(s)' assessment that the manuscript meets the requirements set for a doctoral thesis, the candidate shall submit an application to the Director of the Doctoral Programme at Turku School of Economics, requesting the confirmation of preliminary examiners.
- After a hearing of the Steering Committee of the Doctoral Programme, the Director of the Doctoral Programme appoints at least two preliminary examiners, based on the proposal of either the supervising professor or the professor in the doctoral candidate's major subject. The preliminary examiners shall be external to Turku School of Economics, and not disqualified for the task (due to possible conflict of interest). Each must have a doctoral degree, and as an academic qualification one shall hold at the very least the title of docent (adjunct professor) or equivalent.

Instructions for preliminary examiners

- Preliminary examiners are asked to deliver a substantiated, written statement (approximately 1200–1600 words) evaluating the scientific contribution of the manuscript, indicating its strengths and weaknesses. The statement shall consider the research problem, theoretical framework, methods and data, the findings and validity, discussion, and conclusions. And finally, the composition and representation of the manuscript, as well as the quality of the argumentation.
- For a compilation thesis, the statement shall also consider whether the studies in question form a coherent whole. If any of the studies is co-authored, the statement shall consider the sufficiency of the candidate's independent contribution.
- The pre-examination statement must conclude with an unconditional recommendation indicating that the manuscript meets the requirements set for a doctoral thesis and in consequence can be granted a printing permit. This means the examiners do not have decisive requirements for revisions before printing permission is granted. The Director of the Doctoral Programme grants permission to print on the basis of the preliminary examiners' statements. If a preliminary examiner requires changes to the manuscript, the administrative procedure shall halt until the changes have been made and said examiner states that the manuscript warrants permission to print.
- Preliminary examiners can draw up individual statements or a joint statement, which shall be provided within two months of receipt of the manuscript. The *signed* statement(s) will be delivered to the Steering Committee of the Doctoral Programme to the following email address: tse-asiakirjat@utu.fi (TSE Registry).

Grading Committee

- After a hearing of the Steering Committee of the Doctoral Programme, the Director of the Doctoral Programme grants a permission to print the doctoral thesis and at the same time appoints a Grading Committee for the grading of the thesis. Members of the Committee are the opponent(s), the preliminary examiner(s) and the supervisor(s).



- The Doctoral Researcher shall submit a written response on the significant changes made to the thesis after the preliminary examination. The statement, the final thesis and also the preliminary examiners' statements are delivered to the members of the Grading Committee by the secretary of the Steering Committee of the Doctoral Programme.
- The Grading Committee will discuss the grading of the thesis. Arrangements for the discussion are handled by the custos. The discussion should be organised as a face to face meeting or online video call/meeting. Discussion by email is possible yet not encouraged as it makes the dialogue between the members more challenging. After the discussion the opponent(s) appointed by the Director of the Doctoral Programme shall write a final statement on the thesis.
- The Grading Committee shall be notified of the grade suggested in the opponent's final statement. As a member of the Grading Committee the preliminary examiner must as soon as possible respond to the notification and inform whether he/she agrees/disagrees with *the grade* (not the content of the statement per se). In the case the preliminary examiner(s) disagrees he/she shall have 14 days from the date of being notified to deliver a written statement on his/her opinion to the Council of Turku School of Economics.
- After hearing the Steering Committee of the Doctoral Programme of TSE, the Director of the Doctoral Programme of TSE shall grade the doctoral thesis on the basis of the opponent's final statement and possible statement(s) from the member(s) of the Grading Committee.

THE GRADE

Grading reflects the scientific contribution of the doctoral thesis, which usually corresponds to its potential to result in journal publications and consequent citations. The grade relates to the thesis as a whole, not some of its parts (e.g. published articles). If parts of a compilation thesis are co-authored, grading shall relate to the candidate's individual contribution. The contents of the statement must reflect the grade suggested. The grade for the thesis will be proposed employing the scale described below:

Laudatur, "Outstanding"

The thesis makes an *exceptional contribution* to the knowledge in its field. It will most likely result or has already resulted in articles being published in major refereed scientific journals. Major denotes a highly respected journal that is not, however, necessarily among the top 10 or so, due to variations in ranking procedures between different fields. The results of the thesis will likely be widely cited in the scientific literature.

As such, outstanding grades are rare and detailed justifications are required in the statement.

Eximia cum laude approbatur, "Excellent"

The thesis makes a *very significant contribution* to the knowledge in its field. It contains innovative and creative ideas, and has great potential to result or has already resulted in one or more articles being published in major refereed scientific journals. The thesis is expected to be cited, possibly widely so, in the scientific literature.

Magna cum laude approbatur, "Very Good"

The thesis makes a *significant contribution* to the knowledge in its field. It might result or has already resulted in one or more articles being published in refereed scientific journals, possibly in those that are major. The thesis is expected to be cited in the scientific literature.

Cum laude approbatur, "Good"

The thesis makes a *rather significant contribution* to the knowledge in its field. The research results might be publishable or already published in refereed scientific journals. The thesis has some potential to be cited in the scientific literature.

Non sine laude approbatur, "Fair"

The scientific contribution of the thesis to the knowledge in its field bears *some significance*. The thesis demonstrates the author's ability to produce new scientific results. However, the ideas might not have fully matured. Further work may result in articles published in refereed scientific journals.

Lubenter approbatur, "Poor"

The thesis fulfils the scientific criteria set for a doctoral thesis; however, its *scientific contribution in its field is very limited*. Publishing the research results in a refereed scientific journal will require a substantial amount of work.

Approbatur, "Pass"

The thesis fulfils the minimum standards of acceptance and is highly unlikely to result in articles being published in refereed scientific journals.

Improbatur, "Fail"