# 1 / Vision of teaching and assessment

Our vision builds on the Faculty of Arts' stated focus on dialogue and learning; we value not just the gaining of knowledge but questioning and critical engagement as part of the learning process. Our courses are interactive and the assessment of our students focuses on their ability to use a range of means of communication, including digital tools, to express their ideas and show their ability to theorize and do research by applying theory to data in linguistic analysis.

# 2 / How to follow the assessment cycle (from design to evaluation and optimization)

Courses in the research master almost invariably require students to create written projects. The procedure is as follows:

- Written assignment prompt, through collaboration with co-instructors if applicable, in accordance with the intended learning outcomes and modes of instruction/learning activities
- Students are given a deadline for submission and also a re sit deadline if their paper does not receive a sufficient grade (5.5 or higher) in its initial form
- The assignment is distributed to students
- performance assessment of student work
- analysis of the results : was the assessment appropriate for the students, i.e., neither too easy nor too hard
- communication of results and feedback
- evaluation of the assessment instrument : what changes would make it a better test of student knowledge and ability to do linguistic analysis
- improvement of previous steps in the assessment cycle as needed

# 3 / Assessment dossier

**a.** The assessment dossier

The requirements of the assessment dossier are set out in §4 of the 'Protocol for Quality Assurance in the Assessment of Course Units' drawn up by the Board of Examiners.

All the examiners of a degree programme must provide the Board of Examiners with an 'assessment dossier' containing the following:

a. the syllabus

b. the list of marks, comprising all marks that count towards the final mark

c. for assessments in the narrower sense of the word (i.e. tests): the test that was set, incl. model answers/key

d. for written assignments: the formulation of the assignment, information about the assessment method (assessment criteria and standards) if this is not listed in the syllabus, and the completed assessment forms

e.  for final assignments: the completed assessment forms and the work submitted (with or without the lecturer's comments)

f.  the assessment blueprint, minutes of peer-support meetings, evaluations and self-evaluations of course units, etc., if available

g.  an evaluation form completed by the examiner with information about how the assessment proceeded.

### b. Parties involved

The following parties are involved in fulfilling duties related to the assessment dossier:

- the course instructors upload this information to Nestor
- this information is checked by the secretariat to insure completion
- the Exam Board reviews these dossiers

## 4 / Assessment timetable

| | |
|---|---|
| Overview of learning outcomes of the degree programme + matrix | Appendix 1 |
| Overview of the intended learning outcomes of the course units | Appendix 2 |
| Schematic overview of time periods intended for assessment, modes of assessment used and their modes of assessment | Appendix 3 |
| Additional regulations for the graduation dossier | Appendix 4 |

The objectives of the degree programme, set out in the learning outcomes of the degree programme (Appendix 1), form the guiding principles. All course units together fulfil a role in working towards these learning outcomes. This is reflected in a coherent curriculum with a transparent structure. The matrix of learning outcomes (Appendix 1) defines the course units that include summative assessments and distinguishes between a) course units with assessments that *lead up to* the attainment level set out in the programme-level learning outcomes and b) course units with assessments *at this attainment level* (in the latter case the learning outcomes of the course unit are thus identical to the programme-level learning outcomes of the degree programme). This distinction is expressed as follows:

> '<u>x</u>', i.e. underlined, is used for summative[1] assessments at the level specified in the programme-level learning outcomes
> 'x' for summative assessments at lower performance levels
> 'fx' for formative[2] evaluations at lower performance levels

In parallel with the curriculum, the assessment programme (Appendix 2) offers a balanced, well-structured overview of modes of assessment and exam periods. Course units taught within one learning pathway may be given matching visual markings in the overview.

In order to gain insight at the programme level into whether the chosen modes of assessment tie in with the learning outcomes of the course units and create a balanced mix in the run-up to the programme-level learning outcomes of the degree programme, the intended learning outcomes of the course units are related to their modes of assessment (Appendix 3).

Specific rules may apply to certain components of the graduation dossier (e.g. for the thesis: approval of the thesis proposal, amount of supervision, resit). These rules are set out in Appendix 4.

## 5 / Safeguarding of assessment quality by the Board of Examiners

The Board of Examiners is responsible for safeguarding the quality of assessment at both the degree programme level and the level of individual course units.

### a. Safeguarding of assessment quality at degree programme level

The Board of Examiners annually issues advice on each degree programme's draft assessment plan for the coming academic year. Further, the Programme Committee reviews the assessment plan annually.

### b. Safeguarding of assessment quality at course unit level

The Board of Examiners aims to evaluate the assessments for all course units in a degree programme in a three-year cycle – in other words, to examine each course unit's assessment at least once every three years, bearing in mind the position of

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[1] Summative assessment aims to assess a student's knowledge and skills. Such assessments are usually awarded a mark, accompanied by a justification of the mark (adapted from *Toetsen in het hoger onderwijs* (2017)).
[2] Formative evaluation relates to the process of searching, aggregating and interpreting information, which students and lecturers can then use to determine how students are doing in their learning process, what they should work towards and how this can be most effectively done (adapted from *Toetsen in het hoger onderwijs* (2017)).

the course unit in the curriculum and in a specific learning pathway. In addition, a substantiated selection of theses is also evaluated.

## 6 / Archiving

The required documents will be uploaded to the Assessment Dossier folder on Nestor for each course.

## 7 / List of documents relevant to assessment

**Faculty vision of teaching and assessment** – see

https://myuniversity.rug.nl/infonet/medewerkers/let/onderwijs/vision-for-education

**Rules and Regulations** – the internal regulations of the Board of Examiners.

**Teaching and Examination Regulations (TER = OER; *Onderwijs- en examenregeling*)** – a legally binding document that applies to the entire cohort of students who start a degree programme in a certain academic year. The TER may also contain transitional arrangements for previous cohorts.

**Matrix of learning outcomes** – an appendix to the Assessment Plan that specifies the course units with *summative* assessment leading up to or at the level specified in the programme-level learning outcomes and the course units with formative assessment.

**Placement manual** – a manual for the placement course unit.

**Syllabus** – a document that sets out the details of the TER and the Assessment Plan at course unit level in accordance with the information in Ocasys.

**Assessment Plan** – a document that is enclosed as an appendix with the TER and is therefore legally binding.

**Assessment programme** – a schematic overview of time periods intended for assessment, modes of assessment used and, if relevant, learning pathways (previously known as the 'assessment plan').

**Assessment protocol** – the implementation of the TER, Part A, Article 8.7.

# Appendix 1. Learning outcomes of the degree programme + Matrix of learning outcomes

| Description of Master's level according to the **Dublin Descriptors** | Learning outcomes of the Research Master's Programme in Linguistics<br><br>A Master Degree in Linguistics is awarded to students who: |
|---|---|
| **Knowledge and understanding**<br>Have demonstrated knowledge and understanding that is founded upon and extends and/or enhances the level that is typically associated with Bachelor's level, and that provides a basis or opportunity for originality in developing and/or applying ideas, often within a research context. | 1.1 have general knowledge and understanding of several subdisciplines in linguistics, their interpretations, methodologies and techniques<br>1.2 have a thorough knowledge of at least one theoretical and methodological approach within linguistics |
| **Applying knowledge and understanding**<br>Can apply their knowledge and understanding, and problem solving abilities in new or unfamiliar environments within broader (or multidisciplinary) contexts related to their field of study. | 2.1 are able to formulate an academic problem independently, and in so doing, to select, apply and where necessary adapt an adequate theoretical framework and one or more relevant research methods<br>2.2 are able to make an original contribution to knowledge in at least one subdiscipline in linguistics<br>2.3 are able to independently formulate a research proposal |

| Making judgements | 3.1 | make use of the research results of others and evaluate these critically |
|---|---|---|
| Have the ability to integrate knowledge and handle complexity, and formulate judgements with incomplete or limited information, but that include reflecting on social and ethical responsibilities linked to the application of their knowledge and judgements. | 3.2 | are able to make connections between their own specialist knowledge of a subdiscipline of linguistics and other subdisciplines of linguistics or and other related disciplines, for example, psychology, neurology or information science |
| **Communication** | 4.1 | are able to participate actively in a research group working on an academic project |
| Can communicate their conclusions, and the knowledge and rationale underpinning these, to specialist and non-specialist audiences clearly and unambiguously. | 4.2 | are able to work with other students and lecturers on an academic project |
|  | 4.3 | are able to participate in international academic debate in the chosen area of specialization and to present an academic problem convincingly in appropriate English, both orally and in writing |
| **Learning Skills** | 5.1 | are able to keep abreast of the latest developments in linguistics and broaden and deepen their own knowledge and understanding |
| Have the learning skills to allow them to continue to study in a manner that may be largely self-directed or autonomous. | 5.2 | are able to reflect on the implications of one's work for the development of linguistic theories |

KEY For Appendix 1 Matrix

x', i.e. underlined, is used for summative[3] assessments at the level specified in the programme-level learning outcomes

'x' for summative assessments at lower performance levels

'fx" for formative evaluations at lower performance levels

'

| | | 1. Kennis en inzicht | | 2. Toepassen kennis en inzicht | | | 3.Oordeels-vorming | | 4. Communicatie | | | 5. Leervaardig-heden | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1.1 | 1.2 | 2.1 | 2.2 | 2.3 | 3.1 | 3.2 | 4.1 | 4.2 | 4.3 | 5.1 | 5.2 |
| **JAAR 1 semester 1** | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Vaktitel*** | **vakcode** | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Basic Statistics (C) | LTR013M05 | x | x | fx | | | x | x | | | | | |
| Corpus Linguistics (C) | LTR014M05 | x | x | fx | | | x | x | | | x | | |
| Linguistic Analysis (C) | LTR017M10 | x | x | | | | x | x | | | | | |
| Discourse Analysis | LTR027M10 | | x | x | | | x | | | | | x | x |
| **JAAR 1 semester 2** | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Vaktitel*** | **vakcode** | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Designing your Research Project (C) | LTR021M05 | | | x | | x | x | | | | x | | x |

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[3] Summative assessment aims to assess a student's knowledge and skills. Such assessments are usually awarded a mark, accompanied by a justification of the mark (adapted from *Toetsen in het hoger onderwijs* (2017)).

| Course | Code | 1.1 | 1.2 | 2.1 | 2.2 | 2.3 | 3.1 | 3.2 | 4.1 | 4.2 | 4.3 | 5.1 | 5.2 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Language, Brain and Cognition | LTR008M10 | | x | x | | <u>x</u> | x | x | | x | x | x | x |
| Methodology & Statistics Ling. Research | LTR002M10 | | x | <u>x</u> | | | x | | | <u>x</u> | | x | x |
| Research Training | LTR028M05/ LTR029M05 | | fx | | | | | | fx | fx | <u>x</u> | | |
| LOT Course 1 (C) | LTR015M05 | x | x | | | | x | | | x | | x | x |
| Summer School/Winter School/Tutorial | LTR016M05 or LTR012M10 | x | x | x | | x | x | | | x | x | x | x |

| | | 1. Kennis en inzicht | | 2. Toepassen kennis en inzicht | | | 3.Oordeels-vorming | | 4. Communicatie | | | 5. Leervaardig-heden | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1.1 | 1.2 | 2.1 | 2.2 | 2.3 | 3.1 | 3.2 | 4.1 | 4.2 | 4.3 | 5.1 | 5.2 |
| **JAAR 2 semester 1** | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Vaktitel*** | vakcode | | | | | | | | | | | | |

| Vaktitel* | vakcode | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Research Internship in Linguistics (C) | LTR011M20 | | x | x | x | x | x | | x | x | x | x | x |
| LOT Course 2 (C) | LTR016M05 | x | x | | | | x | | | | x | x | x |
| Summer School/Winter School/Tutorial | LTR012M10 or LTR016M05 | | | x | x | x | x | | | x | x | x | x |
| **JAAR 2 semester 2** | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Vaktitel*** | **vakcode** | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Research Master's Thesis in Linguistics, Thesis Class (C) | LTR999M30 | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | | | x | x | x |

\* C = compulsory module

# Appendix 3. Schematic overview of the assessment programme

| JAAR 1 semester 1 | | Blok 1 | | Blok 2 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Vaktitel\*** | **vakcode** | **week 1-7 colleges** | **week 8/9/10 toetsing** | **week 11-17 colleges** | **week 18/19/20 toetsing** |
| Basic Statistics (C) | LTR013M05 | computer practical | Written examination + test computer practical | | exam re-sit |
| Corpus Linguistics (C) | LTR014M05 | | | computer practical, weekly assignments | Report on research project report re-sit |
| Linguistic Theory (C) | LTR017M10 | homework assignments, | written project | homework assignments | Take home exam re-sit written project exam re-sit |
| Discourse Analysis | LTR027M10 | Essay 1 Essay 1 re-sit | Essay 2 Essay 2 re-sit | Essay 3 Essay 3 re-sit Essay 4 | Essay 4 re-sit |
| Research Training+ | LTR028M05 | Participation in faculty research project | Reflective essay about applications of theory and methods used in project | Participation in faculty research project | Reflective essay about applications of theory and methods used in project |
| **Totaal aantal ECTS** | 30 | | | | |
| **JAAR 1 semester 2** | | **Blok 3** | | **Blok 4** | |
| **Vaktitel\*** | **vakcode** | **week 1-7 colleges** | **week 8/9/10 toetsing** | **week 11-17 colleges** | **week 18/19/20 toetsing** |
| Designing your Research Project (C) | LTR021M05 | | | Peer review, participation in panel and mock defence | Research proposal proposal re-sit |
| Language, Brain and Cognition | LTR008M10 | presentations, short papers. | | presentations, short papers. | Report on research project. project re-sit |

| Methodology & Statistics Ling. Research | LTR002M10 | computer practical, presentation | | computer practical, presentation | final paper<br>final paper re-sit |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Research Training+ | LTR029M05 | Participation in faculty research project | Reflective essay about applications of theory and methods used in project | Participation in faculty research project | Reflective essay about applications of theory and methods used in project |
| Summer School/Winter School/ Tutorial | LTR012M10 | The student takes classes at a summer school or winter school or pursues an independent study. Assessment is based on a paper. | | | |
| **Totaal aantal ECTS** | 120 | | | | |

| **JAAR 2 semester 1** | | **Blok 1** | | **Blok 2** | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Vaktitel*** | **vakcode** | **week 1-7 colleges** | **week 8/9/10 toetsing** | **week 11-17 colleges** | **week 18/19/20 toetsing** |
| Research Internship in Linguistics (C) | LTR011M20 | This specialization module involves an internship in a research environment. Assessment is based on the internship and an internship report. | | | |
| LOT Course 2 (C) | LTR016M05 | The student takes LOT classes, e.g. at the LOT Summer School or Winter School. Assessment is based on a paper. | | | |
| Summer School/Winter School/ Tutorial | LTR012M10 | The student takes classes at a summer school or winter school or pursues an independent study. Assessment is based on a paper. | | | |
| **Totaal aantal ECTS** | 30 | | | | |

| **JAAR 2 semester 2** | | **Blok 3** | | **Blok 4** | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Vaktitel*** | **vakcode** | **week 1-7 colleges** | **week 8/9/10 toetsing** | **week 11-17 colleges** | **week 18/19/20 toetsing** |
| Research Master's Thesis in Linguistics, including Thesis Class (C) | LTR999M30 | thesis | | | |
| **Totaal aantal ECTS** | 30 | | | | |

# Appendix 4. Additional regulations for the graduation dossier

# Thesis Regulations

# Research Master Linguistics

**30-11-2015**

# Contents

# 1.      Definitions and Learning Outcomes

*a.      Definitions*

The Research Master's thesis (thesis) is one of the most important instruments for determining whether a student has achieved the learning outcomes for the Research Master's program. The students put what they have learned (knowledge, understanding and skills in their subject area) into practice by setting up and carrying out a substantial and academically sound research project. For this purpose, an unambiguous problem definition is formulated (also known as the research question or central question), which can be split into sub-questions if necessary. A well-formulated problem definition is essential to the success of a research project. It gives direction to the research and determines which material needs to be studied. The sub-questions give structure to the research and determine how the thesis is subdivided.

The most relevant literature and sources are identified, and/or novel research data is collected. Literature, sources and data are analyzed in order to answer the research question as well as the sub-questions. The answers are then presented in the form of an analytical argument, substantiated with sources or data that support the argument. The academic research is carried out in accordance with the conventions for the subject area. Students conduct the research independently. Their work constitutes an original contribution to the development of the subject and/or to the application of ideas within it.

The thesis research may involve theoretical research on the basis of existing literature or data, empirical research leading to new data, computational research on the basis of existing data, or a combination.

The thesis should demonstrate knowledge of current research on the chosen subject. It should contain a critical reflection on the theoretical perspectives and methods used. The relevant sources, arguments, views and conclusions must be assessed in terms of their value and validity, and where necessary compared.

The thesis describes how the research makes a new contribution to the discipline. The thesis thus demonstrates the student's ability, based on subject knowledge, to analyse and critically appraise his/her own research results and what others have written on the subject.

The thesis forms the proof that a student can actually carry out independent research on a level that demonstrates his/her capacities to participate in the international debate on his/her topic. The level of the argumentation and the mastery of the relevant literature should be such that the thesis could be re-worked into an article that could be submitted to an academic journal.

*b.      Learning outcomes Research Master in Linguistics*

The learning outcomes of the research master thesis, as formulated in the OER and organized according to the five Dublin descriptors, include the following:

1.   Knowledge and insight
1.1  Have general knowledge and understanding of several subdisciplines in linguistics, their interpretations, methodologies and techniques
1.2  Have a thorough knowledge of at least one theoretical and methodological approach within linguistics

2.   Applying knowledge and understanding
2.1  Be able to formulate an academic problem independently, and in so doing, to select, apply and where necessary adapt an adequate theoretical framework and one or more relevant research methods

2.2 Be able to make an original contribution to knowledge in at least one subdiscipline in linguistics
2.3 Be able to independently formulate a research proposal

3. Making judgments
3.1 To make use of the research results of others and evaluate these critically
3.2 Be able to make connections between their own specialist knowledge of a subdiscipline of linguistics and other related disciplines, for example psychology, neurology or information science

4. Communication
4.1 Be able to participate actively in a research group working on an academic project
4.2 Be able to work with other students and lecturers on an academic project
4.3 Be able to participate in international academic debate in the chosen area of specialization and to present an academic problem convincingly in English, both orally and in writing

5. Learning skills
5. Be able to keep abreast of the latest developments in linguistics and broaden and deepen their own knowledge and understanding
5.2 Be able to reflect on the implications of one's work for the development of linguistic theories

## 2.    Formal Requirements

*a.    Language of the thesis*

The thesis must be written in English. Another language may only be used with the explicit authorization of the Board of Examiners, Director of Studies (DoS) and supervisors. If a thesis is written in a language other than English, the supervisor and the DoS have to make sure that there is a second supervisor available, who is sufficiently fluent in that language to assess the quality of the work.
The style of writing should be at an acceptable academic level with correct grammar and spelling and careful formulation.

*b.    Structure of the thesis*

The thesis should contain at least the following:
- Title page with title of thesis, name of student, student number, address, email address of student, university, name of program, name(s) of supervisor(s) and date of submission
- Table of contents
- Introduction, containing the research question, methods, theoretical framework, and the aim of the research
- Theoretical background consisting of an elaboration of the introduction and a review of relevant literature
- Main text describing the actual research
- Discussion and well-founded conclusions
- Notes  (if applicable)
- References
- Appendices with relevant additional materials (if applicable)

*c.*      *Length of the thesis*

The thesis must be around 20,000 words, excluding appendices, footnotes and bibliography. Assuming there are approximately 450-500 words on a page, this is 40 pages.

*d.*      *Credits of the thesis*

The thesis is worth 30 ECTS credit points = 840 hours. This is equivalent to 21 full-time weeks.

*e.*      *Format of the thesis*

The thesis should be submitted in printed and in digital form. A thesis should have a title page stating the student's name and student number, degree program, submission date, name of the supervisor(s) and the title. The thesis should be printed with a line spacing of 1 ½  and in a standard 12 point font.

Substantial deviations from these requirements need to be approved by the Board of Examiners.

# 3.      Procedure

The student is advised to start as early as the third semester (i.e., the first semester of the second year) with his or her orientation on a suitable topic and the available literature. (S)he is also advised to approach potential supervisors in an early stage.

*a.*      *Admission*

The thesis is the final and all-inclusive assessment of the program. Consequently, the student is allowed to start with the thesis only after the compulsory courses in the first year of the Research Master have been completed, after a supervisor has been appointed, and after the Thesis Contract has been approved by supervisor and Director of Studies.

*b.*      *Supervision*

Each student should find a thesis supervisor from the members of the faculty at the RUG, to be approved by the DoS. A second supervisor may be appointed if this is appropriate for the subject of the thesis.
Students should be aware that the supervisor has only a limited number of hours available for thesis supervision, but they have the right to at least four supervision meetings:
1.      Exploratory discussion to choose a subject;
2.      Discussion of the research setup and planning;
3.      Discussion of the first version of the thesis;
4.      Discussion of the final version of the thesis.

The student is expected to finish the thesis within the period of one semester. If the thesis has not been completed within this period the student should confer with the DoS.

*c.*      *Supervision process*

The supervisor advises the student and reviews and assesses the written work, while the student prepares and carries out the research and writes the thesis. In the supervision process, four phases can be distinguished, which need not always occur in sequence:
- *Preparatory phase*: This phase involves the meetings between student and supervisor until the Thesis Contract has been approved (see § 3e).
- *Research phase*: Student and supervisor discuss the operationalization of the research question, both before and during the actual research activities (for example, method of research, method

of analysis). The research proposal is adjusted if necessary. They discuss ongoing research activities.

- *Writing phase*: During this phase the supervisor reads drafts of thesis chapter and gives feedback to the student. If student and supervisor have a meeting to discuss the text, the text should be sent to the supervisor at least a week before the meeting, unless agreed otherwise. The division into research phase and writing phase need not be a strict division, as it is possible that the student first writes the chapter presenting the theoretical background of the research before conducting the actual research.

- *Assessment phase*: During this phase, a complete, prefinal version of the thesis is assessed, and subsequently adjusted and revised on the basis of the supervisor's feedback, after which the final version is submitted and assessed.

## d.    Planning schedule

Students wishing to graduate by August 31 of the academic year should submit their thesis proposal with their supervisor by March 1. In order to so the student should reserve sufficient time for developing and phrasing the research question before March 1. Students wishing to graduate by January 31 should submit their thesis proposal by October 1. Detailed planning schedules for graduation in August or January graduation are given in Appendices 3 & 4.

## e.    Summer extension

If the time schedule in the thesis proposal extends beyond the dates specified in the Planning Schedule in Appendix 3, i.e., if it extends into the summer break, the availability of the supervisor and second assessor for commenting on and assessing the thesis during the summer break should be explicitly addressed in the thesis proposal.

## f.    Thesis contract

One month after the beginning of the semester the student hands in a research proposal in the form of a Thesis Contract of at least two pages signed by student and supervisor to the DoS for approval.
A Thesis Contract should at least contain the following information (see Appendix 2):
- Working title
- Provisional table of contents
- Research question
- Provisional list of literature and sources
- Discussion of used methods
- Detailed time schedule, including appointments with supervisor
- If applicable, explicit agreement with respect to the availability of necessary research facilities such as computer software or hardware, lab time, etc.

## g.    Thesis class

The student will normally take part in the thesis class that is organized in the second semester of the second year of the program.

## h.    Thesis presentation

Each student gives an oral presentation based on his/her thesis research in the presence of staff and students, the exact context depending on the degree program. Typically, students present in one of the research groups and lab meetings of CLCG. Alternatively, they present at a conference.

## i.    Exceptional circumstances

If the supervisor is unable to continue his task, due to illness or other reasons, the Board of

Examiners will appoint a replacement supervisor, in consultation with the student. If the student is unable to finish the thesis, he or she should contact the supervisor and the Director of Studies. In case of a disagreement between student and supervisor(s) about the supervision offered, the Director of Studies should be notified.

*j.        Center for Study Support and Academic Skills*

The University of Groningen offers several courses for students encountering problems when writing or working on their thesis (mostly in Dutch). More information about their programs for study support and academic skills can be obtained from the Student Service Center (SO, Studie Ondersteuning), tel. 3635548 (www.rug.nl/so).

# 4.        Assessment and Assessment Criteria

The thesis is assessed by two examiners: the thesis supervisor is the first assessor and an examiner who has not been involved in the supervision process as second assessor. In case the thesis project is supervised by two supervisors, a third examiner, who has not been involved, must assess the final text. The supervisor assesses the research process as well as the end product; the second assessor assesses only the end product. The examiners each make their own individual assessment by filling out the Assessment Form (Appendix 2). They then discuss this together to decide on a final assessment and grade. The grade can be any whole or half number between 1—10. The minimum grade for passing is 5.5. The specifications of the grading criteria are listed on the Assessment form (Appendix 2).

The mark for a thesis is based on the quality of the research topic and process, and the quality of the report (the thesis text). The following criteria are used; the Assessment form (Appendix 2) gives definitions and specification of the criteria:

- <u>Topic</u>: Scientific relevance; originality; level of difficulty.
- <u>Process</u>: Degree of independence; creativity; accuracy and reliability.
- <u>Presentation Overall</u>: Structure; cohesion; style and language use.
- <u>Introduction</u>: Motivation; general research question; overview.
- <u>Background Theory</u>: Depth and comprehensiveness of theoretical embedding; analysis and/or synthesis; specific research question and hypothesis.
- <u>Method and Results</u>: Structure; presentation method; presentation results; data analysis and statistics.
- <u>Discussion</u>: Integration results with research question and hypothesis; embedding in the literature.
- <u>Conclusion</u>: Conclusions, follow-up.

If a student does not agree with the assessment, it is possible to seek the opinion of a third expert. This must be done via the Board of Examiners.

# 5.        Archiving and Free Access

Students must provide a digital version of the thesis (in PDF format) for the degree program's archive. This should be submitted via the delivery portal of the Office for Student Affairs (BSO). The thesis is stored in the University of Groningen Repository, the digital archive of University publications.

Theses in the Repository can be freely accessed (from within and outside the University) if the student and supervisor give permission. Students can indicate 'freely accessible – yes/no' on the form. 'Yes' means that the student states that the supervisor has also given permission, in accordance with the Rules and Regulations of the Board of Examiners that apply within the Faculty of Arts. Before answering 'yes' on the form, the student must check that the supervisor also agrees to the thesis being freely accessible.

## 6.      Rights and Obligations of Student

Students have the right to thesis supervision as described in Section 2. In addition, the student is required to gather material in the correct way – i.e. independently – and use it to write a thesis in accordance with the regulations and conventions of the degree program. See also the section relating to cheating and plagiarism in the relevant Teaching and Examination Regulations (OER).

Cheating and plagiarism carry severe penalties, because it must be clear at all times that the student is the actual author of the thesis in all respects. Partial or inaccurate source references and deliberate false references will count against the student. The thesis must be the result of independent academic research. Copying or too closely paraphrasing consulted works does not comply with this. The lecturer has the right to examine the consulted sources and literature, and students must provide the lecturer with this material if required.

The copyright on a thesis is shared: both the thesis supervisor of the degree program and student share the copyright on the thesis results. This means that neither the supervisor nor the student can publish the results reported in the thesis unless they have the permission of the other.

## 7.      Final Provisions

In cases not covered by these regulations, the Director of Studies shall have the final say.

Disputes concerning the provisions of these thesis regulations will first be brought before the Board of Examiners of the ReMa Linguistics degree program, who will take a decision that can in turn be appealed against.

Any further questions can be addressed to the following departments and people:

- Bureau Student Zaken, Harmoniegebouw (Mon-Fri. between 9 am – 5 pm)

- The coordinator of the research masters, Nadja Zadorina (n.a.zadorina@rug.nl)

- The Director of Studies, prof Janet M. Fuller (j.m.fuller@rug.nl)

# 8.      List of Appendices

1.      Thesis Contract

2.      Thesis Assessment Form

3.      Planning Schedule Graduation Summer

4.      Planning Schedule Graduation Winter

# Thesis Contract Research Master Linguistics

Name Student:                                    Student number:

Name supervisor(s):

A thesis contract should at least contain the following information:
- Working title
- Provisional table of contents
- Research question
- Provisional list of literature and sources
- Discussion of used methods
- Detailed time schedule, including appointments with supervisor
- If applicable, explicit agreement with respect to the availability of necessary research facilities such as computer software or hardware, lab time, etc.

## Signatures

Student
(name)                                                              (signature)

(date)

Supervisor:
(name)                                                              (signature)

(date)

Director of Studies:
(name)                                                              (signature)

(date)

# Assessment MA Thesis Research Master in Linguistics

Student name:                  Supervisor:                  **Grade:**
Student number:            Second Reader:
Title Thesis:                Date Started:
                                  Date of Completion:

**Basic Requirements (assessment cannot start until these requirements have been met)**
- [ ] Layout according to format requirements
- [ ] Documentation of sources is OK
- [ ] Bibliography is complete and correct
- [ ] Language is clear and correct
- [ ] Figures and tables are clear and have clear captions
- [ ] Length around 20.000 words, **word count included**

**THESIS RESEARCH**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Topic** | *Scientific relevance* | N.A. |
| | *Originality* | N.A. |
| | *Level of difficulty* | N.A. |
| | *Remarks (if any)* | |
| **Process** | *Independence* | N.A. |
| | *Creativity* | N.A. |
| | *Accuracy and reliability* | N.A. |
| | *Remarks (if any):* | |

**THESIS TEXT**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Presentation overall** | *Structure* | N.A. |
| | *Cohesion* | N.A. |
| | *Style and language use* | N.A. |
| | *Remarks (if any)* | |
| **Introduction** | *Motivation* | N.A. |
| | *General research question* | N.A. |
| | *Overview* | N.A. |
| | *Remarks (if any):* | |
| **Theoretical background** | *Depth* | N.A. |
| | *Comprehensiveness* | N.A. |
| | *Analysis and/or synthesis* | N.A. |
| | *Specific research question, hypothesis* | N.A. |
| | *Remarks (if any)* | |
| **Method and Results** | *Method* | N.A. |
| | *Presentation results* | N.A. |
| | *Data analysis and statistics* | N.A. |
| | *Remarks (if any)* | |
| **Discussion** | *Integration results with research questions and hypothesis* | N.A. |
| | *Embedding in literature* | N.A. |
| | *Remarks (if any)* | |
| **Conclusion** | *Conclusion* | N.A. |
| | *Follow up* | N.A. |
| | *Remarks (if any)* | |

**General Remarks**

# Specification of Assessment Criteria for Thesis Research Master Linguistics

| THESIS RESEARCH | Insufficient | Weak | Sufficient / Threshold | Good | Excellent |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Topic** | | | | | |
| *Scientific relevance* | The topic is not relevant for the field of study | The topic is marginally relevant for the field of study | The topic is relevant for the field of study | The topic is very relevant for the field of study | The topic is highly relevant and addresses an urgent issue in the field of study |
| *Originality* | The topic is not original for an MA thesis | The topic relies heavily on previous studies | The topic is logically connected to and relies on previous studies | The topic is original and innovative | The topic is highly original and innovative |
| *Level of difficulty* | The level of difficulty of the topic is not suitable for an MA thesis | The level of difficulty of the topic is marginally suitable for an MA thesis | The level of difficulty of the topic is suitable for an MA thesis, but is not very challenging | The topic is suitable for an MA thesis, and is challenging | The topic is very challenging and difficult to investigate |
| **Process** | | | | | |
| *Independence* | The student needed strong guidance in all stages of the process | The student needed additional support from the supervisor and met with the supervisor very frequently. Feedback from the supervisor was not very well incorporated | The student worked independently and demonstrated responsibility. The student met with the supervisor on a regular basis. Feedback from the supervisor was incorporated | The student worked independently and showed strong responsibility. The student met with the supervisor about when necessary in meetings that were characterized by insightful discussions. Feedback from the supervisor was well integrated in the thesis | The student worked strongly independently and showed full responsibility. Meetings with the supervisor were characterized by productive cooperation. Feedback was very well integrated in the thesis |
| *Creativity* | The student was not able to creatively solve problems that occurred. The thesis does not show signs of creativity | The student was not very inventive in solving problems that occurred. The thesis shows limited creativity | Throughout the thesis process, the student showed creativity in finding solutions to problems that occurred. The thesis shows some creativity | Throughout the thesis process, the student came up with creative solutions to problems that occurred. The thesis contains several creative characteristics | Throughout the thesis process, the student showed an exceptional ability to find creative solutions to problems that occurred. The thesis is characterized by its overall creative and innovative nature |
| *Accuracy and reliability* | The student's work on the research project was often inaccurate, or s/he often was an unreliable researcher. | The student's work on the research project was occasionally inaccurate, or s/he occasionally was an unreliable researcher. | The student's work on the research project was accurate, and s/he was a reliable researcher. | The student's work on the research project was particularly accurate, and s/he was a highly reliable researcher. | The student's work on the research project was accurate beyond expectation, and s/he was a highly reliable researcher. |

| THESIS TEXT | Insufficient | Weak | Sufficient / Threshold | Good | Excellent |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Presentation overall** | | | | | |
| *Structure* | The thesis lacks a clear structure | The structure of the thesis is not | The thesis is logically structured | The structure of the thesis is | The structure of the thesis is |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | consistent throughout and/or is not in agreement with conventions | in conventional sections | completely in line with the contents and follows conventions where necessary | excellent and would be suitable for publication in a scholarly journal |
| *Cohesion* | The thesis is incoherent and difficult to follow | The different parts of the thesis are not consistently linked at the level of chapters, sections, and paragraphs | The different parts of the thesis hang together sufficiently logically at the level of chapters, sections, and paragraphs | The thesis is strongly cohesive at all levels: chapters, sections, and paragraphs | The thesis is extremely cohesive at all levels. There is a logical flow of clear and professional argumentation throughout |
| *Style and language use* | Language is unclear and the style is generally inappropriate and the language is hard to follow | The style is not consistently appropriate and clear. The thesis contains several disturbing language issues. | The writing style is clear and has an appropriate and consistent level of formality. There are very few disturbing language issues | The thesis reads easily and the style is consistently appropriate. There are no disturbing language issues | The thesis is characterized by a pleasant and professional style and language use throughout |
| **Introduction** | | | | | |
| *Motivation* | The rationale is missing and the study is not contextualized | The rationale for the study is not completely clear and the contextualization is weak | The rationale for the study is explained sufficiently clearly and the study is sufficiently contextualized | The rationale for the study is clear and convincing, and the study is well contextualized | The rationale clearly shows that the study is highly relevant, and the study is very well contextualized |
| *General research question* | The introduction lacks a research question | The research question is not clear or is not sufficiently linked to the topic | The introduction contains a sufficiently clear and feasible overall research question which is linked to the topic | The introduction contains a clear and interesting research question that follows logically from the rationale of the study | The introduction contains a very clear, interesting and challenging research question that follows logically from the rationale of the study |
| *Overview* | The introduction lacks an overview of the contents of the thesis | The overview of the contents of the thesis is incomplete or unclear | The introduction contains an overview of the contents of the thesis | The introduction contains a transparent overview of the contents of the thesis that reads well and that follows logically from the introduction | The introduction contains a clear, interesting and professional overview of the contents of the thesis |
| **Theoretical Background** | | | | | |
| *Depth* | The discussion of the background section is superficial and shows an insufficient understanding of the subject matter | The discussion of background literature is rather superficial and shows a minimal understanding of the subject matter | The discussion of the background literature shows that the subject matter is understood | The discussion of the background literature shows a deep and thorough understanding of the subject matter | The discussion of the background literature shows an excellent and thorough understanding of the topic, showing a full and professional command of the topic |
| *Comprehensiveness* | The selection of sources in the background section is incomplete and/or irrelevant | The background section contains a minimal selection of relevant sources. Some relevant sources are missing and/or | The background section contains a complete selection of the most relevant sources, showing the ability to carry out | The background section contains a varied, broad and original selection of relevant sources, showing the ability to carry | The background section contains an excellent selection of highly relevant sources, showing a professional ability to carry out |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | not all sources mentioned are relevant | literature searches | out literature advanced searches | advanced literature searches |
| *Analysis and/or synthesis* | The sources in the background section are merely summarized and do not show integration; comparisons and contrasts are largely missing | The sources in the background section are summarized, but minimally integrated in the argumentation. The section contains limited comparisons and contrasts | The sources in the background section are integrated in the line of argumentation and the section contains comparisons and contrasts | The background section contains a critical reflection of the sources, which is well integrated in the argumentation and clearly shows the student's own interpretation. The section contains many relevant comparisons and contrasts | The sources in the background section are critically discussed and exceptionally well integrated in a logical flow of original and strong argumentation. The section contains fully synthesized comparisons and contrasts |
| *Specific research question(s) and hypothesis* | The link between research question and hypothesis and the literature review is not clear or is absent | The research question and hypothesis is minimally linked to the literature review. But the links are largely implicit | The research question and hypothesis follow logically from the literature review. The links are explicit | The research question and hypothesis follow logically from the literature review. The links are very clear and explicit | There is a full and logical integration of the literature review, research question and hypothesis. The links are very strong and clear |
| **Method and Results** | | | | | |
| *Method* | The method of investigation is not suitable for the object of investigation and is poorly worked out. The choice of materials has major problems | The method of investigation is minimally suitable for the object of study. The design is not fully worked out. The choice of materials has some problems | The method of investigation is suitable for the object of study and design is appropriately worked out. The choice of materials is appropriate | The method of investigation is highly appropriate for the object of study and the design is well worked out. The choice of materials is highly appropriate | The method of investigation is uniquely appropriate (innovative) and the design is worked out exceptionally well. The choice of materials is highly appropriate and very smart. |
| *Presentation results* | The presentation of the results is unclear and incomplete. Tables and graphs are unclear, incomplete, or missing | The presentation of the results is not clear and complete. Tables and graphs are not completely clear and/or captions are missing | The presentation of the results is clear and complete. Tables and graphs are included and have clear captions | The presentation of the results is very clear and comprehensive, including tables and graphs where appropriate | The presentation of the results is exceptionally clear, fully comprehensive and innovative. The graphs and tables look professional |
| *Data analysis and statistics* | Data analysis is incomplete and statistics are inappropriate or missing | Data analysis is not fully complete and not all statistics are accurate and appropriate | Data analysis is complete and statistics are accurate and appropriate | Data analysis is transparent and complete; statistics are advanced, accurate, and complete | Data analysis is exceptionally good and complete; statistics are very advanced, accurate, complete, and innovative |
| **Discussion** | | | | | |
| *Integration results with research questions and hypothesis* | The discussion is poorly organized. The research questions are not answered, nor are the implications for the hypothesis discussed | The organization of the discussion is weak. Answers to the research questions are not fully clear and the implications for hypothesis are not clearly discussed | The discussion is well organized. All research questions are addressed and answered, and appropriately linked to the hypothesis | The discussion is well organized. The research questions are clearly answered and clearly linked to the hypothesis | The discussion is very well organized and contains insightful, creative, and original reflections on the results in the integrated context of the background literature and the research questions |

|  |  |  |  |  | and hypothesis |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Embedding in literature* | The link between the results and the background literature is insufficient or absent | The results are marginally put in perspective of the background literature. The links are largely implicit | The results are put in perspective and the links to the literature are explicit | The results are clearly put in perspective, with strong links to the background section. The links are clear and explicit | There is a full and logical integration of the background literature, method and results. The links between background, research questions, hypothesis, method and results are very strong and clear |
| **Conclusion** |  |  |  |  |  |
| *Conclusion and critical reflection* | The conclusion is an incomplete summary of the study without contextualization and with missing or incomplete reflections on relevant shortcomings | The conclusion summarizes the main findings but fails to put the study in a broader context. The shortcomings mentioned are not fully complete or relevant | The conclusion summarizes the main findings and puts the study in a broader context. Relevant shortcomings of the study are mentioned | The conclusion includes a clear and concise summary of the study and puts the study in a broader context with some interesting additional reflections and a critical reflection | The conclusion includes an excellent summary of the study and contains a thorough critical reflection that contextualizes the study in an innovative and original way |
| *Follow up* | The conclusion lacks suggestions for further research or makes suggestions that do not logically follow from the study | The conclusion contains limited suggestions for further research that are marginally informed by the study | The conclusion contains sufficiently informed suggestions for further research | The conclusion contains clear and well informed suggestions for further research | The conclusion contains excellent and inventive suggestions for further research that logically follow from the discussion of the study |

## Grading criteria for Thesis Research Master Linguistics

The criteria below refer to the ReMa Thesis Assessment Form with 23 assessment points in eight major categories: Topic; Process; Presentation; Introduction; Theoretical Background; Method and Results; Discussion, Conclusion. Of these, the four most important categories are: Process, Background, Method and Results, and Discussion.

"Insufficient" is given when the minimum requirements for grade 5 have not been met.

Grade 5 ("weak", below passing level) is given when:
- All 'basic requirements' have been met;
- The general tendency of the assessment scores is "insufficient" or "weak";
- In any of the most important categories (Process, Background, Method and Results, and Discussion), no more than one assessment point may be assessed as "insufficient";
- In total no more than 5 (out of 24) assessment points may be assessed as "insufficient".

Grade 6 ("sufficient") is given when:
- All 'basic requirements' have been met;
- The general tendency of the assessment scores is "sufficient";
- None of the assessement points in the most important categories (Process, Background, Method and Results, and Discussion) may be assessed as "insufficient".
- In the most important categories (Process, Background, Method and Results, and Discussion), no more than one assessment point may be assessed as "weak";
- In total no more than 5 (out of 24) points may be assessed as "weak" or less.

Grade 7 ('amply sufficient') is given when:
- All 'basic requirements' have been met;
- The general tendency of the assessment scores is between "sufficient" and "good";
- No assessment point in the most important categories (Process, Background, Method and Results, and Discussion) may be assessed as "weak";
- In each of the most important categories, at least half of the points must be assessed as "good";
- In total no more than 3 points may be assessed as "weak" or less

Grade 8 ('good') is given when:
- All 'basic requirements' have been met;
- The general tendency of the assessment scoress is "good";
- In the most important categories (Process, Background, Method and Results, and Discussion), no more than one assessment point may be assessed as "sufficient" or less;
- In total no more than 4 (out of 24) points may be assessed as "sufficient" or less.

Grade 9 ('very good') is given when:
- All 'basic requirements' have been met;
- The general tendency of the assessment scores is between "good" and "excellent";
- No assessment point in the most important categories (Process, Background, Method and Results, and Discussion) may be assessed as "sufficient" or less;
- In each of the most important categories, at least half of the points must be assessed as "excellent";
- Independence, originality and creativity must at least be assessed as "good".

Grade 10 ('excellent') is given when:
- All 'basic requirements' have been met;
- The general tendency of the assessment scores is "excellent";
- In the most important categories (Process, Background, Method and Results, and Discussion), no more than one assessment point may be assessed as "good" or less;
- In total no more than 4 (out of 24) points may be assessed as "good" or less;
- Independence, originality and creativity must be assessed as "excellent".

## Appendix 3. *Planning Schedule Graduation Summer*

## Basic model: Step-by-step plan for the master thesis

Graduation at end of Semester 2

| Step-by-step plan | Deadline* |
|---|---|
| 1. Exploratory discussion on thesis subject | November–December |
| 2. Start thesis work | 1 February |
| 3. One month after the beginning of the semester the student hands in a thesis contract of at least two pages signed by student and supervisor to the DoS for approval. | 1 March |
| 4. As required, interim discussions of chapters, as agreed between supervisor and student. | March-May |
| 5. Student submits thesis. | 1 June |
| 6. Assessment by and feedback from supervisor. | 1 – 15 June |
| 7. Student submits new version, if applicable. | 15 June – 1 July |
| 8. Student requests degree certificate ceremony online from the Office for Student Affairs. www.rug.nl/let/afstuderen | No later than 2 months before date of completing Master's program, i.e. before July 1 for a graduation date of Aug 31 |
| 9. Supervisor and second assessor assess final version, determine final mark and submit it for processing. | by July 15 |
| 10. Final discussion between supervisor and student. | by July 15 |
| 11. After assessment, the student must upload the final version of the thesis. N.B. thesis must be uploaded in PDF format. http://scripties.let.eldoc.ub.rug.nl/UDA/ | Immediately after final mark has been entered in Progress |
| 12. When the final mark for the Master's degree has been registered in Progress, the student must inform the Office for Student Affairs that he/she is finished. | |

* For steps 1 to 7, other dates may be agreed upon by student and supervisor.

*Appendix 4.   Planning Schedule Graduation Winter*

## Basic model: Step-by-step plan for the master thesis

Graduation at end of Semester 1

| Step-by-step plan | Deadline* |
|---|---|
| 1. Exploratory discussion on thesis subject. | July-August |
| 2. Start thesis work | 1 September |
| 3. One month after the beginning of the semester the student hands in a thesis contract of at least two pages signed by student and supervisor to the DoS for approval. | 1 October |
| 4. As required, interim discussions of chapters, as agreed between supervisor and student. | September-December |
| 5. Student submits thesis. | 15 December |
| 6. Assessment by and feedback from supervisor. | 15 – 31 December |
| 7. Student submits new version, if applicable. | 1 January – 15 January |
| 8. Student requests degree certificate ceremony online from the Office for Student Affairs. www.rug.nl/let/afstuderen | No later than 2 months before date of completing Master's program, i.e., before Dec 1 for a graduation date of Jan 31 |
| 9. Supervisor and second assessor assess final version, determine final mark and submit it for processing. | by January 31 |
| 10. Final discussion between supervisor and student. | by January 31 |
| 11. After assessment, the student must upload the final version of the thesis. N.B. thesis must be uploaded in PDF format. http://scripties.let.eldoc.ub.rug.nl/UDA/ | Immediately after final mark has been entered in Progress |
| 12. When the final mark for the Master's degree has been registered in Progress, the student must inform the Office for Student Affairs that he/she is finished. | |

\* For steps 1 to 7, other dates may be agreed upon by student and supervisor.