

# Regulations for Bachelor's and Master's Theses



## Introduction

This guide contains the regulations for executing bachelor's and master's thesis at the Faculty of Science and Technology, ref. section 3-10(4c) of the *Regulations relating to Studies and Examinations at the University of Stavanger*.

These regulations have been stipulated by the Dean and provide the framework for the work on theses. The faculty also publishes *Student Guide for Bachelor's and Master's Theses*, which provides additional information on the rules and advice on how students should approach starting and completing their thesis.

### 1. Starting a thesis

Thesis	Bachelor's thesis	Master's thesis, 30 ECTS	Master's thesis, 60 ECTS
Deadline for department's information meeting	15 Oct	15 Oct	15 Mar
Deadline for publishing projects by the department, faculty or external enterprise <sup>1</sup>	15 Oct	15 Oct	15 Mar
Deadline for students to register their projects <sup>1</sup>	15 Nov	15 Nov	15 Apr
Deadline for applications for projects <sup>1</sup>	1 Dec	1 Dec	1 May
Deadline for announcing awarded projects <sup>1</sup>	15 Dec	15 Dec	15 May
Deadline for the formal acceptance of projects	15 Jan	1 Feb	15 Sep
Thesis semester	<b>Spring</b>	<b>Spring</b>	<b>Autumn and spring</b>
Withdrawal deadline	1 Apr <sup>2</sup>	1 Apr <sup>3</sup>	1 Apr <sup>3</sup> (1 Nov for BIOMAS)
Withdrawal deadline for theses outside the normal period	1 Nov <sup>2</sup>	6 Oct <sup>3</sup>	6 Oct <sup>3</sup> (27 Oct for BIOMAS)

Table 1 provides an overview of relevant dates for bachelor's and master's theses. <sup>1</sup> This must be done electronically via the Collaboration Portal, <sup>2</sup> The withdrawal deadline is 6 weeks before the submission deadline, <sup>3</sup> The withdrawal deadline is 10 weeks before the submission deadline.

- 1.1 The department arranges an information meeting for students and informs them about the routines and process surrounding writing a thesis. The department then publishes the available projects in the Collaboration Portal. Deadlines for arranging information meetings and publishing projects are

shown in Table 1.

- 1.2 Students shall apply for three projects in prioritised order or register their own project, i.e. projects students have found themselves, in the Collaboration Portal. The Collaboration Portal will also show projects from external enterprises that students can apply for. The projects must be academically approved and be relevant to students' study programme. The deadlines for applications/registration are shown in Table 1.
- 1.3 The department approves the final project text and checks that the student has made sufficient progress, ref. sections 1.7 and 1.8. The department then assigns a course coordinator so that projects can be accepted by the deadline in Table 1.
- 1.4 If the student will be carrying out a project in collaboration with an enterprise or other institution outside the University of Stavanger, the student will, in addition to a programme coordinator, be assigned a supervisor, who will normally be employed by the external enterprise or institution. If the student will be carrying out a project published by the department, the programme coordinator and supervisor will often be the same person. A programme coordinator must be employed at the University of Stavanger. Research fellows, PhD candidates, postgraduates, technical personal and representatives of external enterprise/institutions can act as supervisors.
- 1.5 The contract must be signed in the Collaboration Portal. Each student must sign and submit a contract by the applicable deadline. If students will be writing their thesis as part of a group, a group contract must also be completed. This is also available from the Collaboration Portal. This must be completed by each student and submitted electronically by the applicable deadline.
- 1.6 The withdrawal deadlines for bachelor's and master's theses are specified in section 3-9(6) of the *Regulations relating to Studies and Examinations at the University of Stavanger*:
  - The withdrawal deadline for bachelor's theses is **1 April**, i.e. 6 weeks before the submission deadline.
  - The withdrawal deadline for master's theses is **1 April**, i.e. 10 weeks before the submission deadline.
  - The withdrawal deadline for master's theses in biological chemistry (**BIOMAS**) is **1 November**, i.e. 6 weeks after accepting the project. This is due to the expensive laboratory exercises.
  - If a bachelor's thesis is going to be written outside the normal period, the withdrawal deadline is 1 November, i.e. 6 weeks before the submission deadline.
  - If a master's thesis is going to be written outside the normal period, the withdrawal deadline is 6 October, i.e. 10 weeks before the submission deadline.
  - If a master's thesis in biological chemistry (BIOMAS) is going to be written outside the normal period, the withdrawal deadline is 27 October, i.e. 6 weeks after accepting the project. This is due to the expensive laboratory exercises.

Oral notification of withdrawal is not valid. If candidates who have enrolled for a bachelor's or master's thesis withdraw after the specified deadline or fail to submit a thesis before the deadline without a valid reason, they will be deemed to have presented for examination and this will be counted as one attempt. Candidates are responsible for documenting that a withdrawal before examination was made by the specified deadline, cf. section 3-9(4) of the *Regulations relating to Studies and Examinations at the University of Stavanger*.

If students want to withdraw from a bachelor's or master's thesis, the student(s) must withdraw from assessment in Studentweb and also send an email to both the course coordinator, potential supervisor, and study advisor.

There are no continuation examinations for bachelor's and master's theses, ref. section 3-11(3) and (8) of the *Regulations relating to Studies and Examinations at the University of Stavanger*.

1.7 To start a bachelor's project, students must satisfy one of the requirements below:<sup>4</sup>

- meet the prior knowledge requirements specified in the course description, and have passed at least 100 ECTS in accordance with an approved education plan by 15 October; or
- meet the prior knowledge requirements specified in the course description, and have passed at least 130 ECTS in accordance with an approved education plan by 15 January.

Bachelor's theses are worth 20 ECTS. Included in those 20 ECTS will be an assessment unit covering the philosophy of science and ethics. See the course description for bachelor's theses for more details. Both the bachelor's thesis and the essay in Philosophy of Science and Ethics must be passed before the final grade and credits are given in the course.

Examen Philosophicum (EXPHIL), which is equivalent to the essay in philosophy of science and ethics, may be approved for this assessment unit.

<sup>4</sup> Exemptions: For students taking:

- the bachelor's programme in urban planning and societal safety, bachelor's programme in customs and border management, or a 5-year master's programme in mathematics and physics (and are going to write their bachelor's thesis), the thesis is worth 20 ECTS and students do not need to take the essay in Philosophy of Science and Ethics.
- the bachelor's programme in biological chemistry, the thesis is worth 20 or 30 ECTS and students do not need to take the essay in Philosophy of Science and Ethics.
- the secondary education teacher programme in natural sciences, the thesis is worth 10 ECTS and students do not need to take the essay in Philosophy of Science and Ethics.

1.8 To start a 30-ECTS master's thesis, students must satisfy one of the requirements below:

- passed the admission requirements for the **2-year master's degree programme** and have passed at least 50 ECTS in accordance with an approved education plan by 15 October; or
- passed the admission requirements for the **2-year master's degree programme** and have passed at least 80 ECTS in accordance with an approved education plan by 15 January.

Special rules apply to the secondary education teacher programme in natural sciences. See the course description.

1.9 To start a 60-ECTS master's thesis, the student must have passed at least 40 ECTS in the 2-year master's degree programme or at least 220 ECTS in the 5-year master's degree programme in accordance with an approved education plan by 15 August.

1.10 The thesis must normally be completed in the spring semester, in the last semester of the education plan. 60-ECTS master's theses can be completed over the last two semesters.

1.11 A written application explaining the reasons must be sent to the department via student reception if a student wishes to change the period in which they will complete their thesis. The deadline for applications is 15 June and the application must be submitted on the form *Application regarding change of approved education plan*. The student must find an external enterprise/institution to collaborate on the writing with themselves, and a course coordinator with capacity to provide supervision in the autumn semester. Information about this must be provided in the application. The student must also include their proposed project. If the student is granted permission to write the thesis during another period, an individual timetable for acceptance and completion must be set up. For a bachelor's thesis, the period between the acceptance and submission deadlines must be 4 months. For a 30-ECTS master's thesis, the period must be 4.5 months, and for a 60-ECTS master's thesis, the period must be 9 months.



To start a 20-ECTS bachelor's thesis in the autumn semester, the student must meet the admission requirements for the **3-year bachelor's degree programme** and have passed at least 130 ECTS in accordance with an approved education plan by 15 June.

To start a 30-ECTS master's thesis in the autumn semester, the student must meet the admission requirements for the **2-year master's degree programme** and have passed at least 80 ECTS in accordance with an approved education plan by 15 June.

To start a 60-ECTS master's thesis in the spring semester, the student must meet the admission requirements for the **2-year master's degree programme** and have passed at least 40 ECTS in the 2-year master's degree programme or at least 220 ECTS in the 5-year master's degree programme in accordance with an approved education plan by 1 January.

Applications to change the period in which the these will be completed, and the individual timetable for acceptance and completion, must be determined and approved by the head of the department. Naturally, there is no guarantee that an application will be granted. The decision will be made based on the department's capacity.

## 2 Working on a thesis

- 2.1 The scope of a bachelor's thesis is normally 20 ECTS. The secondary education teacher programme offers a 10-ECTS bachelor's thesis and the bachelor's in biological chemistry offers a 30-ECTS thesis.
- 2.2 Up to three students can collaborate on a bachelor's thesis, while a 30-ECTS master's thesis can be written alone or in groups of up to two students. A 60-ECTS master's thesis must be written alone. The same assessment and grade will be awarded to the members of a group who write their thesis together.
- 2.3 If a group needs to be split up or a student needs to leave the group, irrespective of the reason, the following applies:
  - The student or students who want to split up the group must apply to the course coordinator to do so 1 April. The course coordinator will then conduct individual interviews with each of the group members. The course coordinator will forward the application to the head of department, who will make the final decision.
  - After splitting up, all of the group members will continue to have the same course coordinator and any supervisor for their thesis.
  - Everything the students have done prior to the date the group split up is jointly owned by the entire group. After splitting up the student(s), who wish to do so, will submit their theses separately. In these circumstances, the individual(s) concerned will be assessed separately and receive their own grade. The thesis can build on what the group had done prior to the date it split up.
  - A thesis written after splitting up is owned by the individual(s) who wrote it. This also applies to any program code or products that were produced in connection with the thesis.
  - If there is a need to apply for a deferred deadline, see section 3.7.
- 2.4 Students must prepare a timetable for their work. Students must also write regular status reports as agreed with their course coordinator and any supervisor.
- 2.5 Students are entitled to a minimum of five supervision meetings with their course coordinator, as well as supervision meetings with any external enterprise/institution.
- 2.6 In addition to the regulations, the faculty publishes *Student Guide for Bachelor's and Master's Theses*, which, among other things, provides additional information on the rules. Departments may issue additional guidelines. Also see the course description.

- 2.7 Students are required to familiarise themselves with the applicable HSE regulations in the department prior to starting experimental work.
- 2.8 Students are responsible for the academic content of their thesis.
- 2.9 Sources must be used in accordance with the faculty's guidelines for this, see section 3.4 of *Student Guide for Bachelor's and Master's Theses*. Infringements of this will be regarded as cheating, ref. sections 6-1 and 6-2 of the *Regulations relating to Studies and Examinations at the University of Stavanger*.

### 3 Submission

- 3.1 Bachelor's theses are worth 20 ECTS. Included in those 20 ECTS will be an assessment unit covering the philosophy of science and ethics<sup>4</sup>. See section 1.7 for more details.
- 3.2 Theses must be submitted electronically via Inspera by 14:00 on the deadline date shown in Table 3. It is important to remember to register the title of your thesis.

Thesis:	Bachelor's thesis	Master's thesis, 30 ECTS	Master's thesis, 60 ECTS
Submission deadline for assessment <sup>6</sup>	15 May	15 Jun	15 Jun
Deadline for department to appoint examiners	2 May	1 Jun	1 Jun
Deadline for assessment	6 weeks	12 weeks	12 weeks

Table 3: Overview of deadlines for submission and assessment of bachelor's and master's theses.

<sup>6</sup>Indicates that this should be done electronically in Inspera.

- 3.3 The form Front Page must be a standard front page.
- 3.4 As a rule, theses should be public but can, upon application, be kept confidential, normally for a period of up to 2 years and for a maximum of 5 years, see section 5.5. If the application for confidentiality is approved, the front page/page 1 must be red.
- 3.5 As a rule, a bachelor's or master's thesis can be submitted only once, ref. section 3-10(4) of the *Regulations relating to Studies and Examinations at the University of Stavanger*. If a student wants to improve their grade, they must submit an application for dispensation stating the reasons. The application must be sent to student reception. The application will be considered by the Dean.

In such circumstances, the student cannot be given an opportunity to rework a previously submitted thesis, ref. section 3-10(4a) of the *Regulations relating to Studies and Examinations at the University of Stavanger*. The thesis must have a new topic and title.

**NB!** This will be counted as the second and final attempt. Dispensation cannot be granted for a third attempt.

- 3.6 If a bachelor's or master's thesis is graded F, the student has a deadline of 14 days after the examiner has registered the grade to apply to either rewrite it or submit a new thesis, ref. section 3-10(4b) of the *Regulations relating to Studies and Examinations at the University of Stavanger*:

*"[...] a candidate who has not passed the bachelor's or master's thesis may be granted a second attempt. In such cases, a reworked version of the bachelor's or master's thesis may be submitted, or*

*a completely new thesis may be submitted. This must then be submitted by the specified deadline and will count as a new examination attempt.”*

Applications must be submitted to the faculty and will be considered by the Dean, ref. section 3-10(5) of the *Regulations relating to Studies and Examinations at the University of Stavanger*.

The faculty can give the student up to 1 month to rewrite the thesis.

The option to rewrite the thesis lapses upon expiry of the deadline. In these circumstances, the student will then have to apply to write a new thesis, ref. section 3.5.

If a bachelor's or master's thesis is not submitted by the deadline, it will be registered as 'not met' and count as an attempt. The student will then have to apply to write a new thesis, ref. section 3.5.

Any new attempt must be made in the next ordinary semester for theses.

- 3.7 Students can apply for a deferred submission deadline for a bachelor's or master's thesis based on valid reasons for absence. Applications are considered by the Dean. Deadlines may only be extended for a period proportional to the reasons for the absence (section 3-12 of the *Regulations relating to Studies and Examinations at the University of Stavanger*). According to the rules and conditions for valid reasons for absence, section 2(i), valid reasons for absence can be defined as *other circumstances that make it highly unreasonable for the student to undergo an assessment*. Applications must be documented and be received by the administration no later than 14 days before the submission deadline.

Applications submitted after the specified deadline will be considered if the reason for the application arose after the deadline.

- 3.8 Students requiring special facilitation may be granted up to 1 month's extra time to complete a bachelor's thesis and up to 2 months for a master's thesis. In exceptional cases, further extensions beyond this may be granted. Applications must be submitted by the specified deadlines and must be documented. The Department of Academic Affairs determines the sort of special facilitation that will be granted (section 3-3(1) and (6) of the *Regulations relating to Studies and Examinations at the University of Stavanger*).

## 4 Assessment

- 4.1 The department will appoint external examiners by the deadline stated in Table 3.
- 4.2 The assessment will be based on the submitted thesis and any oral examination taken by the student. Assessments are made by examiners and course coordinators. Course coordinators, examiners and any supervisors take part in oral examinations.
- 4.3 Letter grades will be used. The faculty has its own guidelines for assessing theses. These are provided in *Student Guide for Bachelor's and Master's Theses*.
- 4.4 Assessment deadlines are provided in Table 3.

## 5 Proprietary rights and restricted access

- 5.1 Students own the copyright to their thesis. Students have the right to publish their thesis, or parts thereof, as a separate dissertation or as part of a larger work, or in popularised form in any public publication. However, this does not, without consent, apply to any material that has been made available by an enterprise/institution and which is disclosed directly in the thesis or in an appendix

to it. Correspondingly, the consent of the programme coordinator is required to disclose material that they have made available.

- 5.2 The submitted copies of the thesis along with any drawings, models and apparatus, as well as computer software included as part of or as an appendix to the thesis, are the property of the University of Stavanger. The University of Stavanger is free to make copies of all or parts of the thesis and appendices for teaching and research purposes. The student(s) must be named on each copy as prescribed by the law and good practice.
- 5.3 An enterprise or institution that has contributed to the work is entitled to receive a copy of the thesis and its appendices and is also entitled to be informed of the University of Stavanger's assessment. The enterprise or institution may use the contents of the thesis in its activities.
- 5.4 Any use beyond what is specified in sections 5.1-5.3 must be agreed in an agreement between the University of Stavanger, the enterprise or institution, and the student(s).
- 5.5 Contributing student(s), supervisor(s) and enterprises/institutions can apply to impose restricted access to a thesis, normally for a period of 2 years and a maximum of 5 years. Applications concerning this must show that publication could result in significant harm. A special agreement must be signed concerning restricted access. The faculty has drawn up an *Agreement concerning Restricted Access to Bachelor's and Master's Theses*, which can be used for this.
- 5.6 Applications for restricted access should normally be received by the faculty when a project is formally accepted. Should a need for restricted access arise later, an application for restricted access must be delivered by no later than 14 days before the submission deadline.

Restricted access for periods of up to 2 years are decided by the head of department after consulting the programme coordinator. Applications in excess of this are decided by the Dean.