

Guideline for the Master's thesis

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

Please note that the use of AI (such as ChatGPT) is prohibited in the context of term papers and theses unless it is expressly permitted by the examiners. If AI is not explicitly approved, it remains an unauthorized aid. Compare "[AI/ChatGPT](#)" below.

Time of registration

Registration for the Master's thesis is possible as soon as **60 credit points** (or 30 credit points in the one-year M.A. "Slavery Studies") have been achieved. This should usually be the case during the third (or respectively, second) semester.

Registration and topic

Before registering for the Master's thesis, please agree on a topic with your supervisor, who usually also acts as the first examiner.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Examiners

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

Writing period

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

AI/ChatGPT

Please note that the use of AI (such as ChatGPT) is prohibited in the context of term papers and theses unless it has been explicitly approved by the examiners. If such a permission has not been expressed, AI remains an unauthorized aid. In cases of doubt, the Examination Office may request a sworn declaration. For further information, please consult our website [“Deception and plagiarism”](#).

Changing the topic

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

Withdrawal

There is a **one-off opportunity** to return the topic no later than two months after notification of it by the Examination Office and to document this formally with a written request to withdraw from the Master's thesis registration. In this case, the topic is deemed not to have been issued; there is therefore no failed attempt. Further information on the possibility to withdraw from exams can be found [here](#).

Scope and requirements

The text part of the Master's thesis must contain **at least 120,000 characters** including spaces and notes (or 60 A4 pages) and **may not exceed 200,000 characters** including spaces and notes (or 100 A4 pages), unless otherwise specified in the programme-specific regulations.

For the two-year M.A. programmes "Dependency and Slavery Studies" and "Psychologie", the minimum requirement is 120.000 characters of text and the maximum 240.000. For the one-year M.A. programme "Slavery Studies", the minimums requires 60.000 and the maximum 120.000 characters, including spaces and notes.

The content and form of the thesis must meet the standards of academic work at "Master of Arts" or "Master of Science" level. You should therefore enquire about the specific requirements with your subject-specific study advisor. Please also note that the regulation of registration after reaching the 60 credit points generally allows you to write the Master's thesis **during your studies** and to prepare it thoroughly with the necessary research and readings before registering in the course of the third semester.

Cover sheet/title page

To ensure that all necessary information appears on the cover sheet of the Master's thesis, please follow this template: [Sample cover sheet](#) (DOCX) (depending on whether you are pursuing a "Bachelor of Arts" or a "Bachelor of Science", please cross out the degree that does not apply to your course of studies). Please note that it is not allowed to place the University's official seal or the Faculty's logo on this page or anywhere else. The copyright is held by the University and the Faculty respectively; unauthorized use may result in legal consequences.

Submission and Declaration of Academic Integrity

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

The thesis must be accompanied by a written declaration (Declaration of Academic Integrity) in which you affirm that you have written the thesis independently, have not used any sources and aids other than those specified, have marked quotations and have submitted identical electronic and written copies.

Please attach a declaration, dated and with your original signature (no digital but a hand-written signature), both in the printed as well as the digital version as the last page of your thesis ([download Declaration of Academic Integrity here](#)). This declaration must be submitted together with the other parts of the thesis, such as the cover sheet, the bibliographies and any appendices, firmly attached to the rest of the thesis (no loose sheets!).

1. Digital submission:

Please send the digital version as a text file (Word document or PDF, assembled in one file) from your University of Bonn e-mail address to the Examination Office of the Faculty of Arts or use the [contact form](#) (12 MB maximum; if necessary, please send the file to philpa@uni-bonn.de, e.g., if you are not able to adhere to the maximum size due to extensive imagery). The handwritten and signed Declaration of Academic Integrity must be inserted as a scanned document into the thesis as the last page. This file of your thesis will be forwarded by the Examination Office to the respective two examiners; the submission deadline is met upon receipt of the electronically sent form at the Examination Office. As we have already received the document from you in electronic form via email/contact form, you **no longer need to send us a CD-ROM or USB stick with the thesis** until further notice.

2. Submission of the print version:

In addition to the digital submission, your thesis must be submitted to us in triplicate by mail or by delivering it to the Examination Office yourself. Please submit each of these copies in bound form (adhesive, spiral or hardcover binding is the norm). Please also note that the indexes and appendices as well as the cover sheet and the **self-signed** Declaration of Academic Integrity are part of the thesis and must therefore be firmly bound.

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

In order to do so, you have two different options:

Please either send the three copies by post to the following address:

University of Bonn

Faculty of Arts

Examination Office of the Faculty of Arts (Office of the Bachelor/Master Examination Board)

Poppelsdorfer Allee 31-33 (**Please note: Posting your theses on-site via the mailbox is not possible!**)

53115 Bonn

Alternatively, you can hand in your print copies in person at the Examination Office at Maximilianstraße 22 (3rd floor). Please feel free to do so during the [opening hours of the Examination Office](#) or by booking an individual appointment during the office hour of the clerk responsible for your subject via the [contact form](#).

*** Please note that the mailboxes at the postal address and visiting address alike have insufficient capacities for you to submit your theses there! ***

Exceeding the submission deadline

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

Repetition

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

De-registration

The examination procedure is only completed when it has been determined whether it was successful or unsuccessful. You must at least stay enrolled until you handed in your thesis. Students who have not re-registered, e.g. in order to save the associated fees, although they are not expected to know their examination result at the end of the previous semester are therefore taking a risk, especially as their uni-ID will be switched off and they will no longer have access to BASIS and their transcripts.

If you have failed your last exam(s) and have therefore unfortunately not yet obtained your degree, you must re-enroll in order to be able to make another examination attempt. If you have already missed the set re-registration deadline at this point, late re-registration at the Student Registry in accordance with Section 16 of the Enrolment Regulations can only take place later if the missed deadline is excused in writing for an important reason and proof of this is provided. You cannot register for the last outstanding exam before you are re-enrolled.

The Examination Office recommends enrollment until you have been informed about the results of your last exam. As soon as you have successfully passed the final exam, you can de-register your enrollment and will be entitled to a partial refund.

For further information concerning deregistration upon request, please contact the Student Registry. You can find more information [here](#).

Underlying provisions

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

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

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