



Guidelines and instructions for degree projects

- in the technical education at Uppsala
University

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Common guidelines and instructions for degree projects in all technical education. Technical education refers to engineering, bachelor's and master's programmes organised under the Educational Board of Engineering (TUN). The guidelines are a complement to the syllabuses. The guidelines do not cover the course Independent work on the five-year Master's Programmes in Engineering.

The guidelines are established by the Educational Board of Engineering. This version replaces previous guidelines (TEKNAT 2003/21, TEKNAT 2008/326, TEKNAT 2012/4 and TEKNAT 2016/25).

1. Purpose

The main purpose of these guidelines is to ensure the quality of the degree projects of the various programmes and to guarantee the legal certainty of the students. Quality assurance applies at both programme and departmental level.

2. Background

According to the Higher Education Ordinance, a degree project must always be included in a degree and it must normally finish the education. The degree project is a comprehensive course that is normally conducted individually but always examined individually. It is therefore of particular importance with clear procedures and divisions of responsibility with the aim of ensuring that all approved students meet given course objectives.

3. Form and execution of degree projects

3.1. Guidelines and regulations

These guidelines entail a uniform management of degree projects on all technical degree programmes at Uppsala University. Uniform guidelines with a clear division of responsibilities are particularly important for those who supervise and subject-review degree projects from different programmes.

All examinations are, from a legal point of view, 'exercise of public authority against an individual'. The guidelines are therefore designed to ensure legal certainty for students.

It is important that a degree project is characterized by technical relevance to the program in which the degree project is included. In addition to the syllabus, there may be program-specific procedures within the framework of TUN's guidelines. The programme director is responsible for this.

In addition to these guidelines, there are also instructions from the Student Services Unit for the administration of degree projects in the engineering programmes (see Appendix 1).

3.2. Place of performance and credits

Degree projects can be carried out at institutions, at other higher education institutions, at companies, authorities and other workplaces, within or outside Sweden. Departments should be involved in subject review and supervision of degree projects.

The guideline is that the student must be registered for the degree project specified in the study plan. For special reasons, registration may need to be made on another degree project, for example at another higher education institution in Sweden, and then the programme manager can credit the degree project if there is not a significant difference.

3.3. Agreement and Confidentiality of Degree Projects

The thesis report is a basis for examination and therefore a public document to be archived at Uppsala University. Usually the reports are published openly, but there may be reasons for delaying open publication through confidentiality agreements. If the student or project owner sees such a need, examples of cooperation agreements are available at the university.

Common purposes of agreements are, in addition to regulating ownership of results and issues of confidential information, also to regulate issues relating to working conditions and access to materials. Contracts may be required for both external and internal theses. For degree projects carried out within research groups at the university, there may in some cases be a need to treat degree projects confidentially in order to protect results that may lead to patents. There is no support in the The Public Access to Information and Secrecy Act for this procedure, which is why it is particularly important that there are signed agreements between the project owner and the student. It is important that the student is not denied the opportunity to present their work during the examination or that the student's presentation is delayed to protect the results. If relevant, a distinction should be made between whether information is shared during the course of the work or whether it is the report itself that may need to be made confidential and for how long.

All reports are archived in DiVA (Digital Scientific Archive). In case of confidentiality, the reports are not searchable externally for the agreed period of time.

Agreements must be signed before the start of the project. If a confidentiality agreement has been concluded, it may be reconsidered once the work has been completed. Contracts for degree projects must be recorded.

3.4. Requirements for independence

The degree project is an independent project but can also be allowed in groups of two. In the report(s), the work of the individual participants must be presented sufficiently well for individual examination to be possible. It is also required that each student conducts his or her own oral presentation of the work and then clearly states his or her own contribution (the presentations may be at the same time).

3.5. Responsibility for the acquisition of degree projects

Normally, it is the student himself/herself who is responsible for finding a suitable assignment for his/her degree project. The assignment must be approved by the examiner. If a student, who has been admitted to a degree programme and who meets the eligibility requirements for a degree project, fails to find a relevant degree project, the examiner shall help to find a degree project and a supervisor.

3.6. Project plan

The process for the completion of a thesis shall be specified in a project plan. In addition to a description of the content and objectives of the project, the project plan shall also include a timetable with timelines for submissions of written report, oral presentation and opposition, as well as an opportunity for any residual examination. The project plan can be revised during the project. Revision is decided by the examiner after consultation between the student, supervisor and subject reader. According to the University's guidelines for generative AI, restrictions on use of generative AI in teaching and/or examination must be clearly stated in written information. To ensure that students, supervisors and subject readers are aware of any restrictions on the use of generative AI, such restrictions shall be stated in the project plan.

4. Division of responsibilities and tasks

For each degree project, there must be an examiner, a subject reader and at least one supervisor.

4.1. Examiner

The examiner is ultimately responsible for the course Degree Project and is appointed in the same way as other examiners according to current rules of procedure. The examiner for the degree project is normally the programme director or is appointed on a proposal from this. The examiner shall ensure that the degree project is in accordance with the objectives, scope and main field of study of the course and meets the other requirements set out in the syllabus.

The examiner is responsible for;

- provide the students with information on the conditions for completion of the course,
- formulate limitations for the use of generative AI within the course,
- assess eligibility for admission,
- establish the project plan, including, where appropriate, its revision,
- obtaining and pass on any agreements,
- appointing subject readers and provide information on the conditions of the assignment;
- that supervisor undertakes the assignment in accordance with these guidelines
- organising and examining presentation and opposition;
- examination of the written report;

- that plagiarism review takes place,
- when possible, the report will be made available in DiVA,
- evaluate the course once a year.

The examiner may delegate parts of his/her duties to one or more coordinators. This does not relieve the examiner of the overall responsibility. Examination cannot be delegated.

4.2. Subject reader

The subject reader is scientifically responsible for ensuring that the degree project maintains a sufficiently high level within the main field of study, has sufficient scope and that the course objectives are met. When the subject reader is appointed, competence must be decisive and not department affiliation. The subject reader is appointed by the examiner and may receive further instructions from the examiner on what can be considered suitable theses within the course in question.

For second-cycle degree projects, the subject reader must normally be a teacher or researcher with a PhD and, unless there are special reasons, be employed at Uppsala University or SLU. For degree projects at undergraduate level, the subject reader does not need to have a PhD if the person is still the one who best meets the programme's requirements for expertise and must, unless there are special reasons, be employed at Uppsala University. The subject examiner can take advice from subject-savvy persons within and outside the department.

The subject reader has the responsibility to;

- approve the project plan and ensure the achievement of its objectives;
- continuously follow the student's work based on the project plan,
- scientifically review and endorse the preliminary written report,
- participate in and, in consultation with the examiner, assess the oral presentation,
- approve the final version of the written report.

Assignment as subject reader is for an individual student valid for a maximum of 18 months for degree projects comprising 45 credits, 12 months for degree projects comprising 30 credits and 9 months for degree projects comprising 15 credits. After that, the subject reader needs to be re-appointed (may be the same).

4.3. Supervisor

A formally responsible supervisor must be present for each individual degree project. The supervisor undertakes responsibility for ensuring that the student receiving supervision and access to materials, resources and data during the degree project. The supervisor is normally active at the workplace where the work is carried out and has competence in the area in question.

The supervisor is responsible for:

- in consultation with the student, draw up a proposal for a project plan,

- organise and implement the ongoing guidance,
- provide feedback on the written report,
- inform themselves about current conditions regarding plagiarism and the use of generative AI.

Assignment as supervisor for an individual student is valid for a maximum of 18 months for degree projects comprising 45 credits, 12 months for degree projects comprising 30 credits and 9 months for degree projects comprising 15 credits, but can then be renewed if necessary if those involved wish.

4.4 Student Services Unit

The Student Services Unit at the Office of Science and Technology is responsible for:

- providing general information with reference to the guidelines on the Student website at the Faculty of Science and Technology,
- provide a uniform template for the front page and abstract of the report,
- provide form for application from student, approval from supervisor and subject reader and decision from examiner
- for the engineering programmes, adopt, register and report results for the student on the course and publish/archive the student's report in DiVA,
- refer to the current model agreements (section 3.3) and register signed agreements for the engineering programmes;

In addition to these guidelines, there are also instructions from the Student Services Unit for the administration of the course at the engineering programmes (see Appendix 1).

5. Examination requirements

The basic rule is that at least two people participate in the assessment of each degree project.

In addition, the following applies:

- supervisor and subject reader must be two different persons;
- the subject reader and examiner must be two different persons,
- The supervisor and the examiner may be the same person.

5.1. Presentation and opposition

Oral presentation with opposition in the presence of the examiner and subject reader is mandatory. Each student should further oppose on a thesis, normally within the same program. Normally, the presentation takes place at Uppsala University and is public. The student shall be given the opportunity for presentation and opposition within the time period of the course. For confidential theses, oral presentation and opposition must take place within the framework of current cooperation agreements with the project owner.

The written examination is made through a written report. The report shall contain a popular science summary of at least one page and the front page of the report shall follow a given template. It should be clear which and in what way aids, such as generative AI, have been used in the report writing. It must also be stated whether there are, and if so which, parts of the work that the student has not carried out/contributed with.

5.2. If the thesis cannot be approved

If not all compulsory parts have been successfully completed according to the project plan's timetable, including an opportunity for a residual examination, the student may be given the grade Fail if this is supported by the course's learning outcomes.

When giving a degree project the grade Fail, written justification must be provided, with an indication of what the student needs to do further in order to be approved. This may include that the student needs to do a completely new degree project.

In order to be re-examined after a failed grade, the student must be re-registered. This includes creating and establishing a new time and project plan. That plan shall include the elements set out in the written statement of reasons for the rejection. If the new timetable exceeds the time for the assignments as supervisors and subject readers, these need to be reappointed for the extra time or for a new full assignment period.

Supervisors and subject readers may be the same as before.

5.3. Cheating and plagiarism

The examiner is responsible for ensuring that students receive information regarding cheating and plagiarism.

Uppsala University uses an anti-plagiarism service. The examiner is responsible for assessing plagiarism.

For confidential theses, procured plagiarism service cannot be used.

5.4. Generative AI

Uppsala University's Guidelines for the use of generative AI in teaching and examination (Established by the Vice-Chancellor 2024-11-26, UFV 2023/2129) invite teachers and students to explore together the opportunities and challenges that technology brings in a positive spirit. According to the University's guidelines for generative AI, restrictions on use in teaching and/or examination must be clearly stated in written information.

The examiner decides on and informs about any restrictions. The limitations should be at programme level and justified based on the course objectives and documented in the thesis project plan. The use of generative AI shall be reported in the written report.

Please note that confidentiality agreements always apply, whereas the use of generative AI services almost always involves uncontrolled dissemination of information, thus violating any confidentiality agreements.

6. Publishing and archiving

All degree projects must be registered (archived) in DiVA after the work has been approved by the examiner. For theses that are not covered by confidentiality, the student decides whether the report is published in DiVA or not. It is strongly recommended that reports that are not covered by confidentiality or have a delayed publication time are also published in DiVA, i.e. become public, as this increases the dissemination and visibility of the work.

7. Annex

Annex 1: Instructions from the Student Services Unit.