

Master's Thesis Composition Guidelines

1. Objective

The Master's thesis is an independent piece of work undertaken by the student on an automotive topic of interest to the institute. It must be presented according to scientific conventions and principles.

2. Timeframe

The choice of topic and title of the Master's thesis may be made at the beginning of the period of postgraduate studies and as such, enables the student to be in a position to selection requisite areas of emphasis in their studies accordingly.

A minimum period, that is the length of the fourth semester of studies, will be made available to the student for the composition of their Master's thesis.

At the very latest, the final version of the Master's thesis is to be submitted as two hard-bound copies when the student registers for the final board exam.

The academic supervisor is required to appraise the thesis as quickly as possible once it has been submitted.

The student will only be permitted to sit the final board exam once a positive final mark has been awarded for their Master's thesis.

3. Topic Proposal

A Master's thesis topic proposal can be made by a student, a member of faculty and/or a university associate based in industry. This proposal must contain the anticipated schedule for the composition of the work. The topic proposal and schedule functions as an indicator of the interest and motivation of the student and also serves as a basis of communication between student and supervisor.

The topic proposal must contain the following:

- Description of the topic and its relevance to the field;
- Research question(s);
- Planned methodological approach;
- Planned structure of the work;
- Expected number of chapters and their length;
- Preliminary list of literature;
- Schedule for completion of thesis (including milestones).

The topic proposal will be submitted to the faculty members of the Institute of Automotive Engineering for discussion and approval. The proposal must be authorized by the Head of the Degree Programme, who will also assign a faculty supervisor. Once approved, the thesis must adhere to the topic proposal.

4. Supervision

- Supervisors shall be lecturers on the degree programme, external course heads or, in exceptional cases, other experts who have knowledge and experience in scientific work and publication and who can demonstrate a relevant track record. Which persons are eligible to act as supervisor will be decided by the Head of Degree Programme on the basis of objective criteria.
- A plan of progression and a time schedule shall be worked out between the supervisor and the student, and if necessary with the companies involved. The supervisor must make sure that the topic is chosen in such a way that it can be realistically completed within the available time frame; he/she must also make sure that the topic is suitable for demonstrating the student's qualification.
- The supervisor must be regularly informed about the progress of the work by the student. In general, the diploma thesis must be written independently by the student. The supervisor must inform the student as soon as he/she realises that the thesis may not be sufficient for a pass. Advice may also be given by other members of the teaching and research staff or by the Head of Degree Programme.
- Following the title page, every diploma and Master's thesis must contain a German and an English summary (abstract). It must also include a table of contents and a bibliography. A sworn declaration of academic honesty stating that the thesis was written by the student him/herself and has not been submitted elsewhere for a similar purpose must also be provided. The thesis could be written in German or English. Upon agreement with the Head of Degree Programme, the thesis may also be written in another language if at least the supervisor speaks that language.
- The same resources that are available during regular studies are also available while working on the Master's thesis. Students are not be entitled to request special resources.

5. Assessment and time period of assessment

- The Master's thesis is assessed on the basis of a catalogue of criteria, which is made known to students at the beginning of the final semester.
- Catalogues of criteria allow a comprehensible and transparent assessment of the thesis by the student's supervisor.
- The time period of assessment shall be set to ensure that students have sufficient time to write the thesis, assessors have sufficient time for assessment and, finally, after submission of the thesis, students have sufficient time to prepare for the final examination.
- Dates will be announced at the beginning of each semester.

6. Grading and retakes

- Master's theses are evaluated and graded by the assigned supervisor.
- Master's theses are graded in accordance with the Austrian marking scheme, i.e. with the marks "Sehr gut" (excellent) (1), "Gut" (good) (2), "Befriedigend" (satisfactory) (3) and "Genügend" (pass) (4), and "Nicht genügend" (fail) (5).
- With regard to assessment and retake options, the regulations for course examinations shall apply. If a thesis has been assessed as a fail, the student shall be granted adequate time to rectify his/her mistakes. A new topic or a new supervisor may be chosen in justified exceptional cases.

7. Non-disclosure of thesis

Upon submission of an academic work, the author has the right to request that the submitted work not be made publically accessible for up to five years after submission. The Head of Degree Programme shall grant this request if the student is able to demonstrate that important legal or economic interests of the student are at risk.