



Guide to the Master Thesis and Final Exam in English

Dr. Simone Heller-Andrist and Dr. des. Martin Mühlheim

This guide is intended to help Master students of English plan and organize their Master Thesis. It is not a legally binding document, and students are advised to consult the official forms and regulations as well (cf. <http://www.phil.uzh.ch/de/studium/studentenservices/abschluss/master.html>).

The Master Thesis

1 Overview and Preliminary Steps

Generally, students should plan to write the Master Thesis in the final two semesters of their Master studies; students wishing to complete their Master degree in four semesters, for instance, should plan to be writing their Master Thesis in the third and fourth semester of their Master studies.

In addition, students need to decide whom they would like to be their supervisor. (Note that a Master Thesis can be supervised by either a Professor or a *Privatdozent/Privatdozentin*.) Ideally, you should previously have attended a – Bachelor or Master – Seminar with the person whom you would like to be your supervisor. Moreover, it is advisable to contact the instructor early on to find out whether he or she is willing to supervise the Thesis topic that you have in mind.

2 Booking the Module

Together with your supervisor, you need to fill in and sign the form “Buchung der Masterarbeit” (available at <http://www.phil.uzh.ch/de/studium/studentenservices/abschluss/master.html>). Note:

- There can be a maximum of twelve months between the *Stichtag* or *Buchungsdatum*, and the submission of the *Gutachten* (by your supervisor) to Faculty.
- Provided that you hand in the Thesis by the *Abgabedatum* indicated on the form, your supervisor will correct and grade the Thesis in time for the module to be completed in the semester corresponding to the *Abgabedatum* (e.g. February 15 → Spring Semester; September 15 → Fall Semester).
- The *Gutachten* date should be either January 10 (for those wishing to graduate in the Fall Semester) or July 10 (for those wishing to graduate in the Spring Semester).

NOTE: We recommend that you choose an *Abgabedatum* early in the semester (e.g. the ones indicated above: February 15 for the Spring Semester, September 15 for the Fall Semester), and strongly advise against an *Abgabedatum* late in the semester to ensure there is time still to deal with any unexpected problems before the graduation deadline passes.

Once you and your supervisor have completed and signed the “Buchung der Masterarbeit” form, please take it to the English Department’s Advisor of Studies, who will stamp the form and make a copy of it for the English Department’s internal records. Please make a copy of the document for your personal records as well. Once this is done, the Advisor of Studies will send the original form to the *Studiendekanat*. The *Studiendekanat* book the module, not the English Department.

The Final Exams: 90 ECTS Major students only

1 Preconditions for Booking

At the beginning of the semester in which you would like to book the Final Exam module, you need to have completed – or at least booked – all the required modules in all of your subjects (including the Master Thesis). The Final Exam module should therefore normally be booked in the semester in which you expect to graduate.

2 Booking

The module is booked like all other modules during the normal booking period. Please check your records carefully before the booking period ends to ensure everything is correct, since **a booking of this module cannot be made once the booking deadline has passed**. Details about the booking period are available on the university website: <http://www.students.uzh.ch/booking/fristen.html>

3 Types of Exam

The Final Exam for the 90 ECTS *Fachformate* in English is an oral exam. You will be examined by your thesis supervisor. The content will initially focus on your thesis, which should be submitted in good time before the examination takes place. Please meet with your examiner to discuss the remaining content of the examination.

4 What Happens If...

... I fail a course in my last semester before the exams?

- This does not affect the Final Exam, which can go ahead as planned. If, however, you have submitted an application to graduate to the *Studiendekanat*, this must be withdrawn immediately in writing.

... my Master Thesis is not accepted?

- Under these circumstances, the Final Exam will still take place, but may have a slightly different emphasis. Please discuss the details with your examiner.

... I fail the exams?

- The Final Exam is a compulsory module, and can therefore be repeated only once. Students who fail the Final Exam twice will not be able to graduate. NOTE: Not attending or not completing the Final Exam counts as a failed attempt, unless the exams are cancelled, e.g. on the basis of a doctor’s certificate.