



## OULU SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE, UNIVERSITY OF OULU DIPLOMA WORK (MSc THESIS) GUIDELINES

### 1. GENERAL INFORMATION ON THE MASTER'S THESIS (DIPLOMA WORK)

- Master's thesis i.e. diploma work is a research-based (artistic or theoretical) study unit included in the advanced level studies of the master's (architect's) degree. The extent of the thesis is 30 credits (30 ECTS).
- The diploma work is carried out individually by the student. Responsibility for the quality and outcome of the work always remains with the author. The Supervisor ensures that the work fulfils the minimum requirements set for diploma projects.
- The language of the diploma work is Finnish, Swedish or English.
- The diploma work is a public document. Any confidential information - commercial or professional - must be excluded from the final version of the diploma work submitted for evaluation.
- The diploma work is carried out as an individual project. Team work of two authors is also possible, in which case each author must be able to define and demonstrate his / her own share of the work, and to individually complete a specified part of the team's work into his / her own Master's thesis.
- Exceptionally, the student may present a project or a research made to order, or a realized project as his/her master's thesis. If the project has been made during an employment the student has to submit a certificate signed by the employer, stating that the student has the right to present the project as his / her diploma work, and furthermore, describing the student's personal role and responsibilities within the project.
- Commissioned projects presented as one's master's thesis will be evaluated by the School of Architecture as a final thesis only. The

Faculty will not authorize or be responsible of the project in any other purposes. The Oulu School of Architecture may forbid using the name of the School or the supervising professor in any other connection except the submitted thesis.

- If a realized project or a project made by order is presented as a student's diploma work, the drawings and documents made earlier for the commission are adequate, when edited and updated to meet up with the diploma work requirements and guidelines. Possible changes and additions must always be consulted with the supervisor before the final presentation.

The individual project can be approved as one's final thesis once by a single university only.



## **2. ABOUT CHOOSING THE SUBJECT AND CONFIRMATION OF THE TOPIC**

- Choose a subject for your diploma work. It is advisable to discuss the choice of topic with a faculty member whose teaching subject your work suits in, before having the topic of your thesis officially confirmed by the School's Degree Program Committee.
- The School's Degree Program Committee confirms the supervisor and topic of your thesis based on your application (*Application for diploma thesis subject*). It is advisable to submit your application at the beginning of your diploma work process. The application is to be submitted before the presentation of your diploma work in the diploma seminar no later than one week before the meeting of the Degree Program Committee.
- The topic of the diploma work may be confirmed as soon as you have successfully completed all additional studies required for the master's degree (i.e. 90 ECTS of the architect's degree studies).
- Attach a short description of the contents, or the list of contents of your diploma work (maximum length one A4), a copy of your transcript of records, as well as suggestion for the supervisor and the possible tutor for your thesis to the application for the confirmation of the topic. Submit your application <https://www.oulu.fi/architecture/node/5921> by email to the Faculty service point [study.architecture@oulu.fi](mailto:study.architecture@oulu.fi)

## **3. SUPERVISION**

- Select a supervisor for your diploma work. The supervisor may be one of the professors of the School or a person holding a doctoral degree and teaching the related subject. Discuss your thesis subject with your supervisor before submitting your application for confirmation of the topic of your thesis.



- For well justified reasons you may suggest a second tutor for your diploma work, regarding that your topic is clearly composed of themes which belong to the fields of study of two teaching units of the School.
- You may also consult other experts for your diploma work. The experts can be members of the teaching staff of the Oulu School of Architecture or external professionals. The possible experts consulted during the diploma thesis process do not have to be mentioned in the application for confirmation of the topic. The experts consulted will not be paid for their time.
- In the diploma course of the spring semester the school organizes a row of instruction sessions for its diploma students. It is recommended that students attend these sessions.

#### **4. REPRESENTATION AND EXTENT OF THESIS**


- The diploma works made for the Oulu School of Architecture can be classified in two different categories: illustrated design projects and written thesis. The maximum extent of a written thesis is 200 000 characters (spacing included). Exceeding the maximum number of characters requires your supervisor's approval. The text part of a design-based thesis may not exceed 50 000 characters (spacing included). The number of characters of your thesis is to be registered in the abstract.
- The detailed elaboration of your diploma work depends on the topic and extent of your thesis, as well as your views and attitude as the author.
- The representation and form of the diploma work has not been precisely defined, thus you need to consider these issues to let the representation support the contents of your work, in order to be clear and easily readable. For the same reason the minimum font size of the body text is 11 pt.
- A design-based diploma work is to include a written description, concluding the objectives and aims, location factors as well as the general and specific principles of the overall solution.
- Attach an abstract to your thesis.

#### **5. CITATION AND REFERENCING**

- In your diploma work do follow a clear system of using citations and references for written sources and illustrations (photographs, drawings etc.). This concerns both design projects and written thesis. Borrowing somebody else's texts, diagrams, pictures etc. without authorization, or presenting them as one's own, is considered as

illegal plagiarism. There are several styles for citation, and you have the freedom to choose which style you will use in your work. Your supervisor can advise you in the selection of citations and references. You can have your text proofread in the MOT application published on the University of Oulu web site, <https://mot.kielikone.fi/mot/ouyobooks/netmot?motportal=80>

## 6. WRITTEN MATURITY TEST

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- In the obligatory maturity test the student presents intimate knowledge of the field of the diploma thesis work and demonstrates ability of communicating in the language of his /her Master's thesis.
  - The maturity test required by the Finnish legislation (Universities Act) demonstrates the student's writing and oral language skills (Finnish, Swedish or English). At the Oulu School of Architecture, the maturity test is integrated with the written part of the diploma work.
  - The recommended extent of the maturity test is approximately three (3) pages. The supervisor of the work inspects the contents and the language of the written description of the thesis.
  - The maturity test is a written exam which evaluates the students command of the research topic and proficiency in Finnish, Swedish or English. In order to be accepted the student's maturity test must meet the linguistic criteria set for the degree level.

<https://www.oulu.fi/forstudents/laws-and-decrees>

## 6. SUBMISSION OF THE DIPLOMA WORK FOR REVIEW

- The thesis is to be submitted in the Laturi system for review and approval. <http://laturi.fi>
- Before uploading your thesis in Laturi, you must have your work approved by your supervisor, and register for the diploma seminar and announce the final title of your diploma work in weboodi. Uploading the thesis in Laturi is possible only after registration.
- The general instructions for submitting the electronic thesis are published on the Laturi web sites both in Finnish and in English at <http://libguides.oulu.fi/theses>.
- Academic theses are public documents. When submitting your thesis in Laturi, select the level of publicity of your diploma work between the two options:



- *You wish that your thesis and its abstract will be publicly available for browsing, printing and saving on the internet*
- *You do not wish that your thesis is made publicly available on the internet*
- It is recommended by the School of Architecture the thesis to be publicly reviewable in the open access repository of the University of Oulu, in order to ease publishing e.g. in news on recent diploma projects.
- When approved by your supervisor, submit your thesis in Laturi two (2) weeks before the final presentation of your work. The evaluators will download your work from Laturi for assessment.
- Please notice that after submission in Laturi no alterations or corrections can be made in your thesis.
- The maximum size of a document (drawings/plans) to be submitted in the Laturi is one GB (1024 MB). The maximum size document the Urkund system accepts is 200 MB (written text / written thesis).
- If problems should occur when you are downloading your work in Laturi, contact the helpdesk: [laturi@oulu.fi](mailto:laturi@oulu.fi)

## **7. DIPLOMA SEMINAR, PRESENTATION PROCEDURE**

- Should there be problems when signing up for the diploma seminar in weboodi, please contact [sudy.architecture\(at\)oulu.fi](mailto:sudy.architecture(at)oulu.fi)
- The diploma work presentations are open and public acts of learning i.e. diploma seminars, which are primarily organized in the Agora lecture hall. All participants of the seminar have the right to take part in the discussion after the student's presentation.
- Use the data projector for displaying your diploma work in the seminar. The maximum length of the oral presentation is 20 minutes, after which you are expected to answer to the questions made by the audience. After the questions and discussion, two members of the diploma jury, the other being your supervisor, will give their evaluation speeches.
- In situations of force major (such as prohibition to travel due to pregnancy), the student may present his / her diploma work, and receive comments and evaluation remotely. In such cases the student should agree upon the arrangements with the chair of the evaluation board in advance.
- Diploma seminars are organized altogether five times during the academic year: twice in the autumn and three times in the spring semester.

- Assessment of the thesis takes place in the evaluation meeting after the seminar.

## 8. DIPLOMA WORKS EXHIBITION

- Diploma works exhibition is arranged in connection of each diploma seminar. In addition to the submission of the diploma thesis in the Laturi system, all the panels and the possible scale model of a design-based project, or a copy of the research-based thesis are to be publicly displayed in the diploma exhibition one (1) week before the diploma seminar. The staff will instruct the students on the diploma exhibition arrangements in the school's exhibition hall.



- The following information is to be mentioned in all the parts (exhibition panels) of the diploma work:
  - word "diploma work", the title of the work, and the name of the teaching unit (Oulu School of Architecture, University of Oulu)
  - title or name of the thesis
  - name of the author
  - names of the nominated supervisors
  - number of the part of the exhibit (panel number / numbers of the parts of a written thesis)
  - date and signature (of the author)

## 9. EVALUATION

- The evaluation of the diploma thesis works is carried out immediately after the seminar in a closed meeting of the evaluation committee.
- The evaluation committee consists of the architect members of the School's Degree Programme Committee, and the supervisors of the thesis. The evaluation is prepared by the preparation team appointed by the Head of the Degree Program Committee, composed of the supervisor(s), and one member of the committee, appointed by the Chair.
- The evaluation committee members present constitute a quorum, when the chair person and three (3) committee members with the right for evaluation are present.
- In the evaluation meeting the members of the evaluation committee give their grades in numeral form. First two nominated persons, the other being the supervisor, present their own proposals for the grade. If the thesis has two supervisors, they give their grade proposal commonly. If needed, the grade will be discussed commonly, after which the other members of the evaluation committee give their grades. Absent members, the supervisors excluded, may not submit their grades in writing to the meeting.

The scale of evaluation is the following:

5 = erinomainen / *excellent*

4 = kiitettävä / *very good*

3= hyvä/*good*

2= tyydyttävä /*satisfactory*

1 = välttävä /*sufficient*

Fail. The performance does not meet up with any of the requirements set to the exercise. The task has either been misunderstood or performed in such an inadequate manner that the outcome of the exercise cannot be approved.



Sufficient (1) 'Sufficient' is the lowest grading for an approved performance. The objectives of the task have been achieved partially. There are numerous lacks in the processing of the task. A student's performance evaluated as 'sufficient' may through further guidance of the student be improved and reassessed as 'satisfactory' (2).

Satisfactory (2) The performance fulfils most of the objectives set to the exercise. The accomplishment has qualities in its overall approach, but also contains lacks. Additionally, a performance, which has credits in its parts and details, can also be assessed as satisfactory.

Good (3) What comes to the overall outcome and details of the whole, the performance fulfils the objectives set to the exercise. The grade 'good' is the starting point in assessment of diploma works.

All the documents in a performance assessed with the grade 'good' are clear and sufficiently comprehensive from the point of view of evaluation. The contents and structure of a written work must be coherent and logical. The text must be fluent and the use of citations and references appropriate.

Very good (4) The performance not only fulfils the objectives set to the task, but also contains additional values, such as many-sided processing of the task, and / or the performance in some areas exceeds the requirements set to the task. In a design-based project all the documents are to be informative and versatile. The outcome contains a personal view or a profoundly studied design documentation. In a written performance the processing of the subject is versatile. The outcome contains a personal view or a profoundly studied research documentation.

Excellent (5) The performance both fulfils all the above listed requirements and clearly exceeds the level of objectives set to the task. The contents and display of the performance are exceptionally of a high level. The contents of the task have been

illustrated from various aspects and the outcome includes a personal point of view.



- The grade is given as integral numbers (1–5) by each member of the evaluation committee. The final verbal grade is based on the average of the given numeric grades.
- Should the numeral average of the grades be on the median of two grades, the grade will be rounded up to the nearest full grade.
- The thesis supervisor provides a written evaluation of the work, to be supplied to the student together with the degree certificate (diploma).
- The evaluation discussion of a diploma work is based not only on the outcome of the work, but the aims and objectives set to the work, command of approaches and solutions, representation and other possible specific aspects.
- As soon as the evaluation committee has completed its work, the students who have presented their diploma works in the respective diploma seminar are invited to the meeting of the evaluation committee to hear the grades of their work announced personally to each student by the chair of the committee.

## 10. REDRESS OF THE EVALUATION

- The student has the right to demand for a redress of the final grade within fourteen (14) days from the evaluation of his / her diploma thesis work. The demand is to be addressed to the Board of Examiners of the University of Oulu within 14 days of having been informed of the decision.
  - <https://www oulu fi/forstudents/board-of-examiners>
  - [https://www oulu fi/external/education\\_regulations.pdf](https://www oulu fi/external/education_regulations.pdf)

## 11. DIPLOMA APPLICATION

- Once all the required courses have been completed and added in the study register, the student may apply for graduation and your Diploma in the OSAT-system <https://osat oulu fi>. Attach your approved Personal Study Plan to the application
- Submit your application at the latest one week before the end of the month, in which you wish to graduate.
- The day of graduation is always the last day of the month, regardless of the week day, therefore the day of graduation is not the same day when you will receive your Diploma.



## 12. RECEIVING THE DIPLOMA (degree certificate)

- The Diploma Work (Master's Thesis) must be approved 14 days before awarding the Diploma (degree certificate).
- The Diplomas are given in the common, festive Diploma Conferment Ceremony arranged by the Faculty. In case you would not join the ceremony, you can collect your Diploma from the date of the ceremony onwards at the KOMPASSI service point of the faculty.
- Please, notice that the Diploma can be awarded only to students who are registered as present at the University



Study Programme Board  
Oulu School of Architecture