

**UNIVERSITY OF OULU**  
**OULU SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE, MASTER'S THESIS INSTRUCTIONS**  
**FOR INTERNATIONAL MASTER'S DEGREE STUDENTS**  
**25.3.2015**

## **1. GENERAL**

### **Master's thesis**

The Master's thesis i.e. the diploma work (artistic or scientific) is a research based study unit included in the advanced level studies of the architect's degree. The extent of the thesis is 30 credits (30 ECTS), which equals to the study load of one academic term.

The topic selected for the diploma thesis work is regularly linked to the subjects within the field of orientation the student has chosen for master level studies. The diploma topic application of the student is approved by the Education Board of the faculty.

The language of the diploma work is Finnish, Swedish or English. The diploma presentation and the seminar discussion are held in the language of the student's thesis.

### **A public document**

The diploma thesis is a public document. Any confidential information - commercial or professional - must be excluded from the final version of the diploma thesis submitted for evaluation.

### **Individual or team work**

The diploma work is carried out as an individual project on a topic, which is related to a specific subject of the degree studies in architecture. Team work is also possible, in which case each author of the project 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 diploma thesis.

### **Realized project as diploma thesis**

In some specific cases the student may present a project or a research made by order or a realized project as his/her diploma work. If the work 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 a diploma thesis, and furthermore, describing the student's role and responsibilities in the project. The work must meet up with the general requirements set by the faculty for diploma works.

This kind of a diploma work is supervised and evaluated by the faculty as a final thesis only. The Faculty will not authorize or be responsible of the project in any other context. The Faculty may also forbid using the name of the Faculty or the supervising professor in any other connection except the thesis submitted.

## **2. SELECTION AND CONFIRMATION OF THE TOPIC**

### **Setting the aims for the work**

The topic of the diploma thesis has to have a link to the aims and learning outcomes of the study program in architecture. It is recommended that the topic selected for the diploma thesis work is connected to the orientation the student has chosen for his / her master level studies. In practice, the topics of the diploma works made for the Oulu School of Architecture can vary from theoretical research work to concrete design projects.

A diploma work, which has been made for another university, will not be accepted.

### **Confirmation of the topic**

The thesis topic has to be presented in writing to the Education Board of the faculty when starting of the diploma process. The topic can be confirmed when the student has completed successfully all additional studies required in the master's degree program (i.e. 90 ECTS of the architect's degree).

In cases of force major the topic may be confirmed earlier than described above, regarding that the student will have completed all the required 90 ECTS by the time of the last meeting of the Education Board before the actual diploma presentation. A copy of the student's official weboodi transcript of records has to be attached to the application.

The application for the confirmation of the topic has to be attached by a short description of the contents of the diploma work, a copy of the transcript of records and additional documents needed, as well as the suggestion for the supervisor and the possible tutor for the thesis. The application has to be submitted one week in advance before the Education Board meeting to the administration office of the faculty.

## **3. DIPLOMA SUPERVISOR**

### **Diploma supervisor and selection of the possible tutor**

Each diploma thesis has to have a nominated supervisor. The Education Board of the faculty nominates the supervisor according to the student's own proposal. The supervisor may be one of the professors of or a person with a doctoral degree and who is teaching the related subject at the faculty.

In general, the supervisor of the thesis also acts as the tutor. The author of the thesis may suggest an additional tutor for his/her diploma work. The student may also consult additional experts concerning the diploma work. The experts may 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 the confirmation of the topic. The diploma project experts will not be paid for the use of their time.

The student has to consult the supervisor and the possible tutor before submitting the application for the confirmation of the topic.

If the diploma thesis should be based on a realized project or a paid research, a supervisor has to be selected and named according to the above mentioned principles.

### **Responsibility for the outcome**

The diploma thesis work is carried out as an individual study. The responsibility for the quality and outcome of the work remains to the student. The supervisor is responsible for securing that the aims and objectives of the work correspond to the requirements set by the faculty for diploma works.

## **4. REPRESENTATION**

### **Classification of the diploma works**

The detailed outcome of the thesis depends on the topic and extent of the work, as well as views and attitudes of the author. The diploma works made at the Oulu School of Architecture can be classified in two different categories: illustrated design projects and written thesis. The diploma work may also be a combination of the two.

### **Representation and form of the diploma works**

The representation and form of the diploma works are not precisely defined. The students have the liberty of designing an individual look and layout to their work. The representation should be clear, support the contents of the thesis and be easy to examine. The diploma work is presented in the diploma seminar with the help of a data projector. The work has to be displayed on panels (plans and drawings) or as a printed copy (written thesis) in the exhibition hall of the School for review. Students submit their finalized theses to the LATURI system for review and approval <http://laturi oulu.fi/index.php?uilang=en-US> (see also point 5).

### **Citation and referencing**

The thesis has to 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. The University of Oulu has published the student's ethical guidelines, which oblige the thesis author to name the used sources, and deny copying information from e.g. the internet and publishing the copied material as one's own. <https://wiki oulu.fi/display/tor/1.4.3+The+ethical+principles+of+research+activities> There are several styles for citation, and the author of the diploma and the student has the freedom to choose which style to use in his / her work. The student may consult the teachers of the History of Architecture and Renovation on these issues.

### **All documents included in the thesis are to be marked with the following information:**

- word 'diploma thesis' and the name of the teaching unit (Oulu School of Architecture, University of Oulu)
- name or topic of the work
- author's name (= student)
- supervisor's name + the possible tutor's
- number of the document (panels, numbering of the written thesis if in several parts)
- date and signature

### **Projects made by order**

In case a realized project or a project made by order is presented as a diploma work, the drawings and documents made earlier for the commission are sufficient, when edited and updated to meet up with the diploma thesis requirements. Possible changes and additions always have to be consulted with the supervisor before the final presentation of the diploma work.

### **Contents and form of the description**

A diploma thesis, which is carried out as a design project, has to include a written description, concluding the objective and aims, location factors, and the necessary and general principles of the solution.

## **5. SUBMISSION OF THE DOCUMENTS FOR REVIEW**

### **E-thesis**

The Oulu School of Architecture has switched to electronic publishing of theses at the beginning of year 2014. <http://laturi oulu.fi>

Students submit their finalized theses to the system for review and approval. The general instructions for submitting the electronic thesis can be found on the Laturi web pages both in Finnish and in English, as well as at <http://libguides oulu.fi/theses>. Before the submission of thesis the student has to announce the faculty office the final name of the thesis work for weboodi registration.

When approved by the supervisor, the author of the diploma work has to submit the thesis into the Laturi system two (2) weeks before the final presentation to be reviewed by the education dean of the faculty. The system will make an Urkund analysis of the thesis for the reviewers' use on the student's approval. Urkund compares documents and flags similarities as a possible instance of plagiarism. The appointed reviewers and approvers download the thesis from the Laturi system.

The author of the diploma work has to notify that no alterations or corrections can be made after feeding the thesis into the electronic system.

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).

It is recommended by the faculty and for the benefit of the author that the thesis is publicly reviewable in the open access repository of the University of Oulu.

## **6. MATURITY TEST**

The maturity test of written and oral language skills (English) required by the University of Oulu degree regulations, is integrated with the written part of the diploma thesis at the Oulu School of Architecture. The recommended extent of the maturity test is approx. three (3) pages. The supervisor of the work inspects the contents and the language of the description.

In the maturity test the student present intimate knowledge of the field of the diploma thesis work and demonstrates ability of communicating in the language of the diploma thesis work.

## **7. PRESENTATION, DISPLAY AND EVALUATION**

### **Diploma seminar and evaluation meeting**

The final presentation of the diploma work takes place in the diploma seminar organized four times during an academic year and twice during a semester. The administration office of the faculty will notify of the dates and times of the seminars on the web pages of the Oulu School of Architecture.

The diplomas are presented and evaluated in two separate occasions during the same seminar day. The prior place for the seminars is the Apaja auditorium.

As soon as the student's diploma work has been submitted in the Laturi system, the student informs the administration office of the School at which diploma seminar he / she wishes to present the work. The office has to be informed two (2) weeks before the forthcoming seminar at the latest. An oral notification is sufficient.

In addition to the submission of the diploma 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, have 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 exhibition hall.

### **Procedure of the diploma seminar**

The diploma seminars are educational and public occasions open for all.

The seminar is opened by the chair person, after which the student presents his / her diploma thesis work orally (maximum time used is 20 min) and answers to the questions presented. All participants of the seminar have the right to participate in the discussion. The common discussion is followed by the comments of the evaluation committee (diploma jury).

### **Procedure of the evaluation meeting**

The evaluation of the diploma thesis work is done immediately after the seminar in a closed meeting of the evaluation committee.

All members of the evaluation committee who have the right to participate in the evaluation are obliged to give the evaluation in numeric form and state it orally. The absent members of the committee have the right to evaluate the diploma thesis work and give their grade as an integral number in a written statement addressed to the chair person of the evaluation committee.

The scale of evaluation is: excellent (5), very good (4), good (3), satisfactory (2) and sufficient (1). 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.

The evaluation of the diploma thesis work is based on the final outcome of the work, the aims and objectives set for the work, command of approaches and solutions, representation and possible specific criteria.

As soon as the evaluation committee has decided upon the grades, the students who have presented their diploma thesis works in the respective diploma seminar are invited to the meeting of the evaluation committee to hear the grades of their work announced by the chair person of the committee.

### **Evaluation committee and presence of a quorum**

The evaluation of the diploma works is made by the evaluation committee formed by the members of the Education Board of the School, holding the degree of MSc in architecture.

The evaluation committee members present constitute a quorum, when the chair person and three (3) committee members with the right for evaluation are present.

### **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 Education Board of the faculty and is to be submitted to the administration office of the School.

### **Diploma**

The diploma is awarded by the faculty by request. The diploma application is filled in at the administration office of the School of Architecture or on an application form available on the school's web pages. The application is to be submitted to the office of the School on the day of the final presentation of the diploma thesis work. The diploma thesis work has to be approved by the Faculty at least 14 days before awarding of the diploma.

The diplomas are distributed at the diploma conferment ceremony organized by several faculties. In case the student is not participating in the ceremony, the diploma can be collected at the administration office of the School of Architecture on the same day. The diploma can also be posted to the student.

Oulu 25.3.2015

Oulu School of Architecture  
Education Board