

GUIDELINES FOR COMPLETING THE MASTER'S THESIS AT THE SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING

Approved by the School Board in its session on 21 February 2014 and modified by the School Board in its sessions on 26 June 2014, 5 July 2016, 5 October 2017, 12 February 2018, 13 September 2019, 12 November 2020, 11 January 2021, 29 June 2022, 6 July 2023, 30 November 2023, and 2 July 2024.

INTRODUCTION

The Master's Thesis (hereafter MT) is a compulsory subject that forms part of all the master's degree curricula at the School of Engineering (ETSE) and, depending on the course, is worth between 6 and 30 ECTS credits. It is carried out in the final stages of out in the final stages of the course.

Article 1. Aim

1.1. During the MT, students must undertake, present and defend before an examination panel an original piece of work in the form of a project that must show that they have acquired the competencies specified in the corresponding curriculum.

1.2. The MT is defined as an autonomous and individual assignment although it may be written collaboratively. In such cases, each student must be individually assessed.

1.3. Students on courses with their own specific MT directives must comply with these directives.

1.4. Students may undertake the MT within the frame of the URV's Service Learning programme in accordance with the standard procedure.

Article 2. Organisation

2.1 The director of ETSE appoints one of the members of the teaching staff affiliated to the School to act as MT coordinator for each degree or group of degrees in agreement with the departments responsible for teaching. In the case of interuniversity master's courses, a coordinator may be appointed from each of the universities involved.

2.2. The MT coordinator is responsible for drawing up the Course Guide and the Work Plan in accordance with current regulations and keeping the information about the subject in the Virtual Campus up to date.

2.3. The coordinator is responsible for ensuring that the subject runs smoothly and for finding solutions to all MT-related incidents.

2.4 The coordinator must set up a full procedure for organising the BTs that is clear to all teaching staff and students, and is published on the Virtual Campus.

2.5. The MT coordinator is responsible for entering all grades and signing the examination records.

2.6. The coordinator is responsible for generating and keeping a list of all MTs that have been supervised and defended, and a list of the examination panels. They are also responsible for sending them to the faculty or school after every examination call for safekeeping.

2.7. The MT coordinator must make a record of all incidents during the process, inform the management team during the revision of the PR-ETSE-019 process and, if appropriate, make proposals for improving how the MTs are managed and run.

Article 3. Registration

3.1. Students may register for the MT during the official period, in the same way as they would for any other subject.

3.2. Master's courses that set specific requirements for registering for the MT must clearly state the nature of these requirements in the teaching guide of the MT.

Article 4. Teaching responsibilities

4.1. The School will assign the teaching of this subject to one department or more. The procedure will be the same as for other bachelor's subjects and will be undertaken in accordance with each curriculum.

4.2. The MT coordinator shall notify the ETSE's Management Support Office of how the credits are distributed among the teaching staff at the end of every academic year.

Article 5. MT supervisors

5.1. The MT supervisor must be a member of the departmental teaching staff. In some cases, more than one member of the teaching staff may act as supervisors of a MT. The Academic Committee for each master's course may set additional academic requirements which MT supervisors must fulfil in to be appointed.

5.2 The department may appoint any members of its teaching staff as MT supervisor in accordance with its planning regarding teaching responsibilities. The teaching staff may also propose MTs in accordance with departmental procedure or supervise MTs at the request of students.

5.3. MT supervisors will:

- Define the title and objectives of the MT.
- Plan the scope and timetable of the MT in conjunction with the student.
- Supervise the progress of the MT.
- Ensure the objectives stipulated in the MT are achieved.
- Give approval for the student to submit and defend the MT and, if appropriate, draw up a report assessing the MT, which is made available to the examination panel during their evaluation of the student.

5.4. Tuition will be imparted during the specific meetings scheduled on the MT timetable.

5.5. Students who have to carry out all or a significant part of the MT at institutions or organisations outside the URV or, in the case of interuniversity master's, at one of the other participating universities must be assigned tutors at that institution who will assist them in defining the content of the MT and the manner in which it will be conducted.

5.6. Once the master's thesis supervisor has given approval to the proposed work, and before



the student starts the MT, the URV and the organisation in question must sign an agreement. No such agreement is required if the student is employed by the institution or organisation.

5.7. Whether or not the student is employed by the other institution or organisation, they must sign an agreement indicating the confidential (Annex 1, see article 13 of these guidelines for more information) or non-confidential (Annex 2) nature of the work.

Article 6. Assignment of MT title and supervisor

6.1. The coordinator is responsible for assigning all registered students with a title and a supervisor for their MT. With the assistance of the departments, he/she must ensure that all registered students are assigned a title and a supervisor within a reasonable timeframe.

6.2. Only students registered for the subject may request that a particular topic and supervisor be assigned to them.

6.3. Every degree programme must publish a list of MT proposals that must include: title, address, the degree programme that students need to be registered on, a brief description and associated key words.

6.4. Students can choose a topic from the published list and contact the supervisor who has proposed the topic. The MT coordinator is responsible for assigning students with MT supervisors depending on the topic they have chosen.

Students may propose a topic to a member of the departmental teaching staff, who will then decide whether to accept it or not. If the topic is accepted the student will inform the MT coordinator.

6.5. The assignment of a given MT and supervisor will only be valid for the current academic year. Students who do not defend their projects within this period must register for the subject again and apply again for the MT and the supervisor (who may be the same as the ones they had previously).

6.6. In agreement with the coordinator of every master's degree programme, the MT coordinator decides which lines offered by the URV's Service Learning Programme are eligible to be the object of an MT for each degree programme.

Article 7. Appointment of examination panels

7.1. The BT will be evaluated by an examination panel consisting of three members of the teaching and research staff from the departments responsible for teaching the degree.

7.2. The School Board will approve and publish the deadlines for submitting the necessary documentation for the MT defence on the internet before the start of the academic year.

7.3. In order that students may request a MT defence, the MT supervisor must give his/her approval via the procedures established by each coordinator.

7.4. The panel appointed to assess the MT will consist of a chairperson, a secretary and at least one other member. The chairperson of the examination panel will preferably belong to the same department as the MT supervisor.

If the MT is jointly supervised, only one of the supervisors may form part of the examination panel.

7.5. The BT coordinator decides on and publishes the composition of the examination panels

7.6. At least two days before the BT defence, the coordinator will ensure that the composition of the examination panel and the date, time and place of the BT defence are made public.

Article 8. Submission of the documentation required for the MT defence

8.1. The student must submit the MT in electronic format by the deadline for submitting the documentation required for the MT defence. The procedure for submitting the documentation must state the date and time for submission and it must be published on the MT area of the virtual campus at least 30 days before the deadline for submission.

8.2. In the report of the Master's Thesis the student must show that they have applied the competencies defined for this subject in the curriculum

8.3. The submission of the MT must also comply with the URV's formal procedure for depositing MT's in the institutional repository. In the case of interuniversity master's courses, the specific criteria of the participating universities must be taken into account.

8.4. The student may write and defend the thesis in English. If the student chooses to do this, the writing and defence of the thesis will be governed by the criteria in this guide.

8.5. For courses that are taught face-to-face, if the student wishes to defend the MT online instead of face-to-face, the student must request this when they submit their MT.

Article 9. Defence of the MT

9.1. Once the defence has been convened, the coordinator will provide the members of the examination panel with the documentation they need for the defence (internal records, grade sheets, etc.) in accordance with its regulations.

9.2. For master's courses taught face-to-face, the MT defence will be open to the public and face to face. Even so, in exceptional cases and in response to a motivated request from the student and the MT supervisor, the department involved may authorise a synchronous online defence. For online master's courses, the MT will be defended in a synchronous, online session. Even so, in exceptional cases and in response to a motivated request from the student and the MT supervisor, the department involved may authorise a face-to-face defence.

Article 10. Assessment

10.1. The assessment by the members of the examination panel will take into account the work, the BT report, the student's presentation, the responses to the questions and even the evaluation made by the MT supervisor.

10.2. The BT will be assessed using an evaluation rubric and the criteria published in the Course Guide. The rubric will include the evaluation of the student's acquisition of the subject's competencies.

10.3. Once the defence is over and has been evaluated, the secretary of the examination panel will draft the corresponding examination record and submit it to the coordinator. The secretary will notify the student of the grade awarded. He/she may also provide the student with a copy of the proceedings upon request.

10.4. Should the members of the panel feel that the report needs to be modified or corrected, they should make this clear in the record of proceedings. In this case, the panel will specify a deadline by which the student must make the corrections or modifications requested by the panel. Once the secretary of the examination panel has received the corrected report, he/she will



ESCOLA TÈCNICA SUPERIOR
D'ENGINYERIA
Universitat Rovira i Virgili



provide the secretary's office of the department with the internal grade record signed by the examination panel members, along with the MT documentation.

Article 11. Grading

11.1. The grading periods for MTs are the same of those of all other subjects, are specified in the academic calendar of the School, and are chosen from those set by the Teaching Regulations. At the time when the present guidelines were approved, these periods are June and September. In the case of master's courses that have only one MT exam session, the exam session is in June.

11.2. Students may request to bring forward or delay the June exam session to January/February and the September exam session to June. In the case master's courses with a single exam session in June, the exam session may be brought forward to January/February or postponed until September. In all cases, this request must be made in accordance with the procedures established in the URV's Academic Regulations.

11.3. The grade in the record of proceedings issued by the panel will be entered into the official record of proceedings produced by the secretary's office of the Sescelades Campus and will be signed by the MT coordinator of every master's degree.

11.4. The MT will be given a numerical grade. If the grade is equal to or greater than 9, the panel may request that the student be awarded a distinction.

In general, distinctions for MTs must be awarded preferably in the first ordinary assessment call. Therefore, any proposals for distinctions in the advanced or additional call will be resolved with those of the first ordinary call (and if any distinctions are awarded, the record of proceedings will be modified accordingly). In September, any remaining distinctions may be awarded. For distinctions to be assigned, the students registered for the subject will be listed in order of their academic record on 30 March.

11.5. Students have the right to review the final grade in accordance with the URV's Academic Regulations.

Article 12. Deposit of project

12.1. The coordinator will ensure that students deposit their MTs in the Institutional Repository of the URV.

12.2. Each department may have a repository in which it can keep digitalised MTs.

Article 13. MTs containing confidential information

13.1. Students who wish to undertake a MT that will contain confidential information must inform the MT academic supervisor of this.

13.2. In order to comply with the present guide, students must sign the confidentiality agreement (Annex 1), have it signed by the person from the collaborating entity considered to be the owner of the confidential information and attach it to their application for the MT. As soon as a supervisor has been assigned, he/she must also sign the confidentiality agreement. If the owner is a natural person, the owner or their legal representative must sign this document.

13.3. Information will be regarded as confidential if so designated by a legally established entity or by the student (with the approval of the MT academic supervisor) because they intend to use in their own business in the future. In each case, the information must be designated as confidential prior to the start of the MT that is subject to the present guidelines. Confidential information may refer to methods, procedures, models, techniques, circuit, programmes (software), and any other information that may be subject to legal protection.

13.4. For reasons of academic transparency, under no circumstances can a final project be considered to be confidential in its totality.

13.5. There will be two versions of any MT that contains confidential information: the full version and the abridged version. Both versions will contain a preamble stating that the MT contains confidential information and providing the name and address of the entity or physical person that owns the confidential information.

13.6. The full version will make it clear, either by headings or footnotes, exactly what information is considered to be confidential. The abridged version will include a simplified explanation of the missing material so that the work as a whole does not lose continuity. This abridged version must be submitted in digital format in compliance with the standard procedure of the rest of the MT, must be explicitly approved by the collaborating entity and is the version that must be deposited at the URV's institutional repository and, if necessary, in the departmental repository once the MT has been defended.

13.7. The members of the examination panel will be provided with the full version of the MT, before and during the defence. Likewise, they will be notified that some of the information they are to assess is confidential, and they will be asked to sign a confidentiality agreement. The chair of the examination panel must notify all members of the general public who may be in attendance of the confidential nature of some of the information.

13.8. The oral examination will remain open to the public and, therefore, representatives of the owners of the confidential information can attend. Likewise, the defence, graphics, demonstrations, etc. will correspond to the full version. Nevertheless, any of the parties involved in the defence may request for public access to be restricted.

13.9. Once the students have been assessed by the panel, the panel secretary will return all the full versions of the documentation, with the exception of one copy that will be deposited at the secretary's office of the department so that any claims against it may be resolved. Should any claims be made, this copy will remain in possession of the secretary's office until they have been satisfactorily resolved.

13.10. The School accepts no responsibility for the misuse of this confidential information, apart from the individual responsibility that the information may give rise to.

13.11. Any person or entity who is interested in the confidential information in a MT should contact the entity or physical person to whom the information belongs and whose name is stated in the preamble referred to in section 13.5. The School accepts no liability with regards to this information.

Article 14. Intellectual and industrial property

14.1. The intellectual or industrial property rights arising from the MT will be subject to the terms and conditions established by the current legislation. In all cases, the name of the author(s), the nature of the work and the affiliation with the URV must be cited whenever any use is made of the MT.

First additional provision

In the case of interuniversity master's degrees, the application of this guide will be adapted to the specific stipulations of the corresponding agreements. These provisions must be specified in the respective teaching guides.

Second additional provision

The vice-rector's office responsible for postgraduate studies is delegated by the rector as the competent body for resolving any issues relating to the application and interpretation of these guide and for making any exceptions should this be necessary. In this last instance, students must provide their reasons for the exception that they have requested and provide the necessary supporting documentation.

Final provision

This guide comes into force during the academic year 2023-24.

ANNEX 1: FINAL MASTER'S DEGREE PROJECT CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

The student, holder of identity card number....., and holder of identity card number -----, director of the School of Engineering, based at the Sescelades Campus, Avinguda Països Catalans, 26, 43007 Tarragona, as delegated by the rector of the Universitat Rovira i Virgili with tax number Q-9350003-A and based at C/Escorxador s/n, 935003 Tarragona, and holder of identity card number as legal representative of with tax number and based at , agree to the following

CLAUSES

ONE: A student who wishes to undertake a Master's Thesis (MT) that contains confidential information must inform the MT academic supervisor of this and attach the present confidentiality agreement to his/her application to undertake the MT. The confidentiality agreement must be stamped by the collaborating entity that owns the confidential information and be signed by a competent individual from the collaborating entity. If the owner of the company is a physical person, he/she or their legal representative should sign.

TWO: Confidential information is any information considered as such by a legally established entity prior to the execution of the MT. The confidential information may concern methods, procedures, models, techniques, circuits, software (*programs*), etc. or anything else that is susceptible to legal protection (see paragraph above).

THREE: There will be two versions of any MT that contains confidential information: the full version and the abridged version. The full version will make clear exactly which information is considered to be confidential and will be made available to the members of the examination panel. The abridged version will include a simplified explanation of the missing material so that the project as a whole does not lose continuity. This version will clearly show the approval of the collaborating entity and is the version that must be deposited at the URV's institutional repository and, if necessary, in the departmental repository once the MT has been defended. Both versions must state that the MT contains confidential information and give the name and full address of the entity or physical person to whom the confidential information belongs. Any person or entity who wishes to know the nature of the confidential information in a given MT must contact the owner of the information.

FOUR: The members of the examination panel will be provided with the full version of the MT before and during the oral examination. Likewise, they will be notified that some of the information they are to assess is confidential, and they will be asked to sign a confidentiality agreement. The chair of the examination panel must notify all members of the general public who may be in attendance of the confidential nature of some of the information. In principle, the defence of the MT will remain public and any graphics, demonstrations, etc. will correspond to the full version. Nevertheless, any of the parties involved in the defence may request for public access to be restricted.

FIVE: Once the students have been assessed by the panel, the panel secretary will return all the full versions of the documentation, with the exception of one copy that will be deposited at the secretariat of the Department so that any claims against it may be resolved. Should any claims be made, this copy will remain in possession of the secretary's office until they have been satisfactorily resolved.

SIX: The School accepts no responsibility for the misuse of this confidential information, apart from the individual responsibility that the information may give rise to.

..... 20..

Director of the ETSE	Representative of the collaborating institution	Student	MT academic supervisor
(signature and stamp)	(signature and stamp)		(Approved)

Note: This document will be signed in duplicate, with one version to be kept by the collaborating entity and the other to be kept by the corresponding department of the URV.

ANNEX 2: FINAL MASTER'S DEGREE PROJECT CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

The student, holder of identity card number....., and holder of identity card number-----, director of the School of Engineering, based at the Sescelades Campus, Avinguda Països Catalans, 26, 43007 Tarragona, as delegated by the rector of the Universitat Rovira i Virgili with tax number Q-9350003-A and based at C/Escorxador s/n, Tarragona, and with identity card numberas legal representative of the entity with tax number and based at..... agree to the following

CLAUSES

ONE: A collaboration exists between the STUDENT, the URV and the ENTITY. The purpose of this collaboration is to enable the student to complete their Master's Thesis (MT).

TWO: This collaboration will enable the student to submit their Master's Thesis under the title of: ".....".

THREE: The entity confirms that the information used and the results obtained are not confidential.

FOUR: All signatories of the present agreement agree that this BT is NOT confidential.

FIVE: The entity authorises the complete text of the BT to be deposited in the Institutional Repository of the URV and to its public dissemination.

..... 20..

Director of the ETSE	Representative of the collaborating institution	Student	MT academic supervisor
(signature and stamp)	(signature and stamp)		(Approved)