

# Master's Thesis Info

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[premo.aalto.fi/engthesis](https://premo.aalto.fi/engthesis)



Aalto University  
School of Engineering

# Topics

- **General info about master's thesis**
- **Ilkka Keppo: Supervising master's thesis**
- **Financing your thesis**
- **Process**
- **Q&A**

# General info about master's thesis

- **30 cr + maturity test (0 cr) ~ half a year**
  - Recorded with special codes, no registration needed
  - Abstract serves as the maturity test
  - Thesis topic must be agreed with the supervisor & approved officially through MyStudies
- **Thesis must follow Aalto guidelines**
  - Applies also to international joint programmes
- **Grading 1 to 5**
  - Familiarize yourself with the evaluation form!
- **Some differences between different master's programmes**
  - Always follow the instructions of your own programme!

# General info about master's thesis

- **Master's thesis is a public document!**
  - Do not include any confidential material
- **Need help with writing the thesis?**
  - Writing clinic
  - LC-1322 Thesis Writing for Engineers (MSc) (w) (3 cr)
  - Thesis and Tomatoes (co-writing sessions)

# Ethical questions: Plagiarsm, AI

- Remember to follow Aalto University Code of Academic Integrity
  - Turnitin tool for originality check: teacher-specific return box or independent turnitin usage
- AI:
  - Be careful! Do not enter any confidential text into AI tools
  - Follow the supervisor's instructions & general Aalto instructions:
    - <https://www.aalto.fi/en/services/tips-for-using-artificial-intelligence-for-students>

# Where to find instructions? A?

Two important pages in student guide (own programme):

- Thesis
- Graduation

## Student Guide

Student Guide

Programmes

Master's Programme in  
Water and  
Environmental  
Engineering

Starting your studies

Curriculum 2024–2026

Curriculum 2022–2024

Previous curricula

Recommended timetable

Planning your studies

Thesis

Graduation

Other studies

# Master's thesis management functionality on MyStudies

**On MyStudies Thesis Management functionality, you will:**

- 1.Start a thesis process.**
- 2.Provide basic information about your thesis.**
- 3.Apply for supervisor & topic approval.**
- 4.Store thesis metadata.**
- 5.Submit thesis for evaluation, approval and archiving.**

# Thesis supervising

## Supervisor (valvoja in Finnish):

- Must be Aalto professor or senior/principal university lecturer
- Usually from your own programme
- If you wish to have a supervisor from outside your programme, discuss with the programme director

## Advisor(s) (ohjaaja(t) in Finnish):

- 1-2 advisors
- Minimum requirement: master's degree
- For example, someone from the company, if company is involved



# Thesis from a supervisor's perspective

# What an MSc thesis is?

“The key goal of the master’s thesis is **solving a problem relevant to the field of study** based on existing scientific knowledge in compliance with the principles of responsible conduct of research.  
**The goal is to produce a scientific thesis.**”



# What an MSc thesis is?

“The success of the master’s thesis is evaluated in terms of its success in, e.g. the following:

- identifying a significant and important research problem
- defining the research problem (research question);
- defining the scientific/theoretical framework for the work by finding the relevant sources;
- defining the research methods and empirical material;
- defining the concrete research frame;
- defining the nature of the new knowledge produced and identifying of the relevance and merits of the study and
- the novelty of the research and the innovativeness of its solutions”



# What an MSc thesis is?

Not just any written report on a given topic –  
an MSc thesis has very specific goals and  
requirements

Especially important to remember, if you do  
the thesis for a company

# Supervision (my take)

- Supervisor helps to define the path for the thesis – especially important early in the process
- Supervisor primarily an expert in the research process, sometimes also in the substance
- Division of labour between advisors and the supervisor
- Double role of the supervisor
- Supervisor a resource for the student

# What to pay attention to

- Well defined research questions essential to guide the work – key engine of the narrative of the thesis
- Develop a rough timeline for your thesis project – and update/upgrade it when necessary
- Have a generic thesis outline from the start – and add notes, granularity during the project
- Formalities matter, familiarize yourself with the marking criteria – and do it early in the process

Salary? Grant? Unpaid position?

# Financing your thesis

- **Work contract**
  - Be active!
  - Job teaser, company web pages, recruitment events (e.g. Aalto Talent expo or Summer Job Day)
- **Grants**
  - Foundation for Aalto University Science and Technology / Aalto-yliopiston tekniikan tukisäätiö
  - Other grants & awards
- **Unpaid position**
  - Schedule, more freedom with the topic...

# Schedule

## Deadlines:

- Thesis topic **must be** approved before the acceptance of the thesis
- Thesis presentation completed
- Final version of the thesis sent for evaluation
- If you have completed all the studies and apply for graduation DL date = graduation date

- **IMPORTANT:**  
Agree the schedule with the supervisor!  
The supervisor needs time to evaluate your thesis.

absolute, and no late applications will be processed.

Deadlines for thesis evaluation applications	Degree programme committee meeting date
Fri 29.12.2023	Mon 22.1.2024
Mon 19.2.2024	Mon 11.3.2024
Mon 29.4.2024	Mon 20.5.2024
Mon 27.5.2024	Mon 10.6.2024
Wed 31.7.2024*	Mon 19.8.2024
Mon 30.9.2024	Mon 21.10.2024
Mon 18.11.2024	Mon 9.12.2024
Tue 31.12.2024**	January 2025

**\*\* Deadline 31.12.2024:** Notice the holiday season. Contact your thesis supervisor **well before Christmas (24.12.2024)**.



# Thesis process

**Search for topic & supervisor**

**Agree on the topic with a supervisor → Official topic approval needed!**

- It is recommended that you approve for the topic as soon as it is fixed with the supervisor. Do it *latest 1 month* before finishing the thesis

**Work – work – work: writing your thesis**

*Agree the schedule of the final stages of the thesis with your supervisor*

**Thesis presentation** (see the instructions of your own programme!)

**Maturity test**

**Thesis approval**

**Graduation**

# Double degree programme specifics

Check your student agreement or other possible guidelines & requirements of your programme in terms of...

- **Environment** (university or industry? Can you choose?)
- **Topic** (Should it connect to your major / study track?)
- **Location** (At exit university? Anywhere in the world? In Europe?)
- **Timeline** (Hard deadlines at partner universities? Tuition fee consequences? Joint graduation ceremony, requirements to attend?)
- **Partner university role** (how much is the partner university involved in the process? Should you have your topic approved there? Do you need a supervisor? Will they evaluate your thesis independently or simply incorporate the Aalto evaluation? Do you have to attend a defense at the partner university or is Aalto thesis presentation sufficient? Any requirements to publicity of your thesis and archiving the thesis document? How do you submit your thesis to the partner university?)
- **Thesis document** (do you need a separate cover page for the partner university? How to give credit to your programme and partner university?)

# Questions?