

GUIDELINES FOR THESIS COMMITTEES

M.Sc. Logic

Article 1. The committee.

(1.1) The M.Sc. thesis is evaluated by a *thesis committee* consisting of a chair, the supervisor(s) and independent evaluators. The chair is a member of the *examencommissie* of the M.Sc. Logic and takes the official role of the *examiner* for the thesis, taking responsibility for the grade.

(1.2) The first step in the preparation for the defense is the assignment of the chair of the defense committee. It is the task of the supervisor to contact the *examencommissie* so that a chair can be assigned. After his or her assignment, the chair of the defense committee is in charge of all procedural decisions in the defense committee.

(1.3) It is the responsibility of the supervisor(s) to submit a list of potential members of the defense committee to the chair. It is preferred that this list contains more names than necessary to allow the chair to choose committee members.

(1.4) The chair and the supervisor(s) are automatically members of the defense committee.

(1.5) The defense committee must meet the following requirements:

a. All committee members must hold an MSc or equivalent degree.

b. At least three committee members must have a PhD.

c. The number of independent evaluators must be at least as big as that of the number of supervisors. The chair may count himself or herself as an independent evaluator if he or she decides to take an active role and is an expert in the field of the thesis.

d. The majority of the committee members should be affiliated with the ILLC (exceptions to this rule may be granted by the *examencommissie*).

(1.6) The chair chooses the independent evaluators on the basis of the list submitted by the supervisor(s). The chair can select none, some or all of the names on that list and add further members to the committee. The chair makes sure that the committee meets the requirements of (1.5). The chair does not have to justify this selection.

Article 2. Defense Date and Submission Deadline.

(2.1) The members of the committee and the student agree on a defense date. The defense date has to be at least four weeks in the future when it is submitted to the programme administrator (Tanja).

(2.2) The programme administrator books the room for the defense and announces the defense via the ILLC News.

(2.3) The date of the defense determines the submission deadline which is exactly three weeks before the defense.

(2.4) The thesis is submitted by e-mail as a pdf file that is sent to the entire committee with

a copy to the programme administrator. The submitted thesis must contain the official ILLC M.Sc. thesis titlepage. The chair of the committee checks whether the formal requirements are satisfied.

(2.5) If the student does not submit by the deadline, the chair can cancel the defense.

(2.6) Before the deadline, the student can request an extension. Extensions are only given in exceptional cases and only if the student sends the request in due time. Very short extensions (a day) can be granted by the chair without consulting the committee. Longer extensions (at most three days) require consent from every single committee member.

Article 3. Pre-Assessment.

(3.1) After the submission, the chair informs the committee members about the procedure. All pre-assessments have to have reached the chair at least seven days before the defense. If that is not the case, the chair can cancel the defense.

(3.2) A committee member who thinks the student should receive a failing grade should contact the chair immediately. In that case, the chair needs to check the opinions of all committee members, and if necessary involves the chair of the *examencommissie* or the entire *examencommissie*. It is not the intention to have a public defense in the case that the committee will not give the student a passing grade. If there is no majority in the committee to pass the student, the defense should be cancelled (at least one week before the defense date) and the student should receive the grade NAV. The student should get detailed feedback from the committee to revise the thesis in order to pass in a second attempt.

(3.3) Pre-assessments contain a grade range and a brief statement about each of the evaluation criteria, correctness, originality, writing, independence, and difficulty. Pre-assessments are sent only to the chair, not to the entire committee.

(3.4) After all pre-assessments have been received, the chair discloses the pre-assessments to the entire committee. He or she produces a draft assessment consisting of four to seven sentences describing the consensus of the committee members.

(3.5) In the days before the defense, there can be an e-mail discussion among the committee members.

Article 4. The defense.

(4.1) The defense consists of 20 minutes of presentation by the candidate and 30 minutes of questions. After that, the committee discussion typically takes between 30 and 45 minutes. In total, between 90 and 120 minutes should be scheduled for a defense.

(4.2) The chair introduces the candidate and keeps track of the time during presentation and questions.

(4.3) Traditionally, the question period starts with questions from the general audience. After that, the chair decides on the order of opposition. Supervisors can ask questions, but often don't. The majority of the question time should be given to the independent evaluators. The chair can ask questions at any time, but doesn't have to.

(4.4) If the audience contains non-ILLC members, it is nice if the chair introduces the committee members.

(4.5) After the question period, the committee retires to another room (if there are very few people in the audience, the chair can ask the audience and the candidate to leave the room). The chair coordinates the committee discussion, discusses the possible grades, and collects opinions of the committee members about the grades. If the thesis has a chance to get a cum laude grade (8 or higher), the chair checks whether all criteria are satisfied. The chair arranges the decision process for the grade.

(4.6) The chair then reads the draft assessment text and asks for proposals for changes. The committee agrees on the final assessment text and checks that the grade matches the text (i.e., that the text is neither too positive nor too negative for the grade). The assessment text should be fair and honest. There is no reason to avoid criticism in the assessment text.

(4.7) After the committee has agreed on both the grade and the assessment text, the candidate is asked to join the committee. The assessment text is read to the student, the grade is announced, and the student gets the chance to ask questions in private.

(4.8) Then the student and the committee return to the room with the audience, the chair announces that the student has passed, publicly congratulates the student and gives the word to the supervisor who speaks personal words. After this, the chair closes the meeting.

(4.9) Both the grade and the assessment text are private information and should not be made public by anyone except for the student. Even if the student explicitly gives permission to the public announcement of the grade, the *examencommissie* strongly discourages this practice.