

Joint Master of Architecture

Guideline for the Master's Thesis

August 2013

Approved on August 29th 2013 by the Board of the
Joint Master of Architecture



Table of contents

1	Miscellaneous.....	3
2	Requirements.....	3
3	Objectives of the Master's Thesis	3
3.1	Didactic objectives.....	3
3.2	Competencies to be acquired	3
4	Definition of the Master's Thesis	3
4.1	Method and form.....	3
4.2	Choice of topics.....	4
4.3	Content.....	4
5	Support.....	4
6	Procedure and dates.....	4
7	Evaluation.....	4
7.1	Evaluation committee	4
7.2	Evaluation criteria	5
7.3	Presentation	5
7.4	Amount of work.....	5
7.5	Costs.....	5
8	Rights.....	5



1 Miscellaneous

The Master's Thesis is the closing training module of the Joint Master of Architecture. The module is equivalent to 28 ECTS and builds on the module Preparation of Master's Thesis t. The Master's Thesis combines the design project, which may include research work, with related areas such as social and natural sciences as well as art and must be performed independently. The student is responsible for the theme of the work, its procedure and the organization of the specific support group. The Joint Master of Architecture organizes the evaluation committee. Students usually complete their Master's Thesis at the location of enrolment.

This document is based on:

- Study and examination regulation Joint Master of Architecture
- Regulations and general conditions of the particular location

2 Requirements

Admitted are students of the degree course Joint Master of Architecture who have completed 92 ECTS, including all compulsory modules, the Preparation of Master's Thesis t and the Academic Method Seminar 1. The detailed conditions for the latter are set by the location of enrolment.

3 Objectives of the Master's thesis

3.1 Didactic objectives

The module Master's Thesis requires the following competencies:

- The formulation of a complex architectural question and its approach by means of developing synthetic solutions;
- The development of an architectural project dealing with a complex issue;
- The creative inclusion of professional knowledge and methodical skills;
- The creation and further development within a network of know-how and transdisciplinary competencies;
- The management of the processes by means of appropriate methods;
- The self-taught expansion of professional knowledge;
- The development and defence of an ethical attitude;
- The responsible and mature way of acting.

3.2 Competencies to be acquired

- Professional competencies: To master a large know-how regarding architecture and urban planning with the necessary skills to enlarge upon an architectural theme;
- Methodic competencies: To phrase an issue and develop a strategy containing the definition of objectives, the required steps of the procedure, as well as a schedule;
- Personal competencies: To autonomously manage the Master's Thesis, to reflect in a self-critical manner on attaining the requirements and the individual goals, autodidactic skills;
- Social competencies: To have a capacity for teamwork and integration into the professional world;
- Communicational competencies: The phrasing and presentation of the Master's Thesis.

4 Definition of the Master's thesis

4.1 Method and form

The Master's Thesis comprises the following aspects:

- Implementation and interpretation of an analysis;
- Development and management of the project and its reference to research;
- Presentation and communication of the results;



4.2 Choice of topics

The students may freely choose the topic of their Master's Thesis. The topics, the lecturer supporting the process, as well as the expert are defined within the scope of the module Preparation of Master's Thesis t. The topic and names are submitted to the lecturer responsible for professional evaluation and approved by the Board of the Joint Master of Architecture before the commencement of the module T.

The topic chosen must contain the following aspects:

- A complex, architectural question;
- A professional, ethical attitude;
- A demonstration of the architectural methods;
- A transdisciplinary approach.

4.3 Content

In a broader sense, the Master's Thesis is an architectural project and creates an identifiable relation to research by means of its complex question. The Master's Thesis is an individual project. However, in case of a very complex theme and a large field of work, it may be developed in parts by a group.

The students are responsible for the structure, the content, the process, the value of the information collected, as well as for the quality of the work. Third party advisors must be named.

5 Support

The support group is responsible for accompanying the student through the process. The group consists of at least three people, chosen by the student:

- A lecturer of architecture for the Master's Thesis;
- A lecturer of theory for the Master's Thesis;
- An external expert.

For accompanying tasks, the support group may consult a research assistant named by the student.

6 Procedure and dates

Procedure and deadlines are defined by the support group in a schedule containing:

- T0 Handing-in of the Master's Thesis;
- T1 Intermediate Presentation;
- T2 Intermediate Presentation;
- T3 Intermediate Presentation;
- T4 Handing-in of the completed Master's Thesis;
- T5 Presentation of the Master's Thesis for evaluation purposes.

Only works handed in in due time are admissible for the final presentation of the module T5 and will be evaluated.

In exceptional cases and upon a written request, the Board of the Joint Master of Architecture may decide on adapting the schedule or the requirements.

7 Evaluation

7.1 Evaluation committee

An evaluation committee at each location is responsible for the assessment T5 of the Master's Thesis. The committee consists of following three-members:

- At least two members of the support group;
- A person in charge from the Joint Master of Architecture representing one of the partner schools.



The evaluation committee may consult with third parties.

7.2 Evaluation criteria

The evaluation of the Master's Thesis bases on the following criteria:

- Quality of the project work;
- Phrasing and meeting of personal objectives;
- Mastering the work methods;
- Integration of the research objectives;
- Definition and management of the schedule;
- Realization of the work steps;
- Quality of the Master's Thesis presentation;
- Argumentation, conclusion, and self-critical assessment.

7.3 Final Presentation

At the final review, the students present their work to the evaluation committee. The presentation comprises an oral presentation as well as replies to comprehension questions followed by a discussion.

Procedure and duration of the presentations are defined by the corresponding locations.

7.4 Amount of work

A successfully completed Master's Thesis is awarded with 28 ECTS. The amount of work corresponds to approximate 840 hours during one semester. In exceptional cases the student can apply for a part-time workload. In this case the part-time students may work on their Master's Thesis during two consecutive semesters.

The final presentation of the Master's Thesis is usually conducted twice a year. The regular dates are announced by the people responsible for the module before the commencement of the module T.

The diplomas are usually presented during the joint annual ceremony of the Joint Master of Architecture, organized in turn by one of the three locations.

7.5 Costs

Semester fees:

During the Master-Thesis, the usual semester fees are owed. The amount of the fees depends on the location.

Compensation of expenses:

Payment and compensation of expenses of the experts are determined by and to the expense of the corresponding locations.

Further costs for the completion of the Master's Thesis are to the expense of the students. The corresponding location may provide additional financial contributions for students benefit.

8 Rights

The partner schools of the Joint Master of Architecture have the right to publish the Master's Thesis. However, the Master's Thesis may not be published while still in progress unless the Board of the Joint Master of Architecture has given its consent.

Students are the owners of their Master's Thesis. Upon signing the Master's Thesis Form & Agreement T0, the students grant the Joint Master of Architecture a legal right of use and publication in the broader sense.



Upon signing the Master's Thesis Form & Agreement T0 and handing-in their Master's Thesis, the students confirm that their Master's Thesis is an authentic work, completed without the help of third parties with the exception of the ones mentioned above. All sources need to be mentioned.

Appendix:

Master's Thesis Form & Agreement T0