

Guidelines for the preparation and defence of a thesis in the Department of Political and Social Sciences

These guidelines outline the rules and procedures for preparing a thesis for defence and should be read in conjunction with the document entitled 'PhD Defence Workflow'. The relevant formal rules are contained in chapter 9 of the [Academic Rules and Regulations](#) and in the SPS Guide for Researchers. In case of uncertainty or conflict, the Academic Rules and Regulations prevail. You are strongly advised to read these documents in addition to the present guidelines.

1. The format of a thesis in the Department of Social and Political Sciences

An acceptable Ph.D. thesis should contain a contribution to knowledge in one of the core sub-fields of Social and Political Science, taking one of the following two forms:

- An extended manuscript providing the basis for a book or monograph of publishable standard; or
- A set of papers, **at least three of which** could provide the basis for publication in a peer reviewed journal.
 - The papers must be preceded by an Introduction providing an overview of the candidate's substantive area of inquiry, related literatures, and research methods, and a Conclusion that summarizes the findings and the contribution of the thesis to the academic field;
 - Joint research may contribute to the papers, provided that the Introduction contains a clear statement of which parts are the result of joint research, and of the relative contributions of the co-authors. **At least two** of the papers should not be co-authored.

The **maximum word length is 100,000 words**, including footnotes and bibliography. The thesis must contain (and must also be accompanied by, in a separate document) an abstract of 300 words.

2. Examining Board

Once the supervisor (and co-supervisor, if any) consider(s) a thesis will soon be ready for defence (usually at the stage when there is a full draft of all chapters) he/she will propose a jury (which is officially called the Examining Board) and the administrative assistant organising the thesis will then prepare the dossier to be sent for approval by the Department and submitted to the Executive Committee. The composition of the four-

member Examining Board¹ is the responsibility of the supervisor who will propose names in consultation with the candidate. On no account is the candidate to contact potential examiners – the organisation of the thesis is the sole responsibility of the supervisor. If there is a co-supervisor, the main supervisor will consult the co-supervisor.

When selecting a Board the supervisor needs to bear in mind that the total cost of a thesis has a limited budget. Under normal circumstances, the candidate and all four members of the Examining Board are required to be present at the public thesis defence at the EUI. The absence of members is not condoned except in cases of force majeure. In such cases, the minimum required presence is one external and one internal member. Video-link solutions will then be provided for members who cannot be present.

3. Submission and deposit of the thesis

When the Examining Board has been approved by both the Department and the Executive Committee the submission procedure begins:

The procedure is as follows:

a) Submission

The supervisor receives a *final draft* of the thesis, and within one month of receipt of this draft notifies the candidate as well as the organising administrative assistant if s/he accepts it as is, or whether revisions or English correction is required.

b) English language correction

If the supervisor determines that the thesis requires *minor* language corrections, the candidate is eligible for a subsidy to help with language correction costs at a rate of 5 euro/1000 words, up to a maximum of 500 euros. If the supervisor determines that the thesis requires *major* language corrections, the candidate is eligible for a subsidy up to a maximum of 1000 euros. (Please see the **Language Center webpage** for further details on the EUI's policy on language correction.)

Before arranging the language correction the candidate must obtain approval of the supervisor and confirm with the organising administrative assistant, who will arrange for the SPS Department's reimbursement of correction costs (upon presentation of proof of payment).

Minor language corrections can be postponed until the reports of the Examining Board have been delivered. If major language corrections of a final draft are necessary, they should be carried out before the thesis is sent to the Examiners.

c) Turnitin

Since 1 November 2013, it is mandatory for the candidate to do an originality check through the anti-plagiarism software TURNITIN when submitting the final thesis draft to the supervisor. The supervisor then receives from Turnitin a summary originality report plus an

¹ More specifically, see Chapter 9.7 of the Academic Rules & Regulations for the Doctoral Programme: <http://www.eui.eu/Documents/ServicesAdmin/DeanOfStudies/EUI-RulesRegs.pdf>

annotated version of the submitted draft showing which part of the text is also found in other publications. Please read detailed information about the procedure here:

<http://www.eui.eu/ServicesAndAdmin/DeanOfStudies/OriginalityCheck-TurnitinSoftware.aspx>

4. Examining Board review and reports

All Board members are required to send in a review (of at least one A4 page, but in most cases greater length) to the organising administrative assistant within 6-8 weeks of receiving the thesis and to state one of the following:

- a) the thesis can be defended as it stands;
- b) minor revisions should be done before the defence;
- c) major revisions are required
- d) the thesis cannot be accepted for defence.

The Examiners must not share the reports with each other at this stage. In cases (a) and (b) a defence date may be set. In case (c) a defence date will not normally be set until the changes have been made and approved by the Board. The defence will normally only be scheduled **if a majority of the Board members** (not counting the supervisor and, where applicable, co-supervisor) agrees that the defence can go forward.

Once the amendments/corrections have been inserted the candidate sends the **final version** of his/her thesis to the organising administrative assistant at least one month before the date of defence.

If revisions have been required, the candidate must send together with this final version a reply letter in which he or she responds to the Examining Board reports and explains in detail all changes that have been introduced since the submission of the final version for review. The administrative assistant will send a copy to all Board members.

5. Thesis preparation

The thesis needs to be in A4 format, recto verso. Please leave a margin of 2,5 cm on all sides and use an easy to read font that uses a full character set. One-and-a-half line spacing is recommended. The thesis must contain page numbers throughout; use Roman numerals for the front matter (acknowledgements, abstract, table of contents) and Arabic numerals for the thesis text. Every new chapter and section must start with an odd page on the right-hand side of your text. You will need to insert a blank page when a chapter ends with an even number. Blank pages need to be numbered. (Consult a book for an example of this).

The final version of the thesis (including the cover pages) needs to be sent to the organising administrative assistant in pdf and in word. Please see 'Thesis title page' under 'Rules and Forms' on the [SPS website](#) for further details.

Insert tables, graphs and other images directly where they belong in the text (remember to apply 2,5 cm margin to these too). The EUI cannot normally guarantee to reproduce colour graphs, photos etc.

6. Final version of the thesis for printing

When suggestions for improvement and corrections (if any) have been inserted, the candidate supplies the organising administrative assistant with the final version, which is sent to the EUI print shop for production of bound copies – 3 for the candidate and the remainder for the Examining Board, the Library, the SPS archive and the President's office.

7. The day of the defence

On the day of the defence the candidate is expected to make a presentation lasting approximately 20 minutes. The Examining Board will then pose their questions (the supervisor will be the last one to ask his/her questions). A general debate can then follow. At the end of the discussion the candidate and guests will be asked to leave the room for a few minutes while the Board deliberates in camera. The Board decides on whether to award the doctoral degree and formulates recommendations for publication. The Chair of the Board drafts a report on the defence immediately during the deliberation, or delegates this task to a Board member (working in cooperation with the supervisor). If the report is not drafted and agreed during the deliberation, it shall be adopted within no more than three months after the defence.

(In exceptional cases, the Board may vote in favour of a conditional award. The candidate has then to carry out further revisions after the defence but before the doctoral degree is awarded.)

8. After the defence

After the defence the Doctor should indicate to the organising administrative assistant in which language(s) he/she defended and in which language the diploma (one only) and the certificate(s) should be issued. The recent implementation of the thesis to be published in the EUI Repository (CADMUS) requires that each Ph.D. candidate signs a form that either gives 'open access' or 'embargoed access' to his/her thesis online (the form will be handed out by the organising administrative assistant). On the basis of the signed form and the above-indicated information, the Academic Service, will prepare a certificate. The final report on the defence is given to the Doctor, one copy is kept in the departmental files, and one copy is transmitted to the Academic Service.

For any further clarifications, please contact the organising administrative assistant in charge.

Revised and approved by the Director of Graduate Studies

October 21, 2015

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