



COMENIUS
UNIVERSITY
BRATISLAVA

**Internal Regulations
Comenius University in Bratislava**

Internal regulation No. 32/2023

Directive of the Rector
of the Comenius University Bratislava

**on basic requirements for theses,
rigorous theses and habilitation theses, checking their
originality, retention and accessibility at
Comenius University in Bratislava**

Year 2023

The Rector of Comenius University Bratislava (hereinafter referred to as "CU" or "University") issues in accordance with Article 56 par.9 of Internal Regulation No.23/2021 Internal Assurance System of Quality of Higher Education of the Comenius University (hereinafter referred to as "Internal Quality System") and in accordance with art. 65 par.2 of Statute of CU, this Directive of the Rector of CU on the basic requirements for theses, rigorous theses and habilitation theses, control of their originality, preservation and accessibility at CU (hereinafter referred to as 'the Directive').

Art. 1

Subject of regulation

(1) The Directive regulates a procedure for the processing of theses, rigorous theses and habilitation theses, control of the originality, registration, preservation and accessibility of these theses in the Central Repository of Theses, Doctoral and Habilitation Theses (hereinafter referred to as "Central Repository") and in the Library - Information System of the Comenius University.

(2) This directive applies to the theses of students studying in the first, second and third degree in all accredited study programmes. Terms of this directive shall apply to rigorous and habilitation theses, unless otherwise provided further.

Art. 2

General terms and definitions

(1) Each study programme includes a final thesis, which, together with its defence constitutes one course; the defence of the thesis is one of the state examinations.¹ The final thesis is a university work produced by the student to fulfil the obligations arising from his/her legal relation to the CU.²

(2) The final thesis for studies under a bachelors degree programme is a bachelors thesis.³ It is the simplest type of final thesis.

(3) The final thesis for studies under a second degree programme is a master thesis and combined first and second degree programme it is a diploma thesis.⁴ A master or a diploma thesis differs from a bachelor thesis by a larger scope and a higher degree of difficulty in the elaboration of the topic.

(4) The final thesis of the doctoral study programme is the doctoral thesis,⁵ the defence of which is one of the conditions for the proper completion of doctoral studies.

(5) The training institute is a workplace of the Comenius University or its units (e.g. a department or an institute), which creates the material and technical conditions for the author to obtain information and to carry out the work that will enable the thesis to be completed. The doctoral student's supervising workplace may also be an external entity, based on a written agreement with the CU (private company, government or public organisation, etc.).

¹ § 51 sec.3 of Act no.131/2002 coll. on Higher education and on amendments and additions to certain acts, as amended by later regulations (hereinafter referred to as the 'Higher Education Act')

² § 93 of Act no. 185/2015 coll., Copyright Act, as amended

³ § 52 sec.4 of the Higher Education Act

⁴ § 53 sec.5 of the Higher Education Act

⁵ § 54 sec.3 of the Higher Education Act

Art. 3

Content of the final thesis

- (1) The bachelor thesis shall demonstrate the student's ability to work creatively in the field of study in which he/she has completed the study programme. The student shall demonstrate adequate knowledge of the issue and apply his/her skills in the collection, interpretation and processing basic scientific literature, which may include its application in working experience or solving a sub-task related to the student's future field of study. If the work includes hypotheses, they must be verifiable.
- (2) In masters or diploma thesis the student elaborates the chosen topic at the level of a scientific study with a representative selection of scientific literature, with properly chosen scientific procedures, hypotheses that can be verified. The masters or diploma thesis should be a contribution in the specific field.
- (3) By the doctoral or thesis the student demonstrates the ability and readiness for independent scientific and creative activity in the field of research or development or for independent theoretical and creative artistic activity. It must be characterised by a high degree of analysis and synthesis of knowledge, as well as a sufficient overview of the existing scientific literature.
- (4) The final thesis must be original, created by the author as a result of their creative activity in accordance with the rules of working with information sources. The final thesis must not have the character of plagiarism, it must not infringe the copyrights of other authors. The author is obliged to cite consistently the information sources used, state by name and specifically results of research by other authors or authors collective by citing the relevant source, accurately describe the methods and workflows used by other authors or authors collectives, documents the laboratory results and field studies of other authors or author collectives. The author must not repeatedly submit his or her own identical or slightly modified thesis, which he or she has already defended once as a thesis, a rigorous thesis or habilitation thesis.

Art. 4

Final thesis assignment

- (1) Theses topics shall be published by the departments through the Academic Information System (hereinafter referred to as "AIS") within the time limit set by the schedule of study. The head of the supervising department or a person authorised by the head of the department shall be responsible for the publication of the topics.
- (2) The student chooses the topic of the thesis in agreement with the tutor or thesis supervisor, who prepares the assignment of the thesis (hereinafter referred to as "assignment"). The head of the department or the authorised person shall approve the assignment.
- (3) The assignment must be delivered to the student no later than the beginning of the academic year, in which the defence will take place.
- (4) If the thesis is to be written in a language other than the national language, the assignment shall be prepared in both the state language and the language in which the thesis is to be written.
- (5) In justified cases, with the consent of all persons concerned (author, supervisor, the person authorised to approve the assignment) it is possible the content of individual points of the assignment may be changed. The data in the assignment at the time of submission of the final thesis are binding and must be identical to the data on the final thesis.

(6) An assignment is a document by which the CU or the faculty determines the study obligations of the author in connection with the elaboration of the thesis. As a rule, the assignment contains:

- (a) the name and surname of the student,
- b) the study programme,
- c) the field of study,
- (d) the designation of the thesis (bachelor thesis, master thesis, doctoral);
- (e) the language of the thesis,
- (f) the title of the thesis,
- (g) an annotation of the thesis,
- h) the name and surname of the tutor or the thesis supervisor,
- (i) the supervising department,
- (j) the name and surname of the head of the department,
- k) date of assignment,
- (l) date of approval,
- m) signature of the head of the department, tutor or supervisor and author.

Art. 5

Structure of the thesis

(1) The thesis shall contain the following main parts:

- (a) an introductory part,
- (b) the main body of the text,
- (c) the final part,
- (d) appendices and other supplementary material (optional).

(2) The introductory part of the thesis contains the following items in the given order:

- (a) Cover,
- (b) the title page,
- (c) the assignment,
- (d) acknowledgements (optional),
- e) abstract in the national language (if the thesis is written in a language other than the national language, an abstract in the state language is a compulsory part of the thesis)⁶
- f) abstract in the English or another foreign language,

⁶ § 51 sec.3 of the Higher Education Act

- g) preface,
- h) the table of contents,
- i) list of illustrations and list of tables (optional),
- (j) list of abbreviations and symbols (optional),
- (k) glossary (optional).

(3) The cover of the thesis (Annex 1) contains:

- (a) the name of the university,
- (b) the name of the faculty,
- (c) the registration number, if designated
- (d) the title of the thesis,
- (e) the subtitle of the work (if used),
- (f) the designation of the thesis (bachelors thesis, masters thesis, doctoral thesis, or doctoral).
- (g) the name, surname and titles of the author,
- (h) the year of submission⁷

(4) The cover of the rigorous thesis and the habilitation thesis shall contain the data referred to in section (3) letter (a), (c), (d), (f) and (g). The cover of these theses shall also indicate whether the thesis is a rigorous or habilitation thesis, and, if the thesis procedure takes place at the faculty, the name of the faculty shall be indicated.⁸

(5) The following information shall appear on the cover sheet (Annex 2):

- (a) the name of the university,
- (b) the name of the faculty,
- (c) the title and subtitle (if a subtitle is used),
- (d) the designation of the thesis (bachelor thesis, master thesis, doctoral, or habilitation thesis);
- (e) the name, surname and titles of the author,
- (f) the title of the study programme (not given for doctoral theses and habilitation theses),
- g) the name of the field of study,
- h) the name, surname and titles of the tutor or thesis supervisor (for rigorous theses, it is indicated if designated)

⁷ § 1 sec.1 of the Decree of the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic no. 233/2011 coll., that implements Amendments to the Act no. 131/2002 coll. on Higher Education and amendments of certain acts as amended (hereinafter referred to as "Decree 233/2011")

⁸ 1 sec.2 of Decree 233/2011

(i) the name, surname and titles of the consultant, if one has been appointed (not indicated for rigorous theses and doctoral theses and habilitation theses),

(j) the training department (if designated),

(k) place and year of submission⁹

(6) The assignment is the document referred to in art. 4.

(7) Acknowledgements includes thanks to the tutor or thesis supervisor and other persons, departments or institutions for their help and support in the preparation of the thesis. Acknowledgements may be part of the foreword.

(8) The abstract contains concise information about the goals of the thesis, its content, results and significance of the Final thesis. The abstract includes 3-5 key words. The abstract is written coherently as a single paragraph and its length is usually 100 to 500 words. Language versions of the abstracts are given on separate pages.

(9) The preface the general information about the thesis, contains the main characteristics of the thesis, and the circumstances of its origin. The author justifies the choice of the topic, gives a description of the goals and significance of the thesis, mentions the domestic and foreign context, who the thesis is intended for, and the methods used, the state of knowledge; the author briefly describes his approach and his point of view.

(10) The table of contents is an overview of the unnumbered and numbered parts (chapters) of the final thesis.

(11) The list of illustrations, the list of tables, appendices, the list of abbreviations and symbols, and the glossary are optional parts of the thesis. Lists are included in cases where they contribute to increase the clarity, unambiguity of interpretation and comprehensibility of the thesis.

(12) The main parts of the body of text of the thesis are:

(a) Introduction,

(b) the core,

(c) conclusion,

(d) list of used bibliography.

(13) The introduction is the first comprehensive information about the thesis, its aim, content and structure. The introduction relates to the elaborated topic specifically, contains a brief and concise description of the issue, characterises the state of knowledge or practice in the field, which is the subject of the thesis and introduces the significance, aims and objectives of the thesis. The author, in the introduction emphasises why the thesis is important and why he/she has chosen to work on the topic. The introduction as the title of the chapter is not numbered and is usually 1 to 2 pages in length.

(14) The core is the main part of the thesis and is divided into chapters, subchapters, paragraphs, etc., which are numbered in ascending order.

(15) The structure of the core of the thesis is determined by the type of thesis. In scientific and professional theses, the core usually has the following main parts:

(a) the current state of the problem addressed at home and abroad,

⁹ § 2 of Decree 233/2011

- b) the aim of the thesis,
- c) the methodology of the work and the methods of research,
- d) the results of the work,
- (e) discussion.

(16) In the section "current state of the subject at home and abroad", the author mentions the available information and knowledge on the subject. The sources for the treatment are current published works of domestic and foreign authors. This part of the thesis should be approximately 30 % of the overall length of the thesis.

(17) The "thesis objective" part characterizes the subject of the solution clearly, concisely, and accurately. It also includes elaborated sub-objectives that condition the achievement of the main objective.

(18) The section "methodology of work and methods of research" generally includes:

- (a) characteristics of the object of research,
- (b) working procedures,
- (c) the method of obtaining data and their sources,
- (d) the methods used to evaluate and interpret the results,
- (e) statistical methods.

(19) The "thesis results" and "discussion" sections are the most important parts of the thesis. The author's results (their own positions or solutions) must be logically organised and sufficiently evaluated when describing them. At the same time, all the facts and findings are commented in confrontation with the results of other authors. "The results of the work" and "discussion" may also form one separate part and together they usually make up 30% to 40% of the final work.

(20) In the conclusion part, it is necessary to briefly summarise the results achieved in relation to the set aims of the work. The length of the conclusion is a minimum of two pages. The conclusion as a chapter shall not be numbered.

(21) Bibliography contains a complete list of bibliographical references. Scope of this section is determined by the number of literary sources used, which must correspond with the quotations used in the text.

(22) The optional part of the annexes contains materials that has not been included in the main text. Each annex shall begin on a new page. The list of annexes is included in the table of contents.

(23) The optional final part of the thesis may include an index, a biography of the author, and other additional materials.

(24) The thesis template, as a model document that can help to unify the formal aspects of the thesis, is published on the website of the Central Registry: <https://crzp.cvtisr.sk/>.

Art. 6

Quotations and bibliographical references

(1) Both ethics and technique are important in citation. The ethics of citation determines the way ethical norms in relation to the ideas and results of others that are contained in other documents and

in the literature sources. Citation technique must clearly indicate what is reproduced, from whom it is taken, and accurately identifying the source, from which it is taken.

(2) The citation technique follows the conventions of the respective scientific field, while acknowledging the corresponding standards and norms. The same citation technique should be used throughout the whole thesis.

(3) If the field of study does not have a specified citation technique, it is recommended to proceed according to ISO 690.¹⁰

Art. 7

Formal adjustment of the thesis

(1) The final thesis is usually prepared in the official (Slovak) language and generally in first person plural in the past tense. With the consent of the faculty dean, the thesis may be written and defended in a language other than the official language.

(2) The recommended font type is Times New Roman, size 12. Recommended page setting - line spacing 1,5; margins left 3,5 cm, right 2 cm, top and bottom 2,5 cm, orientation to portrait orientation, A4 format.

(3) The recommended length of a bachelors thesis is normally at least 30 to 40 standard pages (54 000 to 72 000 characters including spaces), the thesis 50 to 70 standard pages (90 000 to 126 000 characters), the doctoral thesis 80 to 120 standard pages (144 000 to 216 000 characters) and habilitation theses of up to 150 pages. The appropriateness of the scope of the thesis will be assessed by the thesis supervisor or the tutor.

(4) The final thesis must be written according to the valid rules of the Slovak language (or the foreign language used).

(5) The thesis has a standard layout and must respect the formal and citation criteria and the principles of referencing primary and secondary literature.

(6) The thesis shall be prepared in printed form bound in hardcover (in hard boards), printed, generally, on both sides so that the individual sheets cannot be removed.

Art. 8

Submission of the thesis, licensing agreement and originality check

(1) The author submits the final thesis according to the established schedule in electronic form (PDF file with the possibility of conversion to plain text) via the AIS¹¹; the deadline for submission of the thesis must be at least 21 calendar days, however, maximum 90 calendar days before the thesis defence date. The faculty may, by internal regulation, determine that the thesis shall also be submitted by the author within the above deadlines in printed form.

(2) The AIS will automatically generate a licence agreement draft (Annex 4) between the author and Slovak Republic and a licence agreement draft (Annex 5) between the author and the CU. Licence agreements shall be concluded through the AIS, within 30 days from the date of delivery of the draft

¹⁰ STN ISO 690:2010(E) Information and documentation - Guidelines for bibliographic references and citations to information resources; for examples of notation of literature used - see https://stella.uniba.sk/texty/690-2010_priklady.pdf

¹¹ § 8 sec.3 of Decree 233/2011

to the university.¹² The licence agreement shall be signed electronically.¹³ By an internal regulation, the faculty may determine that licence agreements shall be concluded in paper form and signed by the dean or his/her designee within 30 days from the date of delivery; original of each licence agreement shall be given to the author, the copy shall be placed in the student's personal file at the dean's office of the faculty.

(3) If the author requests in the draft of the agreement, a standstill period of more than 12 months from the date of the defence of the thesis, they shall also provide a statement of reasons for the requested delay. The Dean must comment on the extension of the period within 10 calendar days. The standstill period thesis may be a maximum of 24 months.

(4) If there are data in the thesis, the disclosure of which is excluded, in particular for the protection of a third party's commercial secrets, classified information or personal data, the student may include such data in special non-public documentation, which is not part of the published thesis and is intended exclusively for the tutor or thesis supervisor, opponent of the thesis and the thesis defence committee.¹⁴ This part of the thesis is not sent to the Central Repository or to any other originality checking system.

(5) Via the AIS, the thesis is sent with the relevant identification data to the Central Repository or other originality checking system as determined by the faculty, to verification of the originality. It is the duty of the tutor or the thesis supervisor to obtain the thesis originality protocols from the Central Repository and other system for checking of the originality, if used by the faculty.

(6) The thesis tutor's or supervisors assessment includes a statement on the results of the protocols on originality. In the case of external opponents, the workplace (department, institute or other organizational unit within the faculty) shall provide the originality protocols of the thesis to the opponent at the same time as the thesis is submitted for the purpose of elaboration the thesis opponent's report and shall ensure that the report is entered into the AIS.

(7) The reports are sent in bulk to the Central Repository via the AIS within 90 days from the date of submission of the relevant work. The reports are not made public through the Central Repository.

(8) The student has the right to be acquainted with the reports at least three working days before the thesis defence.

(9) In the case of rigorous theses, protocols of originality shall be provided by the staff member who was responsible for agreeing of the topic of the rigorous thesis.¹⁵ The originality protocols for the habilitation thesis are provided by one of the opponents authorised to do so by the Chair of the Scientific Board.

Art. 9

Thesis defence and its accessibility

(1) A condition for admission to the thesis defence is the student's written consent for the publication and making the thesis available to the public pursuant to § 63 sec. 9 of the Higher Education Act for the period of its retention pursuant to § 63 sec.7 of the Higher Education Act, without entitlement to remuneration,¹⁶ i.e. submission of signed licence agreements pursuant to art 8 sec.2

¹² § 3 sec.5 of Decree 233/2011

¹³ § 3 sec.6 and § 8 sec.8 of Decree 233/2011

¹⁴ § 62a ods.2 of the Higher Education Act

¹⁵ Internal Regulation No. 22/2018 Principles of the rigorous examination procedure at CU

¹⁶ § 51 sec.3 and § 63 sec.9 of the Higher Education Act

(2) As a part of the thesis defence the thesis defence committee for the state examinations evaluates the content and formal level of the final thesis, as well as its originality.

(3) Committee Chairman is responsible for recording the process and outcome of the defence in the AIS.

(4) After a successful defence, the information on the defence of the thesis is transferred via the AIS to the Central Repository and to the Library and Information System of the Comenius University, where the thesis will be made accessible.

(5) On the basis of the licence agreement pursuant to art. 8 par. 2, the CU is entitled to make accessible an electronic version of the thesis on its website via the Academic Library's Comprehensive Online Catalogue. On the basis of the Thesis Defence Committee, a university may restrict such access; in which case, the access shall be limited to the annotation of the thesis. Reasoned proposal to restrict the access of the thesis is submitted mainly by the tutor or the supervisor of the thesis.

(6) The operator of the Central Repository shall publish the thesis in bulk in accordance with a special regulation¹⁷ within 30 days after the expiry of the standstill period of the thesis, if agreed in the relevant licence agreement, otherwise, within 30 days from the date of the thesis defence. The CU shall, immediately after the defence of the thesis, deliver to the operator of the Central Repository the full information on the conclusion of the relevant licence agreement and on the date of the defence.

Art. 10

Written information

(1) If the subject of the thesis is the creation of a work of art in a medium other than literature form or the presentation of an artistic performance, the author shall prepare written information that includes¹⁸:

(a) the data ref pursuant to in art. 5 par.5,

(b) the type of work of art or artistic performance (a work of fine arts, a work of applied arts, an architectural work in three dimensions, a three-dimensional cartographic work, a photographic work, a musical work in sheet music, a choreographic work in choreographic writing, an audio-visual work, an artistic performance, etc.),

(c) the technical parameters of the work or artistic performance, in particular the dimensions of the work, the type of the work, the technique and material used, the format of the picture, the method of recording and reproduction sound, and an indication of the medium on which the work is originally recorded, if it is audio-visual work, the musical instrument, if it is a musical artistic performance, the duration of the performance of the audio-visual work, in particular if it is a performance by an actor, a director, a cameraman, a musician, and the day of the artistic performance.

(2) The author completes the essential elements of the written information referred to in paragraph 1, in the AIS. The disclosure of which shall not require a conclusion of a licence agreement.

(3) The author may supplement the written information referred to in paragraph 1, with artistic and historical background and a statement about the theme and the elaboration of the work, by inserting

¹⁷ § 4 sec.2 of Act No. 211/2000 Coll. on free access to information and on amendment and supplementation of certain Act (Freedom of Information Act), as amended

¹⁸ § 4 sec.1 of Decree 233/2011 Coll.

the document into the AIS. An access to this part of the written information requires a conclusion of a licence agreement.

Art. 11

Solemn declaration, discontinuation of public disclosure

(1) If the author has published the thesis or a part thereof in a periodical publication or as a non-periodical publication, he/she shall prove this by a solemn declaration (Annex 3). One solemn declaration may include information on all published parts and on all publications.

(2) If the author is in a legal relationship with the CU (as a student, a candidate in the rigorous procedure, a candidate in the habilitation procedure or an employee), he/she shall fill in a solemn declaration in the AIS. The author shall deliver solemn declaration to the repository operator via the AIS. The solemn declaration is signed electronically.¹⁹ If the author is not in a legal relationship with the CU, they shall deliver the solemn declaration to the operator of the Central Repository in paper form or by an electronic submission to the electronic registry of the operator.²⁰

(3) In the case of publication of the thesis, or a part thereof, the author may apply for discontinuation of public access through the Central Repository. If the author is in a legal relationship with the CU pursuant to paragraph 2, the request is submitted by the author, together with an affidavit through the AIS. If the author is not in a legal relationship with the CU, the application and the affidavit is submitted to the operator of the Central Repository in paper form. The application for discontinuation of an access through the Central Repository shall contain the data pursuant to art.5 par.3, the correspondence address of the applicant, and the scope and reasons for the suspension of disclosure.

Art. 12

Final provisions

(1) The thesis must be the original result of own and independent activity of a student, a participant in the rigorous procedure or a participant in the habilitation procedure. The thesis must not interfere with the rights or legally protected interests of a third parties, in particular, it must not infringe the intellectual property rights of a third party or unlawfully deal with classified information or personal data, confidential information or commercial secrets of a third party.²¹

(2) If, a student, a participant in the rigorous examination procedure or a participant in the habilitation procedure submits a thesis, a rigorous thesis or a habilitation thesis which, as a result of his or her fault is not at least in part the result of his own and independent activity commits academic fraud²²; this shall be without infringement to the right of a student, a participant in a rigorous process or a participant in a habilitation process to use information, materials and other objects, the origin or source of which he/she identifies in the work concerned.

¹⁹ § 5 sec.2 and § 8 sec.8 of Decree 233/2011

²⁰ § 5 sec.3 of Decree 233/2011

²¹ § 62a sec.1 of the Higher Education Act

²² § 62b of the Higher Education Act and Article 76 of the Internal Quality System

(3) In the event of finding of copyright infringement by the author of the thesis, the committing of academic fraud as well as other misconduct, the following shall apply the relevant legal provisions and internal regulations of the CU.²³

(4) Internal Regulation no. 12/2013 Directive of the Rector of the CU on the basic requirements of final theses, rigorous theses and habilitation theses, checking their originality, retention and accessibility at CU is hereby repealed.

(5) The annexes to this directive are:

Annex 1 Cover

Annex 2 Title sheet

Annex 3 Affidavit

Annex 4 Licence Agreement between the author and the Slovak Republic

Annex 5 Licence Agreement between the author and Comenius University Bratislava

(6) This directive shall take effect on the date of its signing.

In Bratislava, on 3rd of October 2023

Prof. Marek Števček, J.D., DrSc.
rector of the Comenius University Bratislava

²³ E.g. §108f of the Higher Education Act or Disciplinary proceeding of CU