

## How to Master Thesis @CERES – A Guide (1-Subject-MA-Programme)

Examination Order 2018

### Requirements for starting the thesis:

- 71 CP or more in eCampus
- Plus: passed and entered in the system:
  - S11: Key Concepts
  - PRE-Courses (Check your admission letter)

### Registration Process

Before you register:

- Check your courses – use the [To-Do-List](#) for a better overview.
- Combine modules in eCampus (see “[Documents](#)” website for instructions).
- Get modules confirmed by PD Dr. Maren Freudenberg .

The registration of the Master's thesis in the Examination Office is a legally binding process. Without the official registration you are legally not allowed to work on the MA thesis in detail.

Collect and fill [all relevant forms](#):

- “Stammdatenblatt” (your personal information)
- Form A (Thesis registration)

Form B (enough credits to register the thesis), & Form C (All CP are entered / not necessary for registering, but has to be handed in before finishing the program):

Online via Examination Office (“[Digitales Formblattverfahren](#)”)

→ Select Form B or C vis “Anmeldetyp”.

Good to know – forms:

Form A: The date on the form - the signature of the first supervisor - is the date on which the thesis is officially registered, so from this point onwards the countdown towards your deadline begins. Submit the form to the Examination Office no later than two weeks after the supervisor signs it. Important: The thesis title cannot be changed after this step, so you must stick with the title you registered in the form. If you change it in your thesis (title page), the Examination Office may reject the thesis (no joke!).

Other documents you might have to hand in within the registration process:

- Current study certificate for the respective semester.
- Copy of your Bachelor's certificate.
- Admission letter (for checking your requirements / PRE courses).

### Examination Office / Prüfungsamt

CERES is assigned to Examination Office Philology (Fakultät Philologie) at RUB – this is where you register your thesis. You can find contact information on their [website](#).

### Supervisors:

Every thesis needs two supervisors. Choose them according to the expertise they bring to the topic you will write about. If you are not sure whom to choose as your second supervisor, ask your first supervisor. You can find a list of possible supervisors [here](#).

### Scope

150.000 – 200.000 characters (including blank space), which makes around about 80 pages of text, depending on formatting

Standardised cover sheet – see “Titelblatt Masterarbeit” under [list of forms](#) on Examination Office’s website.

The thesis must contain a declaration of authorship (“Eigenständigkeitserklärung” under [list of forms](#)) – and in case you also have to submit a printed version, you have to include a declaration that the digital and printed versions match.

Maintain the general formatting for academic writing at CERES.

### Time frame:

You typically have four months to write your thesis, counting from the day your first supervisor signs Form A. In cases of empirical research topics, you have six months in total. Note that you may not submit your thesis to the Examination Office before at least 60% of the writing period has passed, as you are not to begin writing your thesis before registering it (thesis registrations shortly before submission are absolutely not allowed).

### Topic:

Reflects your specialisation in the Master’s programme. It cannot already have been dealt with in an earlier paper but needs to cover new material. However, earlier work may be extended upon if new angles are included. Approach your supervisors early on in the process to agree on the exact topic and the course of the work.

### Legal matters

Legally, you are not permitted to start the thesis before registration (as stated above). If you hand in your thesis too early, you risk an external review process and, worst case, a failed thesis. Remember: it is forbidden to reuse text passages from your prior work – even if the topic is similar, you must produce new work in the context of your final thesis. Plagiarism of all kinds is illegal and every thesis is checked for plagiarism by the Examination Office using a special software.

Recommendation for best case practice:

- Choose a topic you love!
- Look at the thesis as a project that will impact your future, not just as a study assignment.
- Make use of regular consultation hours with your supervisors as necessary.

- Be structured: Have a clear plan for the 4 or 6 months.
- Cognitive work is exhausting: set yourself clear goals on writing days and remember to take breaks!
- Reduce your stress level, e.g. by finding a hobby that doesn't take place at a desk.
- Use automatic grammar/orthography correction. Normally every text program has one.
- Plan enough time for the corrections and revisions at the end of the process. Ask friends or fellow students to proofread your thesis.

### Step by Step

- Check your courses, combine modules.
- Talk to a lecturer about a possible topic and a second supervisor.
- Get the necessary forms via "Digitales Formblattverfahren"
- Develop a title, collect all signatures, fill all forms.
- Send everything to the Examination Office.
- Get the confirmation from the Examination Office.
- Officially start your Master's thesis.
- Research, write, write, write.
- Review.
- Hand in the thesis.
- Wait for the response and the official documents / certificates.
- Obtain your Master's Degree.
- Celebrate!

*Please note: CERES and the Examination Office of Philology are two different institutions at RUB, which work together in cooperation. For more detailed questions about the registration process, you might be forwarded. This document is not legally binding, it is only intended to provide information. The Examination Office might change structures within the process which are not mentioned here.*