

# Master's Thesis Directions

Approved by the CMM Master's Program Committee  
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## General guidelines for master's degree thesis

The following instructions are for the master's thesis in Coastal and Marine Management master's program (hereafter referred to as CMM) at the University Centre of the Westfjords (hereafter referred to as UW). They apply to students enrolled in the program in 2011 or later.

### Scope

Thesis topics should have a focus on coastal and/or marine management issues/problems/projects, or have a very strong relevancy for that field of study. They should be of a cross-disciplinary nature.

A master's thesis in Coastal and Marine Management, towards a 2.2 master's degree as defined by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, earns 45 ECTS. This size applies to students enrolled in the program in 2010 or later. This does not apply to students who were enrolled in the program in 2009 or 2008.

### Goals

A master's thesis is the final project in the CMM master's program. It is the product of an independent research, must be completed individually, and can be based on primary and/or secondary data. If collection of baseline data is a prominent factor in the research, it should also focus on the management aspects of a chosen topic. The overall goal of the final project is to train students to employ academic working methods in an independent way.

### Academic Honesty

All students must sign and follow the *University Centre's Academic Honour Pledge* and fully respect intellectual property rights when writing their thesis, as well as in all other study assignments.

### Thesis Advisors

Students choose a thesis advisor in consultation with the program director. An instructor in the program may serve as an advisor. Students may also apply for an external advisor who fulfils the relevant conditions and requirements and has the necessary specialized knowledge and experience. The external advisor must be approved by the master's program committee, after consultation with the program director. In some cases, having two advisors may be recommended, but typically, there should only be one advisor.

### External/internal readers

All master's theses must be evaluated by the advisor and an external or internal reader. The master's program committee nominates readers. The guiding rules are: If the advisor is not an approved CMM instructor, the reader must be one<sup>1</sup>. If the advisor does not have a PhD, the reader must have a PhD. Both should have specialized knowledge in the relevant field. Readers must have a master's or doctoral degree and have extensive experience in the field of academia. When the advisor is not a faculty member and no appropriate internal reader can be found within the faculty member team he/she can be nominated from outside the program.

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<sup>1</sup> Academics with a position at an Icelandic university can be considered internal readers.

If a thesis is allotted two advisors, both of them, plus a reader, will evaluate the thesis.

## Program director's supervision of master's theses

The CMM master's program director oversees the procedures and content of all student theses. As such, the program director will be available to answer thesis related questions throughout the process. The role of the program director is to make first contact with the students regarding the requirements, guidelines and completion of the master's thesis. In consultation with the program director, students have considerable freedom to choose a topic within the field of coastal and marine management. Early in the process, the program director may present students with a list of available topics. However, it is the students' responsibility to make the choice and formulate a research idea. To that end, the student takes the initiative in contacting the program director for consultation.

In class group meetings, program director outlines the expectations regarding the thesis and related work. In private meetings between the program director and each student, individual situations are addressed. The purpose of these meetings is to assure that students are on track and ready to work on a successful thesis.

The primary duties of the program director regarding the master's thesis are:

- to take responsibility for the overall organization of the master's thesis process
- to maintain a list of master's theses including the names of each student, their advisor and reader
- to inform students of the rules regarding master's theses and take responsibility for helping students find advisors, which the master's program committee then has to approve of and nominate
- to give general guidance on choosing the best working methods
- to advise the master's program committee on the choice and nomination of readers
- to take responsibility for informing advisors and readers on program requirements, deadlines, and evaluation procedures
- to take responsibility for organizing public presentations (45 ECTS thesis) in consultation with the advisor, reader, relevant colleagues at the University Centre of the Westfjords, and the student involved
- to assure each thesis fulfils the formal requirements set by the master's program committee when it is sent to readers
- to resolve any matters in doubt, for example the choice of material/data or the division of duties between advisors (if there are two advisors)

If a formal or informal conflict of interest precludes the program director from fulfilling these duties in a given case, administrative rules (i. *stjórnsýslureglur*) apply and a substitute must be found to counsel the thesis process. If the program director is the thesis advisor, the master's program committee will assure that the tasks of the program director are fulfilled.

## The master's program committee

The CMM master's program committee is the ultimate supervising body for academic quality matters concerning the CMM master's program. The program director executes the committee's decisions, or ensures that they are executed. Among the master's program committee's roles is to

review study applications, approve study plans, assess the quality of instruction, approve/suggest instructors and advisors, nominate readers for exams and theses, and deal with other issues when so directed. The master's program committee decides on its own formal procedures.

## Roles, responsibilities and relationship of thesis advisor and student

The master's thesis is the final project in the master's degree program and has its own applicable learning outcomes, see Box 2. Upon the completion of the thesis, each student should fulfil those learning outcomes.

Choosing a project and working on it is the student's responsibility, in consultation with the program director and the student's thesis advisor. In exceptional cases, with the approval of the program director and the master's program committee, two advisors may be assigned to a student. In such cases, one of them must be the primary advisor. It is important that the division of duties and rights is clear if a project has two advisors.

### The thesis advisor's duties

1. The advisor explains the general requirements for a final project at master's thesis level to the student and gives the student encouragement, guidance, and direction in his or her work. The advisor should always follow the frame of reference provided in his/her copy of the relevant CMM master's thesis directions.
2. The advisor gives the student guidance on the following matters:
  1. deciding on the scope of the topic
  2. finding sources
  3. defining goals and research questions<sup>2</sup>
  4. preparing a detailed research plan
  5. gathering, processing, and analyzing research data
  6. presenting findings in a suitable manner and clear style
  7. advising on the general construction of the thesis, based on these directions.
  8. notifying relevant institutions when working with sensitive and personal data<sup>3</sup>
3. The advisor follows the project's progress and evaluates it with respect to the student's research and study plan.
4. The advisor assists the student in resolving any problems which arise during the project, such as methodological issues.
5. The advisor makes sure that the thesis is not prematurely handed in to the reader.

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<sup>2</sup> This applies in particular if the advisor works with the student prior to the submission of the thesis proposal, although research questions may in some cases develop further throughout the research process.

<sup>3</sup> For example the The Data Protection Authority (Persónuvernd) or other institutions those deal with matter of ethics and justice (i.e. in Iceland Vísindasiðanefnd, the National Bioethics Committee). The advisor should guide the student to receive any necessary research authorization.

6. The advisor communicates to the program director if problems arise, e.g. if a student refuses to take advise, or fails to meet agreed deadlines.
7. The advisor, along with a reader, is responsible for the final evaluation of the thesis (by 50% against that of the reader).

**Box 2: Learning outcomes for 45 ECTS master's thesis and oral defense**

Upon the completion of the thesis, each student must have:

**Knowledge**

- acquired knowledge through own desktop-based and/or field-based research
- ability to provide arguments for and defend their own findings, as well as providing constructive criticism for other people's findings and recommendations
- knowledge of science ethics, both in regards to their own scientific subjects and other members of the scientific community (e.g. plagiarism)

**Skills**

- ability to collect, analyze and evaluate scientific data as well and the quality of published work
- ability to develop projects and place them in context by applying methods based on scientific theories, policy instruments and management tools
- ability to effectively apply research methods and implement small-scale research projects
- ability to understand research and research findings

**Competences**

- developed the necessary learning skills and independence for further studies
- ability to initiate and lead projects within the field of coastal and marine management and be responsible for the work of individuals and groups
- ability to communicate complex scientific information, challenges and findings within the field of coastal and marine management to scholars as well as to general audience
- capability of presenting and describing scientific issues and research findings using analytical and methodological terminology
- ability to make decisions in an independent, professional manner and defend them
- ability to present statistical information using tables and figures in a clear and effective manner

## The student's role

1. Students are responsible for their studies, and they are expected to work independently and respect deadlines.
2. Students are responsible for keeping contact with the program director after the first meeting with their advisor, as well as updating the program director regarding the progress of their work.
3. Students prepare a detailed research plan in consultation with their thesis advisor, and create a schedule for the project and its completion.
4. Students, in consultation with their thesis advisor, determine what kind of guidance suits them best.
5. Students must take the initiative in negotiating meetings with their thesis advisor and in negotiating what work will take place between meetings.
6. Students complete the tasks which have been negotiated with their advisor within the agreed deadline, and respect their advice.
7. Students permit their advisors to follow their progress in their project. This also applies to those periods when the student and the advisor do not meet.
8. Students consult with their advisor and program director regarding submittal of thesis for evaluation.

## Communication between program director, thesis advisors and students

There is no fixed schedule of communication for the student and his/her advisor. It is recommended that there should be approximately 60 minutes of meetings/communication a week, while the thesis is in progress, for a total of no more than 26 meetings for a 45 ECTS thesis – 24 meetings before submittal of the final full draft and 2 meetings before the submittal of the revised final full draft. The advisor and student agree when to meet and the way they communicate. All communication about the final project counts towards meeting time, including assistance, guidance, emailing, telephone calls, and so forth. For every hour of meeting time, it is estimated that the advisor will spend two hours on preparation.

In total, the advisor spends no less than 90 hours for communication and the final evaluation of a 45 ECTS thesis. If a thesis advisor has not advised a student at the program before, he/she must have a Skype meeting with the program director in the first months of the work.

## Communication difficulties

If difficulties arise in communication between a student and his/her thesis advisor, for example if a student feels that the advisor is not providing appropriate guidance or is treating the student unfairly, the student has the right to - and should - send a written complaint to the master's program committee.

If an advisor feels that the student is not responding to advice or not respecting deadlines, the advisor can – and should - notify the program director as soon as it becomes evident.

In both cases, the program director can and - and should - intervene as early as possible, with the aim of resolving the matter between the parties involved.

## Starting thesis work: Proposal and registration

In consultation with the program director, students submit the final copy of their research proposals for their master's theses to the master's program committee by the end of Easter vacation each year.

### The research proposal for the master's thesis

The research proposal is a formal declaration of how the student expects to carry out his or her research. The goal of the research plan is to define the scope of the thesis, explain its purpose, define the preliminary research questions and explain the research methods. It should also include a preliminary literature survey. The research proposal also includes a timetable for the project and an explanation of its scientific and practical contribution; see Box 1 for further details. Typically, the research proposal should be about 5 pages long. It should not exceed 10 pages. Proposals exceeding 5 pages should contain an abstract. By the due date for the proposal, under the guidance of the program director, the student should ideally have found a thesis advisor. However, finding an advisor before the summer trimester is not a requirement. The program director ensures that a suitable thesis advisor is found as soon as possible after the final proposal has been approved by the program committee.

During the spring trimester, students are strongly encouraged to hand in a draft of the proposal to the program director for overall comments.

After submission, the master's thesis' research proposal is evaluated by the master's program committee and the program director. In due course, the appointed advisor must also approve the research proposal before the student may continue.

Approval is always relative to current conditions and is valid until such time as the circumstances of the project require that the research proposal and project description be changed.

### Master's thesis registration contract

After a research proposal has been approved, a master's thesis contract must be filled out by the director of education and teaching. The contract 1) represents the approval of the project and the advisor, and 2) serves as a contractor agreement between the advisor and the University Centre of the Westfjords.

## Writing a master's thesis: Frame

### Research Journal

Students must, from the beginning of their research, keep a journal of their work. The journal should be concise and specific. It will include an overview of all sources and data, how they are preserved, and their access and location as well as interviews, the identity of those interviewed, the subjects discussed, and anything which might later need to be recalled at short notice. Interviews provided orally should be recorded, transcribed, and eventually, approved by the source. The research journal is normally not turned in with the thesis, but is an important source for confirmation and validity of student's research work. The program director, thesis advisor and reader may, when necessary, require the student's research journal.

### Format

The thesis must be turned in in a book form (A4 size), written in English. If the University Centre of the Westfjords provides a template and other print directions that must be used when handing in a final print copy. Theses at the CMM master's program must have a standardized look.

Students can apply to the master's program committee to write in Icelandic. In such cases, the student must submit an argument as to why it is relevant to write the thesis in Icelandic. If a thesis is written in Icelandic, it has to have an English summary, approximately one page or 200 words. If a thesis is written in English, an Icelandic abstract is preferable, but not mandatory.

The thesis cannot be written in languages other than English or Icelandic.

### Length

There is no set length or fixed scope for the master's thesis and the advisor will guide the student towards an appropriate length and approach. The length of the thesis may depend upon many factors, such as the approach used or the amount of supporting data included. However, depending on the nature of the research, a typical 45 ECTS thesis in book form might be expected to be about 60-100 pages long, based on 250-300 words per text page. Normally, appendices and references do not count towards the above number of pages.

### Organization and style

The University Centre has a standardized master's thesis template. Students must follow the outline set by the template, which includes 1) the front page, 2) the title page, abstract, contents, index of tables, index of figures, acknowledgements, list of abbreviations, etc. 3) the body of the thesis and 4) the list of references. Further details can be found in the template.

Please consult relevant literature and thesis advisor for acceptable thesis-style writing.

### Source citations and references

Care and diligence is necessary in the presentation of the material, source citations, and references in a master's thesis. For citation questions and a reference list, students should consult with their advisor. To ensure consistency, the APA Harvard reference guidelines are strongly preferred.

## Writing a master's thesis: Contents

### Introduction

The purpose of the introduction is to present the project and to show why it is important. The introduction gives the reasons why the author chose to carry out this research and discusses the purpose the research will serve. In the introduction the student places the issue/problem/project into the context of relevant literature with a brief but critical examination of the state of knowledge in the field including a description of local settings/issue/gap in the literature. It is important to include research frame, the projects' aims and research question(s), and present arguments for the research question(s) and project's aims with reference to previous studies and research. Research questions should present enough information to be able to stand alone. Methods should be briefly explained. Research limitations should be presented. At the end of the introduction there is a short description of the organization and contents of the paper.

### Theoretical overview

In this section, the theoretical foundations of the project are discussed in depth and critically explored. It includes:

- Definition and explanation of terms and concepts
- Literature review:
  - Through description of the state of knowledge in the research field, it explains the importance of the current project and the knowledge and understanding that it hopes to contribute.

### Research methods

This section describes the premises for the research methods selection and how the research was carried out: what was done and how it was done. A detailed explanation of the methods used and why they were chosen and their limitations is a necessary part of this section. Any deviations from previously published methods should be precisely described and reasons for the deviation explained.

The goal of the methods' section in a research paper is to give the reader the information needed to evaluate the reliability and validity of the research results. The methods, procedures and data analysis must be thoroughly and clearly written so that they are repeatable.

### Results

Here the data analysis and results are presented systematically. They should be presented in the same order as stated in the introduction. The text of the paper should present the results systematically, and data and main outcomes should be presented in figures and tables<sup>4</sup>, if applicable.

Any lengthy presentations of detailed data should be placed in an appendix, which allows the data to be used to confirm the accuracy of descriptions, calculations, and other observations.

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<sup>4</sup> Figures and tables should be presented independently. However, they must be referred to in the main text. Figures and tables are to be numbered sequentially and must have legends and titles. Titles of figures should present enough information to be able to stand alone.

## Discussion/conclusions

This section discusses, evaluates and interprets the project results. Results should be discussed in reference to the research questions or problems that were laid out in the introduction, regardless of whether answers to them were found or whether the goals which the researcher set were reached. It is necessary to show and describe internal relationships between the research results and highlight unexpected conclusions. The results and conclusions have to be put into context of the scope of project/research and limitation of the applied research methods. It is important to take care not to repeat the research project's results, which should have been fully presented in the previous section.

Discussion on findings is a critical debate of the author's principal contribution with the research project. It reflects its outcomes with the stated purpose in the introduction and relevant literature review. It implies possible input for reconstruction of knowledge and practical solutions. This section must also discuss further research opportunities, what problems remain and how they might be addressed.

## Submission and graduation

### First full draft handed in to the advisor

By the end of the student's fourth semester she/he is expected to hand in the first full draft of the thesis to the advisor and the program director. The due date for handing in the first full draft of the thesis is December 17<sup>th</sup>. Final full draft (which is graded) is handed in a month later (see below).

### Last corrections of full draft

Within three weeks from December 17<sup>th</sup>, that is January 7<sup>th</sup> at the latest, the thesis advisor, through the program director, will announce to the student if the thesis is acceptable and fulfils the minimum requirements for the degree. At this point, the advisor can propose final corrections before examination. If prompted, the student should, in accordance with the advisor, make requested final adjustments to the thesis. If the student feels that the advisor's final requests and comments are not in accordance with previous guidance and comments, and cannot be address in approximately ten days, the student should notify the program director.

### Final full draft handed in to advisor and reader

Two weeks before the submission date, the program director consults the advisor whether the thesis will be ready by the due date, and thus, whether nomination of a reader should start.

When it has become evident that a student will enter the examination phase, a reader is formally nominated by the master's program committee. As previously stated, the guiding rules are: If the advisor is not an approved CMM instructor, the reader must be an approved CMM instructor (internal). If the advisor does not have a PhD, the reader must have a PhD.

The thesis is handed in again in two print copies, one to the reader and one to the thesis advisor, and mailed latest January 17<sup>th</sup> or the next working day after January 17<sup>th</sup>. Note: Print copies sent to advisor and reader at this stage should not be in spiral binding or other means of binding. An electronic version (PDF) is also emailed to the program director, the advisor and the reader.

At all stages of the master's examination (handing in of first full draft, final full draft and final print copy for approval), the program director must be co-copied.

If the nominated reader is not comfortable with proceeding after receiving the full draft, a student will be notified by the program director as soon as it comes up.

The formal evaluation and grading (for the full draft) needs to be done in a specific template/form, see appendix.

Evaluation work of advisor and reader is supposed to be finished before February 10<sup>th</sup> with a written evaluation of the thesis. The evaluation will be made in accordance with the evaluation guidelines given in this document and applicable learning outcomes for the thesis (see Box 2).

The advisor and the reader hand in a written evaluation of the thesis for the student based on a template provided by the program director. They are encouraged to give as detailed comments as possible.<sup>5</sup>

Along with the written evaluation, the student receives a grade breakdown for the thesis work. The grade registration form is eventually endorsed with the advisor's, reader's and program director's signature. If the reader and the advisor cannot agree on the evaluation, the final grade will be an average of the grades they submit (if the student has two advisors, their evaluations jointly count as one vote of equal value to that of the reader).

### Presentation and defence: Introduction of thesis topic and findings

In order to graduate, students doing a 45 ECTS project are obliged to give a presentation open to the public, the advisor and the reader where main findings of the project are introduced. This presentation and defence is a **requirement** for graduation, and counts separately as 10% of the final thesis grade.

Timing and organization of the lecture will be set in cooperation with the program director, ideally soon after submitting the thesis for examination. The student gives the lecture at UW, either in person at the Centre or through a video-conference system, Skype, or similar. The student is expected to highlight the main aspects of the project, research question(s), methods, major findings, practical value, academic value, and summary of main conclusions (including strengths and weaknesses), in a 35 minute lecture supported with Power Point slides. Following the lecture, 30 minutes are left for questions and discussion, first questions and comments from advisor and reader, and then moving to the audience. The event is lead by the program director.

### Last corrections and preparation for final print copy

If the final evaluation is conditional in any way, requirements for revision must be laid out by the advisor and reader with the utmost clarity at that time. The student receives comments in a word document via e-mail from the advisor and reader. Ideally, the previous print copies already received, with comments, should be returned to the UW.

If billed, postage costs are at the expense of the student.

The student is responsible for having access to his/her University Centre e-mail account during the master's examination period.

Nine (9) days after receiving evaluation reports from both advisor and reader, approximately mid-February, the student provides necessary corrections. The thesis advisor and the reader will then receive the revised copy and, if the requirements of conditions are met, notify the program director by email that the thesis is satisfactory for the amount of 45 ECTS.

Reading evaluation reports and responding adequately to requests for last corrections of the final copy for print is a **requirement** for graduation, but does not have a bearing on the thesis grade.

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<sup>5</sup> Ideally, print copies with written comments should be scanned and sent electronically as a PDF-file to the program director, who forwards the document to the student. Alternatively, the print copy can be sent by regular mail to UW, where it will be scanned and sent as a PDF-file to the student.

## Handing in the final copy of the thesis and completion of the program

The final master's thesis must be submitted in PDF-format to the program director, and must be confirmed by the printer before the given deadline (see table for deadlines). It must be printed in triplicate format. One copy is for the University of Akureyri and one for the University Centre of the Westfjords. The third copy is for the student. The printing of three copies is at the student's expense and the student is responsible for all contact with the printer regarding his or her thesis.

Handing in final print copies is a **requirement** for graduation.

Before graduation, a student has to submit an e-copy of the approved thesis to the Skemman database at the University of Akureyri. A member of UW staff provides students with sufficient guidelines.

Handing in the final copy of the thesis to Skemman database is a **requirement** for graduation.

Upon request, a preliminary confirmation of completed 120 ECTS studies at master's level, a transcript of completed courses, can be sent by the director of teaching and education to students as soon as they are issued by the University of Akureyri.

## Graduation ceremony

The University of Akureyri confers and awards the MRM degree. Students may want to attend the graduation ceremony in Akureyri in June. Furthermore, the University Centre may host its own graduation ceremony in the Westfjords, typically on June 17<sup>th</sup>.

If a student is not in the position to attend either ceremony, the graduation certificate, applicable learning outcomes for the program and a copy of the thesis (if not collected earlier) is sent to the student. The University Centre has permission to charge for delivery.

## Publication

Within a month of graduation, titles and abstracts will be available on the University Centre's homepage. Students' entire theses will be made available on the University Centre homepage and on the central homepage for theses at University of Akureyri within one year of graduation. If the thesis findings are intended for publication in a scientific journal or comparable publications, the master's program committee can allow exception from publication on the University Centre's web site for a limited time, usually a year.

## Extended deadline

In the case of exceptional circumstances, the student can apply to the Master's program committee for an extended deadline of three months and postponed graduation, whether before or during the examination phase. If granted, the following deadlines apply for the second deadline:

Step		First deadline	Second deadline (if granted)	Responsibility for meeting deadline
1	First full draft handed in for advisor.	December 17	March 12	Student
2	First full draft due back from advisor	January 7	March 26	Advisor
3	Revised full draft handed in for examination.	January 17	April 12	Student
4	Evaluation reports, specific comments and grade back from advisor and reader.	February 10	May 5	Advisor and reader
5	Revised final copy for print handed in for confirmation of it being satisfactory as a 45 ECTS thesis.	Mid-February - after receiving evaluation material from both advisor and reader, a student has 9 days (incl. two weekends) for last revisions	Mid-May - after receiving evaluation material from both advisor and reader, a student has 9 days (incl. two weekends) for last revisions	Student
6	After receiving confirmation, student hands in two print copies of the thesis to the University Centre of the Westfjords.	February 28	May 28	Student
7	After receiving confirmation, student hands in an electronic copy of thesis to Skemman at the University of Akureyri.	March 28	May 28	Student
	Graduation ceremony in Akureyri (if preferred)	Second Saturday in June each year <sup>6</sup>	Second Saturday in June each year	
	Graduation ceremony in Ísafjörður (if hosted)	June 17	June 17	

Note: A student who fails to complete step 1, 3, 5, 6 and 7 cannot graduate.

<sup>6</sup> The University of Akureyri only graduates students once each year, in June

## Thesis evaluation and grading: Frame of reference

In general, students who complete a 45 ECTS final project are pursuing a research degree and their final project involves scholarly research. In these projects a lot is expected of students in terms of research ability and methodological sophistication.

The advisor and reader read through the thesis, evaluate it and return a written evaluation that will form a base for the final grade for it. In evaluating a thesis, they must consider all the aspects outlined in the weighing of the thesis (see next page), as well as the thesis' learning outcomes (see Box 2). In addition, the following questions reflect the general criteria for evaluating master's theses.

1. Is the thesis topic introduced at the beginning of the thesis in a satisfactory way? Is the choice of topic and its importance justified?
2. Are the goals of the project clear? Are the questions or problems that the project attempts to resolve explained clearly?
3. Is the project placed in its theoretical context (or its historical or social context if appropriate)? Is the theoretical framework of the topic explained well? Are the unresolved issues connected to the subject matter discussed?
4. Does the author explain his or her connection to the topic and the way in which his or her perspectives and position might influence the work?
5. Are sources chosen and used appropriately?
6. Does the author clearly explain the research methods used, how the research was carried out, the participants in it and how the data was processed?
7. Is the data handled and processed in a careful, analytical, and critical way? Are conclusions drawn with due caution? Does the author explain the limitations of the project?
8. Do the data analysis sections give an informative description of the research results?
9. How good is the presentation of the material? Is the thesis organized in a logical way with good transitions between sections? Does the thesis form a unified whole? Are its goals achieved and its research questions answered? Are the most important results and lessons from the research summarized in a conclusion?
10. How is the writing and layout of the thesis? Is visual information well laid out and presented, if applicable?
11. Does the author demonstrate creativity and inventiveness, or shed new light on the subject? What is the value of the project? Does it make a contribution to knowledge in the field?
12. Are ethical matters or issues discussed, if applicable?

Criteria besides those mentioned here may depend on the nature of the subject matter. For example, differing criteria may apply to projects which involve qualitative and quantitative research methods.

## Weighing

The following list gives more detailed directions on the grading aspects and weight of each part. An evaluation form can be found in the appendix.

The reader and the advisor submit, to the program director, a written evaluation of the thesis, and explain their reasoning consistent with the norms of the thesis evaluation. If the program director judges that master's projects have been graded in an inconsistent way, he/she makes suggestions in writing, explains the reasons and communicates them to the advisor and reader. The advisor and the reader must reply to the program director's suggestions in writing before the grade can be posted, regardless of whether they take them into consideration.

As soon as grades arrive from the advisor and reader, the program director calculates the average, rectifies grading if needed (in consultation with reader and advisor), and seeks confirmation from advisor and reader. Then the program director communicates the grades to UW's administrative director of education and teaching. Finally, the program director notifies the student of the grade. Typically, a student receives a grade for a final project a few days after he/she receives evaluation reports.

## Grading

Consistency in grading is very important. The following frame of reference should be used:

### Thesis

Thesis	Weight
Research frame, scope, research questions.	10%
Theoretical foundation, literature review	10%
Choice of sources and methods	5%
Survey, data collection	15%
Project findings, academic and practical value	20%
Analysis, insights, discussion and conclusions, proposed further research	25%
Overall organisation and mechanics. Overall clarity and focus. Tables and figures.	15%

### Presentation, defence

Oral presentation and defence	10%
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### Calculation

Combined grade (y) for:	
a. thesis (100%)	
b. presentation and defence (10%)	110%
$y / 110 * 100 =$	
final grade for thesis	

Grade	Description	
10,0 (97,5-10)	Superb	The student shows exceptional ability. Ready to publish.
9,5 (92,5-97,4)	Excellent +	The student exceeds by far basic requirements.
9,0 (87,5-92,4)	Excellent -	The student exceeds by far basic requirements.
8,5 (82,5-87,4)	Very good +	The student meets the requirements for the project well.
8,0 (77,5-82,4)	Very good -	The student meets the requirements for the project well.
7,5 (72,5-77,4)	Good +	The student meets the requirements for the project.
7,0 (67,5-72,4)	Good -	The student meets the requirements for the project.
6,5 (62,5-67,4)	Fair +	Somewhat more than the minimum.
6,0 (57,5-62,4)	Fair -	Somewhat more than the minimum.
5,5 (52,5-57,4)	Acceptable +	The project meets minimum requirements.*
5,0 (47,5-52,4)	Acceptable -	The project meets minimum requirements.*
0-4,5 (0-47,4)	Unsatisfactory	Does not fulfil minimum requirements.

\*Note: Students are advised to seek information regarding combined minimum average grade for courses and final project. If a combined average grade is lower than 6.0, an MRM-degree cannot be awarded.

# Appendices

## Appendix 1: Master's thesis evaluation form

Project title (in English):
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Student:

Evaluation done by:

Date:

Grade: See grade registration form

<b>Evaluation category:</b>	<b>Well done:</b>	<b>In need of improvement:</b>
Research frame, scope, research questions (10%)		
Theoretical foundation, literature review (10%)		
Choice of sources and methods (5%)		
Survey and data collection (15%)		

Project findings, academic and practical value  (20%)		
Analysis, insights, discussion and conclusions, proposed further research  (25%)		
Overall organisation and mechanics. Overall clarity and focus. Tables and figures.  (15%)		
Oral presentation and defence  (10%)		

## University Centre of the Westfjords – Master's thesis evaluation form

Project title (in English):

Student:

Evaluation done by:

Date:

Grade: See grade registration form

**Specific comments** (please refer to page numbers):

## Appendix 2: Grade registration form



### Grade registration form - 45 ECTS master's thesis

Coastal and Marine Management

Name of student:

Kennitala (ID):

	Weight (max)	Score - Advisor	Score - Reader	Average	%
Research design, theor. foundations	25	0,00	0,00	0	0,0%
Survey, data collection	15	0,00	0,00	0	0,0%
Findings, value	20	0,00	0,00	0	0,0%
Analysis, discussion, conclusions	25	0,00	0,00	0	0,0%
Overall organisation and mech.	15	0,00	0,00	0	0,0%
<b>Total</b>	100	0	0	<b>0</b>	
Master's defence	10	0	0	0	0,0%

	Weight (%)	Average
Thesis	100	0,00
Public presentation and master's def.	10	0,00
Combined grade thesis + pres. and def.	110	0,00
Combined grade / 110 * 100		0,00
<b>Final grade for thesis</b>		<input type="text"/>

#### Supervisory Committee, Signatures:

DATE/YEAR

\_\_\_\_\_  
xxxxx, Advisor

DATE/YEAR

\_\_\_\_\_  
xxxxxx, Reader

DATE/YEAR

\_\_\_\_\_  
xxxxx, Program Director