

General Regulations Concerning the Master's degrees 2015–2018

1.8.2015 School of Information Sciences (SIS)

The study-related instructions and curricula of the School of Information Sciences will continue to be used in connection with the degree programmes of the Faculty of Natural Sciences.

Unofficial translation – In case of any discrepancies between the Finnish and the English versions, the original Finnish version shall prevail.

1. Degree Programmes at the School of Information Sciences

The School of Information Sciences offers four Master's degree programmes in English

Master's Degree Programme in Computational Big Data Analytics

Master's Degree Programme in Human-Technology Interaction

Master's Degree Programme in Internet and Game Studies

Master's Degree Programme in Software Development

Degree programme graduates are awarded a Master of Science degree, in Finnish filosofian maisterin tutkinto, (120 ECTS).

A Master's degree is a higher university degree (second cycle degree).

2. Overview of the Degree Structure and Required Studies

The new curricula come into force on the 1st of August 2015 and are valid for the next three academic years (2015-2018). The curricula guides define the detailed degree structures, learning outcomes, contents and the order for completion of studies. The variety of available study units is confirmed every year in the teaching schedule. The School gives instructions on transition rules between the old and new curricula on degree programme websites.

The Master of Science is a higher university degree. A Master of Science degree (120 ECTS) must include advanced studies, the extent of which ranges from 60 to 85 ECTS depending on the degree programme. Advanced studies must include a Master's thesis, which is usually worth 40 ECTS. Other courses included in the Master's degree are specified in the curriculum.

The detailed structure and content of the degree, the order of the courses to be taken and the optional studies included in the degree programme are also specified in greater detail in the curriculum.

3. Language and Communication Studies

If a Master's degree student, who has done his/her schooling either in Finnish or Swedish, has not completed the second national language studies stipulated by the Government Decree on University Degrees in a lower university degree or comparable studies, must the language studies be completed for the Master's degree.

Other potentially compulsory language and communication studies are defined separately in the curriculum. The language and communication studies required in Master's degree programmes given in English at the School of Information Sciences are described below.

Language and Communication Studies

International students (8 ECTS):

- KKENMP3 Scientific Writing, 5 ECTS
- KKSU1 Finnish Elementary Course 1, 3 ECTS

Students with education in Finnish and BSc degree taken outside SIS (9 ECTS):

- KKENMP3 Scientific Writing, 5 ECTS
- KKRULUK Swedish Written and Oral Communication, 4 ECTS

Swedish course is required only if no Swedish studies were taken in the Bachelor's degree.

Students who have taken their BSc degree at SIS:

- KKENMP3 Scientific Writing, 5 ECTS

The course is recommended if the Master's thesis is written in English.

4. Internship

An internship may be included in the degree. If a student wishes to pursue this option, he/she must independently arrange it. Internship can take place in Finland or abroad. In order for the student to earn two ECTS, the internship must last at least one week and no longer than three weeks. A student may have internships in both his/her Bachelor's degree or polytechnic degree (e.g. Finnish AMK) and Master's degree, but the total number of credits awarded for internships cannot exceed 10 ECTS.

Any internship must meet the following requirements:

- It must be approved beforehand by the degree programme person in charge of internships. The student must submit an internship plan to the person approving the internship.
- The employer must appoint someone to supervise the student (a workplace supervisor) for the duration of the internship.
- The student must submit a written report to the person in charge of internships, who will then authorise the credits to be granted.

The extent and completion of the internship is defined in greater detail in the curriculum.

5. Personal Study Plan

Each student must draw up a personal study plan (HOPS). A personal study plan for a Master's degree is to be drawn up together with the person nominated by the Master's degree programme. For more information on the personal study plan, please contact the programme tutor teacher of the relevant degree programme.

6. Transferring to Another Degree Programme

The Dean of the School may grant a student permission to transfer to another SIS degree programme or a different specialization within the same degree programme if the student has good reason to do so and if the other degree programme can accept the student. Transfer cannot be applied for before a student's second year of studies. More information on the application process is available on the UTA admissions website (in Finnish: *Valintaopas*).

7. Deviating from the Degree Structure

The Dean may grant a student permission to deviate from the established degree structure if there are good reasons for doing so. Applications are to be submitted to the SIS Office. There is no dead-line for submitting an application.

8. Recognition of Previous Studies

Recognition of previous studies is granted according to the general principles of the University of Tampere's General Regulations on Degrees.

Recognition of previous studies taken at another institution of higher education in Finland or abroad is decided by the Dean, instructor responsible for the course, Head of Study Affairs, or other authorized person.

Credits for courses taken may be transferred if they fit the objectives of the degree curriculum the student is currently pursuing. From a degree quality assurance point of view, the basic principle is that credits over 10 years old cannot be transferred. If the credits are over 10 years old, the instructor responsible for the course can evaluate whether the studies have become outdated and the student may be given an opportunity to supplement his/her studies or give a demonstration of his/her proficiency.

Studies, which are not incorporated in another degree, can be transferred in two ways: either by including the courses taken elsewhere into the degree as such, for example as optional courses, or by substituting courses which are part of the degree programme with the courses taken elsewhere. Substituting previous studies for courses which are part of the curriculum requires similarity of content and degree level. The Dean, the Head of Study Affairs or the instructor responsible for a certain course will decide according to principles that have been decided separately whether course credit can be transferred.

Studies taken as part of a previously earned university degree may be transferred if they correspond to compulsory studies detailed in the curriculum. Compulsory studies include basic, intermediate, and advanced studies in student's own degree programme as well as language and communication studies, and other general studies. The curriculum may also dictate some optional studies as compulsory. These cannot be transferred.

Studies included in a lower university degree cannot be transferred towards a higher university degree.

More detailed information about transferring studies taken elsewhere can be found on the SIS web pages.

9. [Regulation not relevant for Master students]

10. [Regulation not relevant for Master students]

11. Expiration of Studies

Complete study modules, general studies, maturity tests and compulsory language courses do not usually expire during studies, and they are included in the degree in their original extent.

Instructions on supplementing incomplete study modules are given in transition regulations.

Curriculum gives instructions on outdated components of study units.

The degree programme may, however, necessitate the student taking supplementary courses if deemed necessary for the continuation of his/her studies. If the curriculum has been changed substantially, the

student and the teacher responsible for the study module must agree how the student can complete an uncompleted module.

From a degree quality assurance point of view, the basic principle is that credits over 10 years old cannot be transferred. If the credits are over 10 years old, the instructor responsible for the course can evaluate whether the studies have become outdated and the student may be given an opportunity to supplement his/her studies or give a demonstration of his/her proficiency.

12. Course Evaluation and Registering Studies

Course evaluation follows the evaluation criteria and grading scale as presented in the UTA Regulations for Evaluation of Studies. Evaluation of studies is dictated in more detail in the curriculum and teaching schedules.

Courses, study modules and theses are graded pass/fail. Passed courses are graded unless there is a justified reason not to give a grade. The grades are as follows:

sufficient (1)

satisfactory (2)

good (3)

very good (4)

excellent (5).

If a student does not attend the course and does not cancel his/her registration or later discontinues the course, he/she will be given the grade 'fail' for the study unit.

Unless otherwise prescribed, the grade of a study module is calculated as an ECTS credit-weighted average of all the course grades of that module. Pass-graded study units do not affect the average grade given for a study module.

The grade for Bachelor's thesis is calculated into the average grade for intermediate studies and the grade for Master's thesis is calculated into the average grade for advanced studies.

The degree certificate will state the total number of ECTS and the average grade (in writing) for each study module. Bachelor's degree certificate will state the number of ECTS for basic and intermediate studies and the average grades for the study modules. Master's degree certificate will state the same for advanced studies. In general, optional studies will be recorded in the certificate separately, if at least 15 ECTS have been completed in the subject. A study module is recorded in the certificate only if it has been given a final grade. All study units of the study module in question will be compiled for the final grade.

13. Priority Order

If the number of students enrolled on a course, seminar, etc. is higher than there are places available, priority is given to those students for whom the study unit is compulsory and who have completed possible prerequisite studies. If there are not enough places for all these students, priority is given depending on the specialization, number of ECTS, and success of previous studies.

The curriculum may restrict a study unit for students of particular programme/specialization only.

The instructor responsible for the course may grant exemptions from the above-mentioned regulations for special reasons. The Dean will settle any unclear issues.

14. Practice Research Paper

Practice research papers may be included in the Bachelor's or Master's degree as described in the curriculum for the various degree programmes. The purpose of a practice research paper is to train students in scientific writing and the clear and careful use of language. Practice research papers are written under the supervision of the thesis supervisor, and both the paper's content and language are evaluated. The language, style and format of the practice research paper is checked either during a course in scientific writing or after the student has taken such a course. The practice research paper may form part of the student's thesis.

15. [Regulation not relevant for Master students]

16. Master's Thesis

In order to earn their Master's degree, students must write a Master's thesis and take the accompanying maturity test as a part of their advanced studies. The Master's thesis must be in the field of the student's degree programme/specialization.

The Master's thesis demonstrates that the student is familiar with his/her topic, research methods, good research practices, and the conventions of scientific writing and written expression. The Master's thesis is worth 40 ECTS, but Mathematics students specialised in teacher education receive either 25 or 40 ECTS for their Master's theses.

The thesis may be either one of the following:

- A unified research paper (a monograph)
- An integrated entity of research papers together with a summary (an article-based thesis).

A previously published paper may be approved as a thesis if it fulfils the School's criteria for theses.

If the thesis is co-authored, each student's individual contribution must be shown. Also, the work-load of each student must correspond to the workload required of an individually written thesis. Each student's contribution is evaluated individually. Co-authored theses can even be written in the field of two or more degree programmes or specializations. In such cases, supervisors will be appointed for each degree programme or specialization and student.

16.1. Maturity Test

Each student must take a written maturity test based on his/her thesis showing that the student is familiar with the topic of his/her thesis and has an excellent command of Finnish or Swedish. The maturity test is taken in Finnish or Swedish depending on the student's language of previous schooling.

If a student has received his/her schooling in some other language he/she will take the maturity test in English. The maturity test may be taken in some other language than these with the consent of the Dean.

For the test, a student is required to write an essay on a topic related to his/her thesis topic. A student can sign up for this test after his/her thesis has been submitted for evaluation and the supervisor has given the student permission to take the test. The supervisor will provide the student with at least two topics, of which the student chooses one. The supervisor evaluates the test's factual content and a language teacher its language, style and format.

If a student has taken a maturity test for a lower university degree or a previous higher university degree in Finland, a maturity test is not usually necessary to prove the student's linguistic competence. In such cases, the student's familiarity with the topic can be proven with the thesis summary.

16.2. Submitting a Master's Thesis

The Master's thesis is an advanced-level academic project which demonstrates the student's understanding of good scientific practices as well as understanding of study and research ethics as detailed in the curriculum learning outcomes. To ensure that good scientific practices have been adhered to, each Master's thesis is assessed with the Turnitin plagiarism detection software before the thesis is submitted for the evaluation process. The Turnitin assessment is made by the thesis supervisor.

After this the Master's thesis is submitted in electronic format for evaluation, the Library's collection and filing as instructed by the School/degree programme and the Library. For more detailed instructions, please visit the Library and the degree programme websites. A separate one to two page summary must be attached to the thesis. The School/degree programme will provide more detailed instructions on how a summary should be written.

If the curriculum specifies that students are required to write a practice research paper, then the paper must be completed and evaluated before the Master's thesis is submitted for evaluation.

16.3. Master's Thesis Evaluation

Master's theses are evaluated by at least two examiners appointed by the Dean.

If an essay-form maturity test is written for the thesis, the examiners must submit their reports no later than four weeks after the student takes the maturity test. Otherwise the examiners must submit their reports within three weeks. The Dean may grant an extension for the deadline for particularly serious reasons.

The examiners' report is sent to the student at least four days before the thesis is awarded a grade. If the student wishes to respond to the report, he or she may do so. The response must be submitted to the School by the deadline given. If the student does not wish to respond to the report, the Dean will award a grade based on the examiners' report. If a student writes a response, it will be handled by the Dean. If necessary, the Dean can assign the matter to the SIS Management Board.

The pass grades for a Master's thesis are: sufficient (1), satisfactory (2), good (3), very good (4), excellent (5).

A passed and graded Master's thesis cannot be resubmitted (see Section 11 of the Regulations for Evaluation of Studies).

16.4. Petition for Reconsideration

A student who is dissatisfied with the grade of his/her Master's thesis may submit a written petition for reconsideration to the SIS Management Board not later than 14 days after the grade was made available to the student.

University of Tampere gives more detailed instructions concerning the Master's thesis and the maturity test in its thesis writing instructions.

17. [Regulation not relevant for Master students]

18. Graduation and Applying for a Degree Certificate

When a student has completed all the studies required for his/her degree, he/she applies for a degree certificate. The application form is available online in NettiOpsu. The Dean will award the degree certificate on application.

Before applying it is the student's responsibility to ensure that all courses and final grades of completed study modules have been entered into the study register.

19. Development of Education

The School will appoint a curriculum committee whose duty is to work on the development of de-gree programmes and prepare curricula guides. The committee's members include instructors, students, and other experts as needed.

Follow-up data and student feedback is used in the future development of education and evaluation of services. The School's feedback processes are described on the School website.

The instructor responsible for the teaching arranges the evaluation of teaching and learning. The person in charge of the degree programme is responsible for degree programme quality assessment. The Dean is responsible for larger, School-wide assessments.