

Guide for conducting independent project at the NJ-faculty at SLU

This is a general guidance to the practical work conducting an independent project (a Master thesis project). In all parts, official SLU documents dictates frames and regulations. See [riktlinjer för självständiga arbeten](#) (only available in Swedish).

The guide applies to projects in the main subject areas biology, environmental science, soil science, food science, agricultural science, chemistry and technology.

All forms and other information are collected the following web page: <https://internt.slu.se/nj-exjobb>

Time	Student	Supervisor	Examiner
Before the start of the course	<p>The student should start looking for a research topic and supervisor well in advance of the start of the course. Contact SLU departments and/or companies, authorities etc. to find a suitable project. Most SLU departments present available projects on their web pages. To find a supervisor, or to get advice on developing an individual project, contact former teachers within the same subject area. The main supervisor must come from SLU. It is the student's responsibility to find a main supervisor from SLU if the project will be conducted in cooperation with an external part.</p> <p>Apply for the course at www.universityadmissions.se before Apr 15 for the autumn semester, and before Oct 15 for the spring semester.</p>	<p>The supervisor discusses the student's ideas with the student.</p> <p>The supervisor assesses whether the suggested project is feasible within the guidelines set by the course syllabus. Doubtful cases should be discussed with the examiner. Such guidelines include those relating to the size of the project, and whether the topic fits the main subject area for the independent course.</p> <p>If needed, the supervisor suggests contacts at companies/organisations/departments/etc. The supervisor should also identify co-supervisors, if appropriate.</p>	<p>When applicable, the intended examiner checks whether the suggested project fits the syllabus for the course.</p>
Start of the course	<p>The student and supervisor(s) should together design a work plan for the project.</p> <p>Enrolment in the course is conditional on the student and supervisor reaching agreement about a work plan for the project.</p>		
		<p>The supervisor suggests, and the supervising department assigns an examiner. The examiner must belong to a department with "examination rights" in the main subject area of the thesis.</p>	

	<p>The student and supervisor together complete the registration form (see web address above) and give it to the director of studies at the department where the main supervisor is affiliated.</p> <p>If the main supervisor comes from a department which does not have examination rights in the main subject area of the thesis, the registration form is instead given to the director of studies at the department of the examiner.</p>		<p>The examiner reads the grading criteria for the course (see web address above).</p>
		<p>The supervising department registers the student in LADOK and enters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - supervising department, - supervisor and - examiner, <p>in function SA20.</p> <p>A copy of the registration form should be sent to the staff member having main administrative responsibility for independent projects in the subject area of the thesis.</p>	<p>In exceptional cases, when the supervising department lacks examination rights in the main subject area, the examining department does the registration in LADOK, see cell to the left.</p>
<p>Supervisor and/or examiner go through the grading criteria with the student. Student, supervisor and examiner inform themselves about course syllabus, this guidance document, and other relevant information about the course.</p>			
	<p>The student informs her/himself about the compulsory parts of the course and how these should be completed (see web address above).</p> <p>Occasionally, it may be possible for compulsory components to be completed based on work undertaken prior to commencement of the course – this should be discussed with the examiner.</p>		<p>The examiner assess whether work undertaken prior to commencement of the course can be counted towards completion of the compulsory course components.</p>
<p>The student and supervisor(s) together complete the work plan document (see web address above) and pass on the signed plan to the director of studies at the supervising department. The work plan can and should be revised during the course of the project as needed (see below for more).</p>			
During the course	<p>The student undertakes the project according to the work plan. The student and supervisor should maintain frequent contact during the whole project.</p> <p>Main responsibility for maintaining contact lies with the student</p>	<p>The supervisor ensures availability for supervision, and commits to answering questions as soon as possible.</p> <p>The supervisor should contact the student if the student maintains less frequent than agreed upon.</p>	
<p>If the project is delayed due to circumstances beyond the control of the student, the time schedule in the work plan should be revised. (This may include illness, broken equipment, etc.)</p>			

	<p>The student completes the compulsory parts.</p>	<p>The supervisor ensures that the student has undertaken all compulsory parts, and reports this to the examiner.</p> <p>All directors of studies receive lists of students that have completed and passed the compulsory parts.</p>	
	<p>For BSc level (G1E), the student should attend at least two other presentations of independent projects.</p> <p>It is the student's responsibility to find presentations to attend.</p>	<p>The supervisor ensures that the student has attended two presentations, and reports this to the examiner.</p>	
Opposition, MSc level	<p>For MSc level (A1E and A2E), the student should be an opponent on a fellow student's thesis and oral presentation, and likewise have a student opponent on his/her own thesis and oral presentation (see link).</p> <p>It is the responsibility of the student to find an opponent, and to identify another student to act as opponent to.</p> <p>If the student has problems finding an opponent or someone to act as opponent to, the director of studies at the supervising department can help asking for candidates at other departments.</p> <p>Some departments coordinate these reciprocal opposition arrangements centrally. If so, the students will be informed about this at the start of the course.</p> <p>The opposition should be oral immediately after the presentation, and also be summarised in a written report of ½-1 page.</p>		
Written report	<p>The student writes a thesis, under guidance from the supervisor.</p> <p>Already early, and on a continuing basis throughout the project, the student gives drafts to the supervisor for</p>	<p>The supervisor reviews drafts and gives feedback to the student, within the agreed time frame for response.</p>	

	<p>comments. The student uses the comments to help improve the text.</p> <p>In most cases the thesis should be formatted according to the template shown by the library during the compulsory lectures.</p> <p>The report should include ½ page abstract, and for MSc projects also a 1 page popular scientific summary.</p>		
Oral presentation	<p>Student, supervisor, examiner and when applicable also the student opponent and his/her examiner agree on a time for the oral presentation. The presentation may be given whenever it suits all people involved, or on the scheduled days for oral presentations that are organised by some departments (if the student is doing the project ant any of these departments).</p>		
		<p>The supervisor books a suitable room for the presentations (if not presented on one of the pre-organised days), and announces the presentation to the target audience.</p>	
	<p>The student gives an oral presentation.</p> <p>For MSc projects, there should be a student opponent.</p> <p>See above for details!</p>	<p>The supervisor for the student giving the presentation chairs the session.</p> <p>The supervisor should give feedback on the presentation, and on how the student answered questions and criticism.</p>	<p>The examiner is present and evaluates the oral presentation; this may be done by a deputy examiner.</p> <p>The supervisor for the student giving the presentation must not be the deputy examiner!</p>
	<p>For MSc projects, the student should be opponent on another student presentation.</p> <p>See above for details!</p>	<p>The supervisor of the student-opponent gives feedback on how the opposition was performed, and on the written summary.</p>	<p>The examiner (or deputy) is present and evaluates the oral and written opposition.</p>
Completion	<p>The student revises the draft text according to comments from the supervisor and feedback received during the oral presentation.</p>		
		<p>The supervisor is responsible for having the final text checked for plagiarism, using Urkund, and to take measures if plagiarism is found (see SLU policy och handlingsplan mot fusk och plagiering).</p> <p>The forms for the Urkund-check vary between departments.</p>	<p>The examiner has formal responsibility for confirming that the text has been checked for plagiarism, and should receive the evaluation from Urkund.</p>

	When student and supervisor agree on the final version of the thesis, it should be given to the examiner for grading		
			<p>The examiner grades the thesis, using the version of the grading criteria current at the time the student started the course.</p> <p>The examiner checks with the supervisor about the contribution of the student to the work, including the student's level of engagement.</p>
	The student is asked to fill the on line course evaluation, available at Fronter . This can be reached from the student web portal.	The supervisor and examiner complete the form for reporting a finished BSc/MSc thesis, and pass it on to the director of studies at the department of the examiner.	Note that "Date when student had fulfilled all requirements to pass", is the date when the student had passed all compulsory components of the course, not the date the examiner finally looked at the thesis!
LADOK input			The examining department enters the grade in LADOK, according to SLU regulations.
Publication in EPSILON		The supervisor is responsible for ensuring that the final version of a passed thesis is published in EPSILON. This should be handled by the responsible person at the department, not by the student.	
If not passed	The student is responsible for revising the text according to comments by supervisor, examiner and opponent (if applicable).	The supervisor and examiner repeat applicable parts of the points above.	