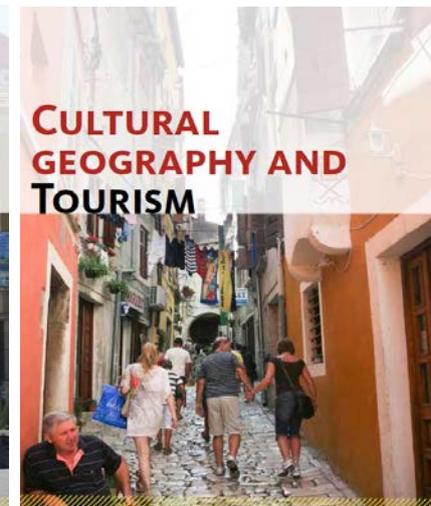
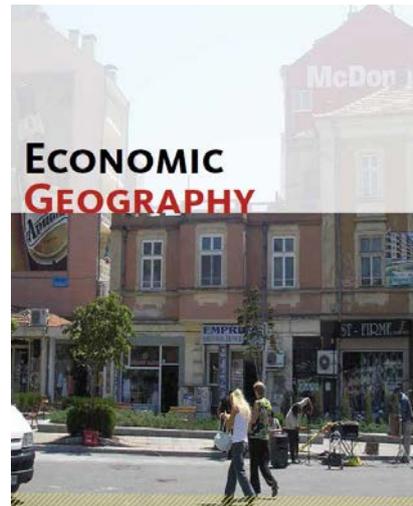
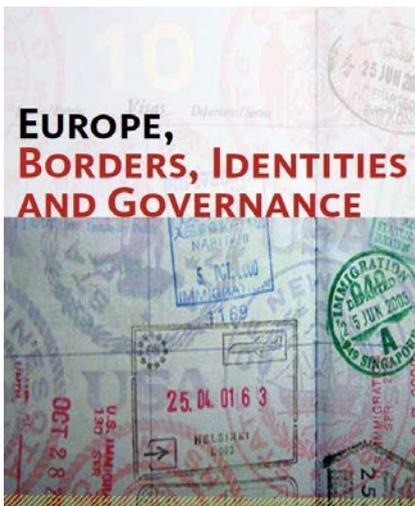
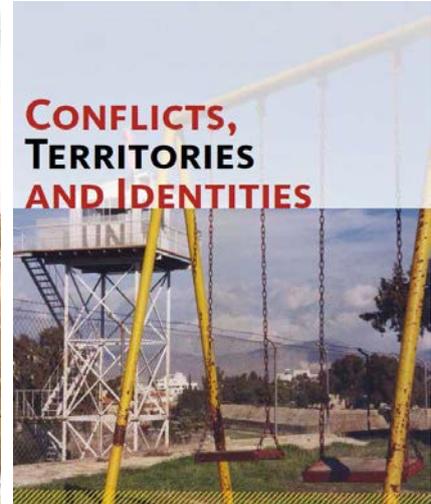
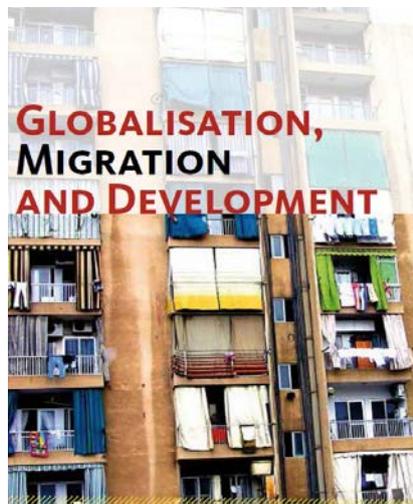
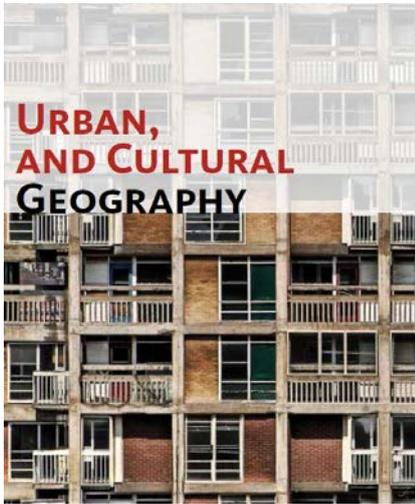


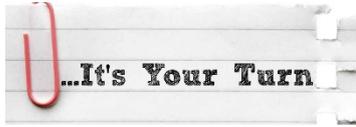
# Human Geography



**Radboud University**



# Student guide Master Human Geography



We assume that all students had their basic academic training in their Bachelor programme. Now it is the turn of the Master Student to make their own choice and specialise and focus on the specific topic of their interest within the broad field of Geography. Our Master students should follow their passion for that topic, especially also because if you follow your passion, that will also be what you do best. The best way to deepen your knowledge in that specific topic of your choice, is by doing research on that topic. Therefore your the Master Thesis Research is the backbone of the Human Geography Master Programme, irrespective if you will become a professional researcher after you graduated in our Master Programme, or if you will follow some other professional track. The knowledge and analytic skills you will gain in our Master Programme will be very useful in all cases. The courses we offer in your master specialisation, are not seen as preparation before you start your research, but as parts of the research. So from day one in our master programme, you will focus on your Master Thesis Research. It is therefore crucial that you already have first ideas about the topic of your Master Thesis Research before the programme even starts. The first blow is half the battle.

## *Be prepared*

As it is the aim of this part of the Master to get you ready for starting the opus magnus of your university career (writing your master thesis) as soon as possible it is of utmost importance that you do have preliminary ideas on a possible topic of your master thesis. To get some 'food for thought' there is a repository containing theses from previous years.

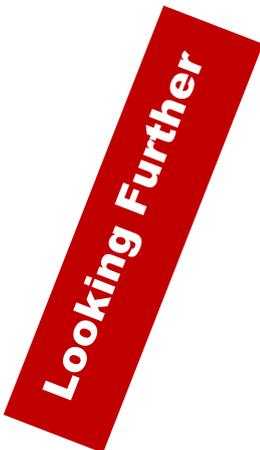
<http://theses.ubn.ru.nl/handle/123456789/31/browse?value=Master+Human+Geography&type=curriculum>

## *Elective courses*



The mandatory courses of your Master Specialisation are probably important building stones of your Master Theses Research, but since each of you has an individual and personal research topic, there is also some free space in the programme, which you can fill with elective courses of your own choice. They maybe about anything which in your eyes would be very useful and needed to do your Master Thesis Research. For example, they can be about certain research methods you would like to apply in your Master Thesis Research, or they might provide you more background knowledge about the area, where you want to do field work research. Elective courses are not restricted to the courses we offer, but may also be courses offered by other disciplines at our university, or offered by other universities in the Netherlands or abroad (e.g. at a local university in the area where you will do your field-work). We also observe, that many students enhance the programme of their Master Specialisation, by taking courses from other Human Geography Master Specialisations as an elective course. So there is a maximum of flexibility in the programme. Also the time, when you want to take these elective courses is up to you, whenever it suits your time schedule best. As some potential elective courses already start right at the beginning of the first term (and sometimes you also have to go through a quite lengthy bureaucratic procedure to gain admission to those courses), it is highly recommendable to make your (preliminary) choices before the start of our master programme, so that you do not miss the opportunity for taking these elective courses.

These elective courses must be of master level. Only in exceptional cases are bachelor's courses acceptable as elective courses, e.g. if a specific statistical technique, or qualitative method you need for your master thesis research is only offered in a bachelor course. Of course the technique or method is still the same irrespective if you apply it to bachelor or master research. Language courses or academic skills courses such as 'academic writing' are of course highly recommended but usually do not qualify as elective courses in this master programme (they can be taken as extra-curricular courses and if they are on master-level can also be listed on your diploma supplement when you graduate).



## Research Internship



The Master Thesis Research is to be conducted in the framework of a **Research Internship**. In a research internship you are not(!) a cheap labourer for the internship organisation. On the contrary, you are solely or mainly conducting your scientific Master Thesis Research on a topic which is of direct relevance to the internship organisation. Therefore, it is important that, parallel to the development of your research proposal, you should also try to find a suitable internship organisation, which would be interested in the results of your Master Thesis Research. You are, therefore, challenged to formulate the topic and research question of your Master Thesis Research in such a way, that they also meet the needs of the internship organisation. Flexibility in both directions, is therefore crucial. As a consequence, defining your final research topic and research question and finding a suitable internship organisation is a bit of an iterative process and should go hand-in-hand. Note in this respect, that also internship organisations often only vaguely know, what is important and relevant for them, and do not have a clear cut 'research question' for you on stock. It is often a process of searching, finding and negotiating what would be the best topic and research question for them and for you.

The main objective of this requirement, is that you learn how to make your scientific research practically relevant and how to negotiate the topic and research question with and how to communicate it to an organisation from the praxis field. Finally it has shown in the past, that the fact that you do not conduct your Master Thesis Research solely within the ivory tower of an academic institution but in contrast, in direct relation to a praxis organisation, will help you substantially to find a job in the professional field after graduating in our master programme.

In many cases, your research internship will not be full-time, since a number of will probably also still have some course obligations parallel to the internship. Also, if you translate the 24 EC you will get for your thesis including internship, into number of hours, this would amount to about 3 months full time. But as your own experience with your Bachelor Thesis probably also has shown, you cannot conduct a full-fledged research project from A to Z within three months. There are always moments, where you need to wait, e.g. before you can get an appointment with your next interviewee, etc.. So in general you should count with a longer 'running time' for your Master Thesis Research project. It is also important that you will be able to finish your Master Thesis Research including the writing of your thesis *within* the framework of your internship. Only in this way, you can make sure, that you have the full support of the internship organisation until the completion of your thesis and that you can report the results back to them and have their feedback on your results. Therefore it is recommended, that you, instead, try to arrange an internship of around 6 months. If you finish your Master Thesis earlier, then, especially since the Master Thesis Research is the only or main part of your research internship, it is usually no problem to quit earlier. But in this way you have the best guarantees that you can complete it within the framework of your internship. The Research Internship Organisation can be located in the Netherlands, or abroad. It might also be an international organisation. Depending on where your actual research work takes place, it could be that you do your research from their office, but in other occasions, it might very well be, that you are related with them through the Research Internship, but you never see their office space, because you will mainly be 'out there in the field'. So again, there is a maximum of flexibility. Our experience shows that it might take some time and effort to find a suitable internship organisation that also fits your research interests and where a position is available at the time you want to start your master thesis research. Therefore, we recommend you to contact your master thesis supervisor as soon as possible and discuss with him/her your ideas about your master thesis research subject and potential internship organisations.

There is also a list available on Brightspace containing organisations where students did there internships in the past (<http://www.ru.nl/gpe/study-resources/internships-links/>). It will be useful to start the process of applying for internship positions as soon as possible, although never contact any potential internship organisation before you have informed your supervisor or the master thesis coordinator Dr. Martin van der Velde (he might also be able to assist you how to proceed in contacting the organisation).

Also note that other universities can also act as an internship organisation. If they for example have a running research programme of which your master thesis research could be part of, and given that they can provide the necessary local supervision, it might be feasible

to do your research internship there. This is also an opportunity in the framework of an Erasmus exchange programme.

In general students are encouraged to conduct research abroad as far as feasible and as far as it contributes to the aims of the specific master specialisation. Note, however, that:

Finding a host organisation for your research internship abroad is usually more time consuming than organising a research internship in the Netherlands. It is, therefore, recommended to discuss this option with your Master Thesis Supervisor as early as possible.

You need to have sufficient language skills to conduct research abroad.

As other universities abroad also qualify as external research internship organisations, you might want to make use of exchange programmes in order to obtain funding and to conduct your master thesis research abroad. Very often, if you make use of an exchange programme, the guest university offers you a list of courses (offered in English) that you could take at that university. 'Master thesis' usually is not listed as such. Nevertheless, also the master thesis formally has the same status as a 'course'. The only difference is that a master thesis is not collectively 'taught' but individually 'supervised'. So even if it is not listed as a course which you could take, it might be worthwhile exploring what kind of human geographic research (or related research, e.g. in the field of political geography and conflict resolution) is being conducted at the guest university. Of course this also implies that you will need to find a local 'supervisor' who is willing to arrange this for you and to offer you the necessary facilities to conduct your master thesis research in this framework. If you have arranged this, it is usually possible to make the 'master thesis' part of your learning agreement.

In the same way, but only in a very exceptional situation, you could also do a research internship in the framework of a running research project of our own department. However, this is certainly not the purpose of the external internship. Also, in contrast to most external organisations, we will not be able to pay any internship allowance.

Note that you are not allowed to start your Research Internship, if your Research Proposal is not approved and graded by the Master Thesis Supervisor.

Usually the Research Internship Organisation designates a local supervisor who has sufficient expertise in the field of research and who can advise the student both on contents and on the research process. The local supervisor should also introduce the external organisation to the student and let the student participate in local activities as far as this is useful for conducting the master thesis research. The Local Supervisor is important for the relation with the Research Internship Organisation but is *not* involved in the academic assessment and grading of the final Master Thesis.

Some Research Internship Organisations require an Internship Contract. As long as the above criteria are met, the Radboud University does not require such an Internship Contract. If one is nevertheless needed, a template for such a contract is available on Brightspace, or you can use the version provided by the Internship Organisation.

### ***Master Education Plan***

As you notice, there is a lot of flexibility and are many choices to be made. To make sure that these choices are well underpinned, the Education and Examination Regulation of the master programme Human Geography, prescribes that each student makes, in close collaboration with the Master Thesis Supervisor as early as possible, decisions on the proposed subject of the master thesis research, on the potential Research Internship Organisation and on the elective courses to be followed. The main purpose of this master education plan is to make sure that the master thesis research is guiding the whole master programme, including the choice of the internship organisation and for the choice of the elective courses and that all requirements are fulfilled. This is a bit of a formality, but without official approval of your Master Education Plan, you will not be able to graduate. It is always possible to change your Master Education Plan again at a later stage, and ask for renewed approval.



## ***Research proposal***

In the first term of the Human Geography Master Programme, in the framework of the 'Preparing the Master Thesis Course' you will step for step develop your Master Theses Research Proposal, in which you elaborate your research problem, research objective, research questions, theoretical and conceptual framework, research design and methods, and time schedule. In a number of assignments you will configure your research project and research proposal. Usually substantial parts of your Research Proposal can be (re-)used in the final version of the Master Thesis, so writing your Research Proposal is also working on your final Master Thesis.

## ***Master Thesis Supervisor***



You will be assigned a Master Thesis Supervisor as soon as possible, who will provide feedback on drafts versions of your Research Proposal and of your Master Thesis, and will coach you throughout the whole process. Also your fellow students will assist you in the development of your Research Proposal by discussing, evaluating and (constructively) criticising your Research Proposal throughout the development of it.

The initiative for making appointments with Local Supervisor in the Research Internship Organisation or with your Master Thesis Supervisor at University lies with the master student himself/herself. So in this respect you are responsible for the quality and intensity of the supervision of the Master Thesis Research. Therefore you should, without being asked, regularly report to the Local Supervisor in the Research Internship Organisation and to the your Master Thesis Supervisor at University and arrange bi- or trilateral meetings with them. Note that supervisors might have full calendars or be abroad for conferences etc., so make sure that you arrange these meetings well in advance, or set up a fixed schedule of meetings from the beginning (cancelling is easier than finding new dates).

It is crucial that the master student timely signals and discusses any problems or questions that arise and that are essential for the progress of the research. You are responsible for 'ringing the bells' in time.

## ***Requirements for the master thesis***

The master thesis is supposed to be a scientific report on a 'problem-oriented theory-led empirical research' project. It is the acid test for the objectives of the master education programme. It should show that you are able to set up and conduct a scientific research project in the field of human geography, with which you contribute to the current scientific theoretical debates, and with which you contribute to the solution of a current societal problem. In contrast to the bachelor thesis, you are expected to position yourself with your master thesis in the debates within the field and to develop your own ideas and contribute to the advancement of scientific knowledge in an innovative way. This implies that you show that you are able to critically reflect on these debates, and locate your own perspective in these debates in a well-founded way. These and other, more standard state of the art requirements are also reflected in the following assessment form used by the supervisor and the 'second reader' of your master thesis. You should use this form as a guideline for writing your master thesis.



	remarks	<4	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<b>Formal:</b>									
Structure: inner structure (logical ordering of information, relationships between sentences, paragraphs and chapters, quality of line of argumentation) and utter structure (ordering of sections, chapters, correct numbering, guidance of reader, titles)									
Style: academic or concise-scientific (accessible, brief, precise, enticing)									
Illustrations: value-added, functional and correct use of maps including legend, schemes, tables, diagrams, graphs, pictures etc.									
Originality of form									
Volume within limits of 20'000-35'000 words (excluding table of contents, appendix, etc.)		No			Yes				
<b>Grade for master thesis itself</b>									

<b>Process: (only for supervisor)</b>	<i>Does not apply for 2<sup>nd</sup> reviewer</i>								
Own initiative and creativity of student									
Dealing with critiques and suggestions									
Live up to deadlines and agreements									
Length of process in relation to quality of product									
Dealing with special circumstances									
<b>Possible adaptation of grade for master thesis for reasons of process max. +/- 1 grade point but by doing so a 5 cannot be changed into a 6, nor the other way around</b>									
<b>Final Grade</b>									

\* **Attention!** If one or more scores fall in the grey shaded boxes, the thesis is not admissible

\*\* Note that the final grade is not an arithmetic mean of the grades on specific aspects, since the weight given to the different aspects may vary from thesis to thesis, as they might be quite different in their aim and objectives.

If necessary additional motivation for the final grade:

Date:

Signed:

## Guidelines for filling out this assessment form

The Master-Thesis serves as a final assessment of knowledge and skills in scientific research in the respective discipline (Spatial Planning, Human Geography, Environment and Society Studies). As such we want the master thesis to be representative for the objectives of the respective master programme. We therefore want the master-thesis research to exemplify **problem oriented, theory led empirical research** at academic level.

Both the master-thesis supervisor as well as the second reviewer should fill out the form and have their forms filed together with the final version of the master-thesis. Normally, the master-thesis supervisor determines the final grade of the master thesis. Although he or she fills out the assessment form in full, and independently, the evaluation of the thesis by the second reviewer mainly serves as a second opinion to support the judgement of the master-thesis supervisor and to make sure that this judgement is not biased. The final grade for the master-thesis therefore is not necessarily the arithmetic mean of the two grades. In case the overall grade for the thesis itself (not taking the process into account) by the master-thesis supervisor diverts more than one grade-point from the judgement by the second reviewer, they should try to resolve the differences in judgement together. *The difference is resolved if the difference is at maximum 1 grade point and if both reviewers agree that the thesis is sufficient ( $\geq 6$ ) or both agree that it is insufficient ( $< 6$ ).* In case they cannot resolve the differences, the examination board can ask the master-programme coordinator to come to a final verdict. The possible differences in judgement are an exclusive issue for the master-thesis supervisor, the second reviewer or the master coordinator, and should not be presented to the student. Usually only the master-thesis supervisor motivates the final grade to the students after the differences are sufficiently resolved.

For a number of criteria some additional (informal) comments by the examination board may help to apply these criteria in a sound and standardised way:

### Contents

#### **Foundation of societal relevance**

The problem orientation presupposes that every master thesis clearly states, what the societal problem is, which is addressed by the research. Formulations like 'it is interesting to...' are clearly not concrete enough in this respect. Why is it interesting? What would be the practical problem if the research would not be done or not be successful? Why is this such a pressing problem?

#### **Foundation of scientific relevance**

The scientific relevance is always more or less derived from the societal relevance and the current state of scientific knowledge. What is lacking in empirical and theoretical scientific knowledge, which makes this master-thesis scientifically relevant? How will scientific development be able to progress with the help of this master-thesis?

#### **Clear formulation of problem, objectives and research questions**

For the formulation of the problem see also our remarks above. The objectives of the master-thesis research should identify the general lack of scientific knowledge related to the problem focussed on in this research. The research questions formulate as concrete as possible the specific elements of knowledge to be generated by this specific master-thesis research project. Conclusions should refer back to these research questions.

#### **Critical discussion of relevant theories and well-argued choice for a theoretical framework**

In contrast to a bachelor-thesis in which we expect students to pick a theory and to apply it in a methodologically correct way in their empirical research, in a master thesis we expect a much more critical reflection on the choices made. We therefore expect that different (state of the art) theoretical approaches to the same problem are discussed and compared. Theories exist on different levels of abstraction, reaching from first (descriptive) conceptualisations of an empirical phenomenon, to specific (mid-range) theories explaining the processes behind these phenomena, to more general (grand) social theories (applicable in many different fields and disciplines), to the philosophical foundations of these social theories. Master theses might be different in their reach of abstraction, but academic research (also on master level) always makes use of a theoretical assessment of the phenomenon investigated and contributes constructively to the development of new theoretical insights. Of course development of new theories is pretty ambitious, even for master-theses, but 'new theoretical insights' can also comprise further elaborations, confirmations, conceptual refinements, or also insights in shortcomings of existing theories.

On the basis of this comparison we expect that the choices made are motivated and underpinned. So it clearly is not sufficient if it is only mentioned, which theory is used, or applied, or explained what this theory implies. This implies that one would expect a comparative argument, why this theoretic approach fits better than a competing alternative. So what is the critique of alternatives and why is the chosen theoretic approach a better one? Or if no comparative argument can be made one would at least expect an argumentation why this specific theoretical approach is most suitable for investigating this specific phenomenon.

#### **Critical discussion of relevant methodologies and research methods, and well-argued choice for methodological approach and research methods:**

Scientific research differs from day-to-day knowledge because of its systematic and rigorous use of methods to collect, interpret and analyse data. Again we expect a critical reflection on the choices made. We therefore expect that different (state of the art) methods to the same problem are discussed and compared. We often note that such an overview is only limited to the methods used to collect data. This is clearly not sufficient. We also want a discussion of the relevant methods of interpretation or analysis of the collected data.

On the basis of this critical evaluation we expect that the choices made are motivated and underpinned. So it clearly is not sufficient if it is only mentioned which method is used or applied or explained how this method is used.

#### **Collection of necessary data**

The choices made above usually have far going repercussions on the choice of case studies, sampling methods, ways of collecting data etc. It is essential that the master thesis research shows a consistent and rigorous application of scientific research methods. The data collection should be driven by the research questions and the applied methods and not the other way around and this should be made clear in the description of data and data-collection methods. Many details, such as interview guides, transcripts of interviews, coding-schemes, long tables, or even full data sets, can be included in the appendix to the master thesis or should be made available as electronic copy for the archive. In science it is a principle that we expect that research results can be reproduced.

#### **Handing in final thesis, primary data material and thesis assessment**

Note that the procedure for finalising the thesis, the assessment of the thesis and the handing in of the thesis and the assessments forms is described on the following webpage: <http://www.ru.nl/gpe/study-resources/useful-links/finalising-your-thesis/>

#### **Systematic interpretation of results in relation to research questions**

The application of methods does not end when data collection is finished. Also the interpretation of data demands systematic scientific methods. The master thesis should clearly show how interpretations are systematically and methodologically derived. Intuitive ('guess-')work is not acceptable. We also sometimes observe that statistical techniques are insufficiently applied or not applied at all, although the kind of research(-question) would actually demand it. Scientific research results should be more than qualified guesses or

impressionistic (or theoretical) arguments. We expect that scientific statements are empirically scrutinised/tested and underpinned. It should (potentially) be possible to reproduce the results. Data files, coding schemes, interview recordings, statistical computations, etc. should be archived.

***Well underpinned conclusions in relation to research questions***

Are research questions clearly and unmistakably answered? And are these answers stringently and directly derived and underpinned?

***Originality of contents***

How new, unexpected and innovative are the research questions, theoretical approach/argumentation, research methods, and/or research results?

***(Original) contribution to further development of theory***

We expect that a Master's thesis contributes to theory development. This can be done in various ways, such as a systematic testing of one or more hypotheses, the development of new theories by integrating parts of existing theories, or the development of a grounded theory.

***Recommendations for praxis***

As each master thesis research starts off with a concrete problem, we may always and without exception expect that some kind of recommendation can be made on the basis of the research results. This does not need to be a 'patent recipe' which certainly will solve the problem at stake. Rather these recommendations can vary in degree of abstractness, from concrete policy recommendations, to more general recommendations of aspects to take into account or alternative ways to follow. These recommendations can also be directed to the praxis of doing scientific research.

***Critical reflection on limits of own research, results and recommendations***

The master-research never answers all questions. What questions remain unanswered? What new questions and problems have popped up? What are the short-comings of the methods used? What problems did the student face with collecting the data? How can the research still be improved? In how far can results/conclusions be generalised? How can they be enhanced through alternative approaches?

**Formal**

***Structure:***

Inner structure, logical ordering of information, relationships between sentences, paragraphs and chapters, quality of line of argumentation, and utter structure (ordering of sections, chapters, correct numbering, guidance of reader, titles). The master thesis should not only have a logical structure, but should also contain a guide for the reader, paragraphs which connect chapters etc.

***Originality of form***

Does the master thesis have a special layout, graphic design, special printing format or accompanying digital media? If the thesis has a nice, original form, you may reward this by giving a high mark otherwise you may write in text 'not applicable'.

***Total length within the norm***

In general the main text of the master thesis should not exceed 20000 to 35000 words, excluding front and back-material (preface, table of contents, list of references, summary, list of tables and figures, appendices etc.).

**Process**

***Own initiative and creativity of student***

Does not need further elaboration.

***Dealing with feedback***

Every research project is a learning process. The supervisor evaluates how the student dealt with his/her suggestions, comments and critiques. Of course this does not imply that tractability is better than (self-)critical reflection.

***Live up to deadlines and agreements***

Does not need further elaboration.

***Length of process in relation to quality of product***

A master thesis can be good, but the supervisor should also take the length of the process in relation to the quality of the final master thesis into account.

***Dealing with special circumstances***

During the master thesis research process sometimes special circumstances are encountered. These may be of personal nature but often also of a more research technical nature: data can turn out not to be available, analysis of data can break down, etc. The supervisor takes into account, how the student dealt with these circumstances.

*Any comments or questions about these guidelines for filling out the assessment form are highly appreciated and can be addressed to the chairman of the examination board: [h.ernste@fm.ru.nl](mailto:h.ernste@fm.ru.nl)*

## **Making the thesis public**

Scientists do not just do research for themselves, but also make their research 'public' so that it can be assessed by their peers for scientific accuracy and can possibly be developed further. This is why scientists are required to publish the results of their research. The degree to which scientific papers are cited by colleagues, is taken to be an indication of the quality of their scientific research. This is also the main reason why we think it is crucial that also your Master Thesis Research is made public digitally in the Master Thesis Repository of the Radboud University, so that everyone who is interested has access to it. We also ask you to fill out a consent form when your thesis is finished (which is available on Brightspace).

## **Formal criteria**

### **Language**



The thesis must be written in **English** according to the usual scientific standards for scientific publications. Only in very exceptional cases is it possible to submit a thesis in Dutch or another language. To be able to do so you will need to present strong arguments and submit a written request to the examination board. That the Research Internship Organisation prefers a thesis in Dutch, or that you conducted your data collection in Dutch, are not sufficient reasons to write your thesis in Dutch. In those cases you can instead always write a Dutch summary as part of your thesis, or you can write a popularising article on your Master Thesis Research in the Newsletter of the Research Internship Organisation, or give an oral presentation for them on your research results, to meet their needs for a Dutch report.

Even if a deviation from the above rule would be accorded, which is, as experience has shown, very unprobeable, the thesis still has to contain an executive summary in English.

### **Structure**

A suggested standardised structure for a master thesis is:

- Cover page (which is numbered I, although page number is not shown) including your name
- Title page
- Preface
- Table of contents
- List of Figures and/or List of Tables

Note: Until here these front material pages are numbered in *roman numbers*, i, ii, iii, etc)

This **front material** is followed by the actual chapters (of which Chapter 1 is the introduction) (At the beginning of Chapter 1 numbering of pages starts over again with 1, 2, 3, 4, ... in *normal numbers*, each chapter starts on a new uneven numbered page, but sections within a chapter can be continuous and need not to start on a new page)

Usually each chapter and (sub)sections of chapters are numbered in the following way:

#### **1. Title of chapter** (level 1)

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#### **1.1 Title of section** (level 2)

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#### **1.1.1 Title of subsection** (level 3)

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**Title of subsection** (level 4)

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**1.2** ...

... etc.

*Note carefully where these numbers are followed by a period and where they are not.*

*Do not use more than three numbered levels.*

The **back material** consists of:

- Bibliography
- Appendices
- (Executive) summary (not longer than 2 A4 pages).

**Size/Length**

In general the main text of the master thesis should not exceed 20000 to 35000 words, excluding front and back-material (preface, table of contents, list of references, summary, list of tables and figures, appendices etc.).

**Way of quoting and referencing**

There are many systems for quotation and referencing. We highly prefer and recommend the APA-standard (<https://www.ru.nl/gpe/study-resources/overview-useful-links/apa-conventions-referencing/>). Take care to be very systematic and precise from the beginning in this respect, because this can save you lots of time at the end of the process. Do not invent your own system.

**Finalising and grading your master thesis**

- 1 If the Master's thesis has been completed (ask your supervisor if he/she thinks that this version is acceptable and can be submitted as a final version), the student uploads the Master's thesis to the Brightspace site pertaining to the Master's course Preparing the Master's thesis.
- 2 The thesis will then automatically be checked by the anti-plagiarism software.
- 3 The student sends the Master's thesis by e-mail to the Supervisor/First Reviewer. If desired the student gives also a hard copy of the final version to the Supervisor and/or Second Reviewer.
- 4 The student uploads all of the relevant data<sup>1</sup> pertaining to the (empirical) research to the Brightspace site of the 'Preparing the Master's thesis' course. **If this material is not complete, the Master's thesis cannot be accepted for submission.**

Relevant data for the Master's thesis research are:

- All the primary data collected by the student (SPSS-data sets, interview transcripts/MP3 interview recordings, etc.) To be able to interpret these data the Code-Book (explaining how the answers were coded in the data-set) also needs to be included.
- A copy of the instrument with which these data were collected (questionnaire, interview guide, etc.) as far as this has not already been included in the thesis itself.

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<sup>1</sup> In principle, this data material is exclusively for the archive and may also contain confidential material. Using this data material for other purposes is only allowed when the Master's student has granted his or her consent and within the framework regarding agreements made concerning the confidentiality of the respondents.

- Since data-material passes through different phases of data-handling until it can serve as under-pinning for the conclusions, it is very important that these steps of data-handling are well documented in the Master's thesis. It is highly recommended that, e.g. in case of qualitative data, the interpretative coding of these data in the form of NVivo or Atlas.ti Coding-Files are also included.

If this material is not complete the Master's thesis cannot be accepted for submission.

- 5 The first reviewer checks the results of the anti-plagiarism check, and if this does not raise any questions, he/she sends the Master's thesis to the second reviewer by e-mail, and the first reviewer assesses the thesis using the assessment form within the prescribed or time agreed upon.
- 6 Parallel and independently of the assessment by the first reviewer, the second reviewer assesses the Master's thesis using the assessment form within the prescribed or time agreed on.
- 7 The first and second reviewers discuss the assessments and try to reduce possible difference in the overall assessment of the thesis itself (without taking the process into account). The difference is resolved if the difference is at maximum 1 grade point and if **both** reviewers agree that the thesis is sufficient ( $\geq 6$ ) or both agree that it is insufficient ( $< 6$ ). The first reviewer determines the final grade, and inserts that into the assessment form. If the difference cannot sufficiently be reduced, the first reviewer will report this to the Examination Board, which will then take a final decision.
- 8 The supervisor, who is also the first reviewer, submits the assessment form of the first reviewer as well as the assessment form from the second reviewer, and the digital version of the Master's thesis for archiving to the secretary's office ([inleveren-GPM@fm.ru.nl](mailto:inleveren-GPM@fm.ru.nl)). In addition, the supervisor provides the original, completed and signed assessment forms to the secretariat for processing the result in Osiris by the student administration.
- 9 The student is required to send the following by e-mail to the secretary office ([inleveren-GPM@fm.ru.nl](mailto:inleveren-GPM@fm.ru.nl)):
  - An abstract of maximum 200 words in Word
  - A signed submission form ([https://www.ru.nl/publish/pages/664691/ma\\_submission\\_form\\_masterthesis\\_radboud\\_university\\_new.pdf](https://www.ru.nl/publish/pages/664691/ma_submission_form_masterthesis_radboud_university_new.pdf)) allow publication of the master thesis in the RU repository in pdf
  - If your thesis appears to be too large to send it as an e-mail attachment, you can use one of the numerous free services for sending large files, e.g.: [www.wetransfer.com](http://www.wetransfer.com), etc.

Master students 'Human Geography' should not forget that the elective courses you took in the framework of your master programme need to be approved by the examination board. For this purpose, in an assignment within the course 'Preparing the master's thesis', you have filled out your Master Education Plan (MEP) and you have submitted that via Brightspace. The examination board has evaluated that MEP and if it was o.k. also gave its approval. If plans have changed later on during your master programme you should have re-submitted the updated MEP and you should have informed Prof. Huib Ernste by E-mail ([h.ernste@fm.ru.nl](mailto:h.ernste@fm.ru.nl)), so that he could take care of evaluation and approval. Without this official approval of your MEP your elective courses cannot be listed as part of your master programme and consequently you will not be able to graduate. So take care that your final MEP is submitted via Brightspace and that the examination board has approved it before you apply for graduation.

### **Applying for graduation**

Normally, the Master's thesis is the last part of the Master's degree programme and after having successfully finished your thesis, you would like to apply for graduation. For this purpose see also: information about applying for graduation. An overview of dates of graduation ceremonies is provided here. Further information about the graduation ceremony itself can be found here.