

	Remarks	<4	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Formal									
Structure: clear inner structure (logical ordering of information, relations between sentences, paragraphs and chapters, quality of argumentation) and overall structure (ordering of sections, chapters, correct numbering, guidance of reader, titles)									
Academic style: accessible, precise, enticing									
Illustrations: value-added, functional and correct use of tables and figures (incl. diagrams, pictures, maps including legend, etc.)									
Volume within limits of 20.000-25.000 word range (excluding table of contents, appendix, etc.)		No			Yes				
Grade for bachelor thesis									

Process (only for supervisor)									
Own initiative and creativity of student									
Dealing with feedback									
Live up to deadlines and agreements									
Length of process in relation to quality of thesis									
Dealing with special circumstances									
Possible adaptation of grade for bachelor thesis for reasons of process <i>max. +/- 0,5 grade point but by doing so a 5,5 cannot be changed into a 6, nor the other way around</i>									
Final Grade									

Note that the final grade is not an arithmetic mean of the grades on specific criteria, 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 one or more scores fall in the gray shaded boxes, the thesis is not admissible.

If necessary additional motivation for the final grade by the thesis supervisor:

Additional motivation for the final grade by the second reviewer (most important strengths and weaknesses in 1 or 2 sentences):

Submission date:

Signed (bachelor thesis supervisor):

Assessment date:

Signed (second reviewer of bachelor thesis)

Guidelines for filling out this assessment form

The Bachelor Thesis serves as a final assessment of knowledge and skills gained in the bachelor programme in Geography, Planning and Environment (GPE). As such we want the thesis to be representative for the objectives of the bachelor programme and to exemplify **problem-oriented, theory-led empirical research** on an academic level.

Most important guidelines:

- The supervisor fills out the assessment form, to be checked and complemented with one or two sentences of additional feedback by the second reader. First and second reader preferably assess the thesis orally to come to a common decision.
- The grade of the thesis is NOT the average of all listed criteria; different aspects might weight differently and vary from thesis to thesis. Grades for sub-criteria are merely used to give direction in the grading process.

The bachelor thesis supervisor fills out this assessment form and the second reviewer subsequently checks if he/she agrees with this assessment, and then co-signs the assessment form, which is filed together with the final version of the bachelor thesis. So, the evaluation of the thesis by the second reviewer mainly serves as a second opinion to support the judgement of the bachelor thesis supervisor and to make sure that this judgement is not biased. **The second reviewer does not fill out a separate assessment form, but briefly indicates the main strengths and weaknesses of the thesis (1-2 sentences)**. In case the overall grade for the thesis itself (not taking process into account) by the bachelor thesis supervisor differs more than one grade-point from the second reviewer's judgement, they should try to resolve the differences in judgement. **The difference is resolved if the difference is at maximum 1 grade point and if both reviewers agree that the thesis is sufficient (≥ 6) or both agree that it is insufficient (< 6).** In case they cannot resolve their differences, they can ask the bachelor thesis coordinator to come to a final verdict. The bachelor thesis supervisor motivates the final grade to the students after a final assessment is settled.

For a number of criteria some further elaborations may help to apply these criteria in a sound and standardised way:

Contents

Foundation of societal and scientific relevance

The problem-orientation presupposes that every bachelor 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 and for whom is this such a pressing problem?

The scientific relevance addresses the current state of scientific knowledge. What knowledge is available and what is lacking in empirical and theoretical scientific knowledge? How will scientific development be able to progress with the help of this bachelor thesis?

Clear formulation of problem, objectives and research questions

The objectives of the bachelor thesis research should identify the general lack of scientific knowledge related to the problem focussed on in this research. The research questions should formulate as clear as possible the specific elements of knowledge to be generated by this bachelor-thesis research project. Conclusions should refer back to these research questions.

Theoretical framework incl. application to research problem and question(s)

In contrast to a master thesis in which we expect that different (state-of-the-art) theories and theoretical approaches are discussed and compared, in a bachelor thesis we (only) expect students to select a theory and to apply it in a methodologically correct way in their empirical research.

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. Bachelor theses might be different in their reach of abstraction, but academic research (also on bachelor level) always makes use of a theoretical assessment of the phenomenon investigated. The theory used can, through the empirical analysis in the bachelor thesis research, be (partially) confirmed or rejected.

Argumentation for choice of methodological approach and research method(s)

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 it is made clear why this method is adequate for answering the main research question in the empirical case under investigation. This critical reflection should also include the method of interpretation or analysis of the collected data.

Collection of necessary empirical data related to research problem and question(s)

The choices made above usually have repercussions on the choice of case studies, sampling methods, ways of collecting data etc. It is essential that the bachelor thesis research shows a very consistent and rigorous application of scientific research methods. The data collection should be driven by the research questions and the applied methods and this should be made clear in the description of data and data-collection methods. Interview guides, coding-schemes, and long tables should be included in the appendix to the bachelor thesis. The full data sets (e.g. SPSS file, interview transcripts) need to be uploaded in Brightspace. In science it is a principle that we expect that research results can be reproduced.

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 bachelor thesis should clearly show how interpretations are systematically and methodologically derived.

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. Data files, coding schemes, interview transcripts statistical computations, etc. should be archived.

Well-underpinned conclusions in relation to research questions

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

Recommendations for praxis

As each bachelor thesis research starts off with a concrete problem, we expect that some kind of recommendation can be made on the basis of the research results. 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 bachelor research should clearly answer the formulated research questions, but new questions and problems might emerge during the research. Other relevant questions to reflect upon: What are the short-comings of the methods used? What problems did the student face with collecting the data? How can the research be improved? To what extent can results/conclusions be generalised? How can they be enhanced through alternative approaches?

Formal

Structure:

Clear inner structure, logical ordering of information, relations between sentences, paragraphs and chapters, quality of argumentation) and overall structure (ordering of sections, chapters, correct numbering, guidance of reader, titles.) The bachelor thesis should not only have a logical structure, but should also contain a guide for the reader, paragraphs which connect chapters etc.

Total length within the norm

In general the main text of the bachelor thesis should not exceed 20.000 to 25.000 words, excluding front and back-material (preface, table of contents, list of references, summary, list of tables and figures, appendices etc.). As length within norm is not an eligibility criterium, theses can be shorter or longer, but experience shows that these are often of poorer quality.

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.

Live up to deadlines and agreements

Does not need further elaboration.

Length of process in relation to quality of product

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

Dealing with special circumstances

During the bachelor 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.

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/use-ful-links/finalising-your-thesis/>

Any comments or questions about these guidelines for filling out the assessment form are highly appreciated and can be addressed to the chairperson of the examination board: riane.vanmelik@ru.nl