

INFO KIT for pre-examination

Doctoral studies

School of Electrical
Engineering



Aalto University
School of Electrical
Engineering

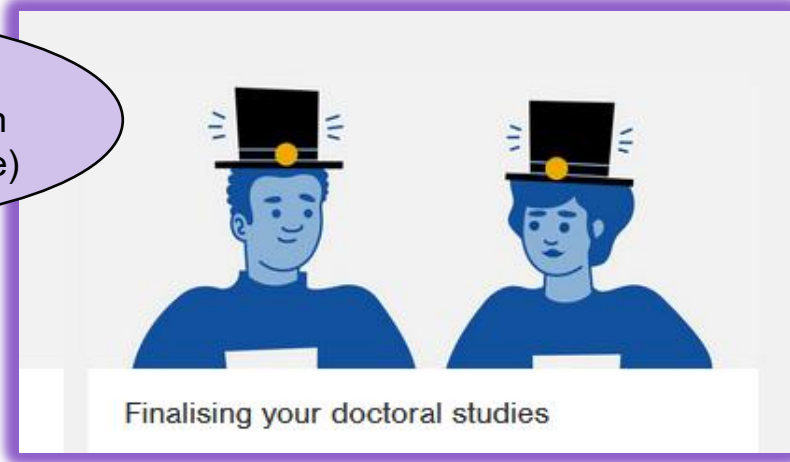
Last updated 21.1.2026 by ELEC DES



Congratulations! As you chose to read this document, you are very close to the target (doctoral degree) already!

We have prepared a short material to make the rest of your journey smoother! 😊

Doctoral education hub
→ information collected in
one place (click the picture)



This extra material is
specifically for ELEC
doctoral students and
includes the most
important things to
start with

In the following pages, you will hopefully find answers to the questions you have regarding submitting your doctoral thesis for pre-examination and especially the practicalities related to the process.

Is my thesis ready for pre-examination?

You may have these questions:

Is the format of my thesis correct?

- The thesis in ELEC can be
 - an article-based thesis
 - a monograph
 - Check the [guidelines](#)

How many articles do I need?

- Recommendation: 3-5 full articles (peer-reviewed)
- The number varies though, depending on the extent, scientific significance and quality of the publications, and on your personal contribution to them.

My articles have not yet been accepted. Do I have to wait?

- One of the articles in your doctoral thesis must be published or accepted for publication when the manuscript is submitted for pre-examination. The rest can be in the submitted state.

What should I mention the summary part?

- The summary (30-60 pages) is an independent entity, so the reader should get your message without reading your articles.
- The summary describes the research problem, research goals and methods, and presents a summary of the key findings

Tips

Check published theses in Aaltodoc

- You can find the theses which have received a **thesis award** from here.
- Note that the most recent theses are more likely to follow the current guidelines

How do I get the initial pages to my manuscript?

- Word template for the initial pages of a doctoral thesis are available on Unigrafia's pages

Good to remember:

- the contents (text, tables, figures) need to be in the final form.
- No changes are allowed after the start of pre-examination, unless your pre-examiners ask you to make changes.



Steps to approach pre-examination (1/2)

Studies and study right

- 1) Advisory information check in MyStudies
- 2) Credit plan ready in Sisu

Check the detailed guidelines described in the next slides

Advisory information check in MyStudies

Log in to MyStudies: (<https://mystudies.aalto.fi/>), [user guide for MyStudies](#)

Check your advisory group (supervising professor and thesis advisors), is the information correct? If not, see below:

Your supervising professor has changed/needs to be changed before pre-examination (retirement etc.)

- Submit your application for change well in advance
- Note that the research field needs to be changed as well, if your research field is very old and not applicable for the new supervisor

Your thesis advisors are not correct

- There's no need to apply for the changes, the current advisors can be confirmed when the pre-examination starts (you inform the advisors in pre-examination application 306)

Need help regarding the change?
Please contact Coordinator Suvi Katajamäki

Doctoral Personal Study Plan (DPSP) Tasks in MyStudies

- If you have finished the tasks earlier, great! Check also the credit plan in Sisu instructions (see further)
- If the tasks are pending, no worries! The invitation to complete the tasks has been sent to everyone. But those who are approaching pre-examination only need to make the **credit plan in Sisu, and a career plan** (see further).

Credit plan in Sisu: preparing the plan

Your credit plan is the basis for the degree certificate, and it has to be ready before pre-examination

Log in to Sisu (<https://sisu.aalto.fi/>):

➤ Study guidance tab (Ohjaustiedot in Finnish)

Finalise your plan according to these instructions

ELEC
ELEC Curriculum 2024-26 gives you guidelines how to place courses and individual studies (teaching, summer schools, etc.) in the modules
(from this page you have also access to the previous curricula)

If you have problems like your completed courses cannot be selected, etc.), please contact Coordinator Suvi.

Credit plan in Sisu: how to proceed?

Your credit plan is now ready if...

- all the courses are **completed** (you have in total 40-43 cr or 30-33 cr) and there are no study drafts
- courses are placed in correct modules (see Curriculum, if you are unsure)
- there aren't red notifications
- your research field has the text "Selection confirmed to the study right".
- you have added your thesis under the thesis section. The code should have the same numbers as your research field. You can see the research field code on top of the research field module.
- You have removed all the courses under extracurricular studies (don't worry, they will not disappear in study register)

→ You can proceed to the confirmation and approval part (next page).

If you are unsure about the contents, etc. please contact Coordinator Suvi at this point.

Credit plan in Sisu: confirming the plan and approving the modules in Sisu

CONFIRMATION OF THE PLAN (email)

NOTE: If the modules have text “selections approved”, no further approval is needed, the credit plan is ready.

Download the credit plan as a pdf from Sisu. If you have individual studies, you may also want to include the screenshot of the details that do not show in the plan, or include a study transcript

Send the credit plan to your supervising professor via email, cc coordinator Suvi Katajamäki.

Your supervising professor approves the plan by sending an email back to Suvi.

APPROVAL OF THE MODULES IN SISU

In Sisu, request approval of the module(s) that have the text “approval required” (click the module heading, and you should see the request button on the right-hand side window).

Inform Coordinator Suvi that you have made the request (Sisu does not send any notification emails)

Coordinator Suvi will approve the modules in Sisu

Career plan

Everyone should make plans for their career after graduation. If you don't have a career plan yet, please make one and upload it to MyStudies.

How to make the career plan?

- Further instructions and
- Career design
 - The format is not relevant, the most important is that you have made some kind of plans for your career
 - If you want to, you can discuss your career with your supervising professor

Where to submit the plan?

- Submit the plan in MyStudies (as task 5)
- Supervising professor's approval is not required

[Instructions for using MyStudies](#)

Questions regarding the career plan?
Please contact Planning officer Emma Holmlund

Steps to approach pre-examination (2/2)

Application for pre-examination

- 1) Check the deadlines for applications
- 2) Check the timeline from pre-examination to graduation (pdf)
- 3) Familiarize yourself with the process (scroll down to “What happens during the process”)
- 4) How to finalize my thesis for pre-examination
- 5) How to prepare and apply for pre-examination

Check the guidelines described in the next slides. If you have further questions, please contact Emma Holmlund.

How to finalize my thesis for pre-examination?

You may have these questions:

How to make the thesis abstract?

- Follow these [guidelines](#)
- The abstract is written in English and if you have received your basic education in Finnish/Swedish, an abstract in Finnish/Swedish is also needed
- You can download the abstract Word templates from [Unigrafia's web page](#)

What about the language revision?

- remember to reserve time for the language revision
- professional language revision is recommended
- the doctoral programme does not cover the cost of the language revision. In some cases, the research group or the department may cover the costs.
- Read more [here](#) (scroll to language revision)

Watch out for intentional or unintentional plagiarism

What is plagiarism?

- Plagiarism, or unacknowledged borrowing, refers to representing another person's material as one's own without appropriate references. This includes research plans, manuscripts, articles, other texts or parts of them, visual materials, or translations. Plagiarism includes direct copying as well as adapted copying

What can I do to avoid plagiarism?

- It is highly recommended to utilize Turnitin in order to identify unintentional and intentional plagiarism.
- Read the guidelines about TURNITIN [here](#)
- Read more [here](#) (Research ethics material in MyCourses, requires login).
- Read the [guidelines of TENK](#) about responsible conduct of research (opens to tenk.fi)

How to prepare and apply for pre-examination?

Check the guidelines regarding:

- copyright and permissions
- the list of publications
- the author's contribution
- polish and finalize your thesis

described in the next slides

NOTE: after pre-examination only changes required by the pre-examiners and DPC, and correction of minor spelling mistakes etc. are allowed. For example, title change is not allowed afterwards.

Your supervising professor will propose two pre-examiners for your thesis. The pre-examiners must be independent, please check [here](#).

You can find the [online application here](#) and forms for application attachments [here](#).

Copyright and permissions for republishing your articles

Who needs to acquire the needed permissions?

- You are responsible for ensuring that appropriate permissions are obtained for all copyright images, tables, figures and other data included in the published doctoral thesis. The same applies to the articles included in your article-based thesis.
- It is your responsibility to store the permissions received.
- You do not have to have all permissions before starting pre-examinations, but you need to have them at the latest before publishing your thesis.

More information

- Read more [here](#) (required permissions)
- Support and help: [Maria Rehbinder](#)

List of publications

In your thesis:

- Published in a journal: All author names in the correct order, title of publication, full journal name (not abbreviated), volume, issue, pages, month, year.
- Published in a conference proceeding: All author names in the correct order, title of publication, "in Proceedings of the" and the full name of the conference, venue, dates, page numbers/number of pages.
- Submitted to a journal or conference: All author names in the correct order, title of publication, number of pages, "submitted to publication forum X", month and year (time when the manuscript was submitted for publication)

Examples:

- Published in a journal: A. Author and B. Author: "Interesting paper worthy of publication" Nature Communication, **5**, (12), pp 34-41, October 2023. The digital object identifier (doi) can also be included for the benefit of the reader. Example: doi:10.1109/TAP.2019.2963587
- Published in a conference proceeding: A. Author and B. Author: "Interesting paper worthy of publication" In Proceedings of the IEEE Wireless Communications and Networking Conference, Helsinki, Finland, 13-19.5.2023, pp 1-7. doi: 10.1109/VTC2021-Spring51267.2021.9448925.
- Submitted to a journal or conference: A. Author and B. Author: "Interesting paper worthy of publication" 8 pages, Submitted to Nature Communications, October 2023.

Author's contribution

Article based thesis

- In article-based theses containing articles with joint authorship, the doctoral student's contribution needs to be clearly explained. This explanation should be placed in the beginning of the manuscript with the list of publications.
- If the co-authors have had a significant role in contributing to the articles, it may be beneficial to briefly describe their contribution as well. The author's contribution shall be **checked and signed by the supervising professor** and approved by the other authors.

Monographs

- In monographs, the contribution of the doctoral student shall be explained in the beginning of the manuscript, preferably in the introduction part.
- If the other members of the research group have had a significant role in the research conducted, it may be beneficial to briefly describe their contribution as well. The author's contribution shall be **checked and signed by the supervising professor** and approved by the other authors.

Polish and finalize your thesis

Why should I polish my thesis? The pre-examiners will ask for corrections anyway...

- The purpose of checking the outlook of the manuscript before the pre-examination is to allow the pre-examiners to concentrate on the content of the thesis and not be sidetracked by bad language/ bad or unclear pictures/ messiness.
- An “easily read and attractive” thesis gives a good impression of the content.

Please check

- for spelling mistakes
- the correctness and clearness of pictures and tables
 - including clear and readable font size in figures and diagram axes
- that all references in your list follow the reference style chosen and that the bibliographic information of all references is complete
- that the abbreviations and symbols are in alphabetical order:
 - Group the symbols with Latin letters in one group, symbols with Greek letters in another group and other symbols in a third group.
 - Read more [here](#)

Events and infos for doctoral students

- Follow the news and events feeds to see when the next events are organized
- Check the info-sessions organized: <https://www.aalto.fi/en/doctoral-education/info-session-series-for-doctoral-students>

GOOD LUCK FOR FINALISING THE THESIS!



Psst..... You may still wonder: after you submit your manuscript - What happens next?
- See the last slides to find out!

Well - what happens next?

- ➔ Pre-examiners are nominated by the DPC, and pre-examination begins. Pre-examiners have 4 weeks to give their statements
- ➔ When the pre-examination statements arrive:
 - Discuss with the supervising professor the revisions required, but wait for the DPC to decide on the continuation of the process
 - DPC gives their first decision:
 - A: Permission granted
 - B: Corrections required within 6 weeks, DPC Chair checks them within one week
 - C: Corrections required within 3 months, submission schedule follows the DPC meeting and email meeting schedule
 - D: Corrections required, sent also to the pre-examiners – a longer process with several administrative steps
 - You make corrections and submit them to the DES coordinator Suvi according to the meeting schedules

→ Permission granted by the DPC

- The defence should be arranged within 2 months
- No (major) changes to the thesis are allowed

Proposing opponent + defence date

- 1-2 opponents, pre-examiner can act as the only opponent
- Your supervising professor proposes opponent(s), you are not allowed to contact them
- Application guidelines for the defence, opponent and custos
- Unigrafia's publishing schedule determines the shortest time frame between the decision of the DPC and the defence date: currently 24 days are required. In need for shorter time frames, please consult the ELEC coordinator Suvi.
- Customarily the defence begins at 12 noon sharp, which means that the audience enter the hall by 12 noon, but the thesis defender, opponent and custos enter at 12:15 sharp.
- Applications processed both in regular and email meetings of the DPC every week (except during holidays)
 - DL on Mondays at 12
 - Decisions announced on Friday of the same week.

→ **Opponent and custos nominated, and defence date, time and language confirmed by the DPC**



Contact information for questions

Pre-examination applications and questions regarding the career plan:

Planning Officer Emma Holmlund

Help with the credit plan in Sisu and applying for changes in advance (supervising professor/ research field):

Coordinator Suvi Katajamäki



Aalto University
School of Electrical
Engineering

Contact information

