INFO KIT
for pre-examination

Doctoral studies

School of Electrical Engineering

Aalto University
School of Electrical
Engineering

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Where to start when pre-examination phase is approaching?

We have gathered information in two places:

Doctoral education hub
→ common guidelines for all schools

ELEC Thesis page
Material specifically for ELEC doctoral students (like this info kit)
→ includes the most important things to start with

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 on our Thesis page

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 in 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

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Further questions? Please ask your supervising professor or Suvi Katajamäki

Tips

Check published theses in Aaltodoc

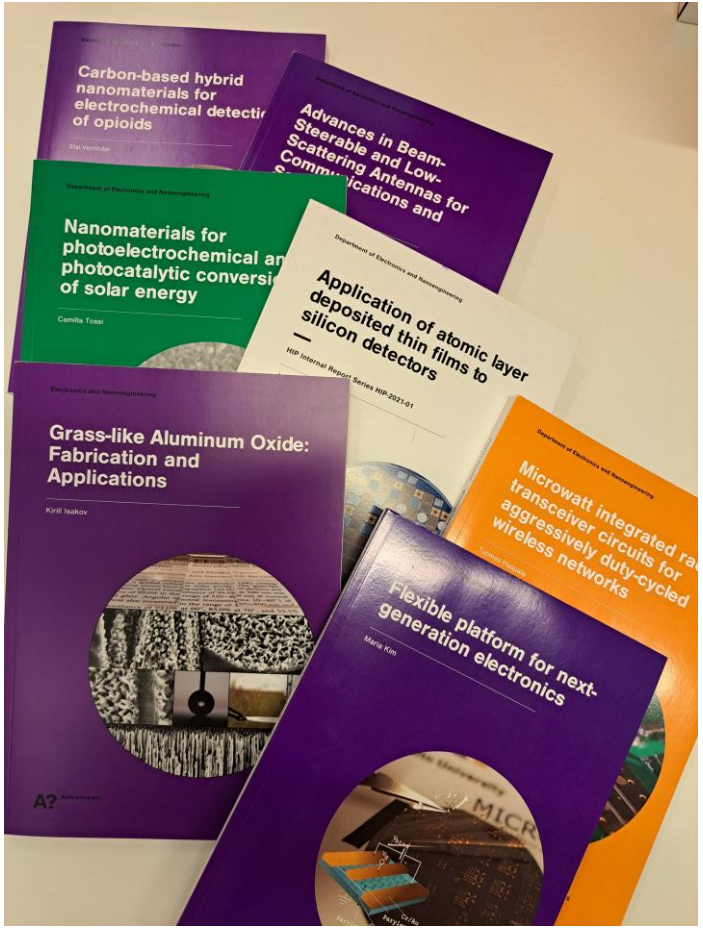
- Note that the most recent theses are more likely to follow the current guidelines regarding length of the summary part and number of publications
- It's good also to check the theses which have received a **thesis award**.

How do I get the official initial pages to my manuscript?

- Template for the initial pages of a doctoral thesis is available via **Unigrafia's pages**. If you have used LaTeX, you need to combine the initial pages with the main part of your thesis.

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 on 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 with the pre-examination application.

Need help regarding the change?
Please contact Coordinator Miika Remahl

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: → Study guidance tab (Ohjaustiedot in Finnish)

Finalise your plan according to these instructions

ELEC Curriculum gives you guidelines how to place courses and individual studies (teaching, summer schools, etc.) in the modules

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

Your credit plan is ready when…

- you have in total 40-46 cr or 30-36 cr depending on your degree requirements
- all the courses are **completed** and placed in correct modules (see Curriculum)
- your research field has the text ”Selection confirmed to the study right”.
- you have added your **thesis** in the thesis module. The thesis code should have the same numbers as your research field. (You can see the research field code on the heading of the research field module.)
- extracurricular studies section is empty

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

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

STEP 1: CONFIRMATION OF THE PLAN

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

Option A: Update Doctoral Personal Study Plan (DPSP)

Upload your credit plan to the DPSP section in MyStudies. You don't need to apdate any other parts. Request approval from your supervising professor in the system. Instructions.

If your most recent DPSP in MyStudies already includes **your final credit plan**, great! You can go directly to step 2.

Option B: Email confirmation
Send the credit plan to your supervising professor via email, cc Suvi Katajamäki.

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

STEP 1 done

STEP 2: APPROVAL OF THE MODULES IN SISU

In Sisu, request approval of the module(s) that have the text "approval required" (General research studies and your research field module)

In open text **field write the date of the confirmation** of your credit plan (and whether it's approved in MyStudies or via email)

Your Doctoral Programme will handle the approval of the modules in Sisu

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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 whole process
4) How to finalize my thesis for pre-examination
5) How to prepare and apply for pre-examination
6) Your supervising professor will propose two pre-examiners for your thesis. The pre-examiners must be independent.

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

How to prepare and apply for pre-examination?

Check the guidelines regarding:

- Abstract
- Language revision
- Responsible citation and plagiarism check
- Copyright and permissions
- List of publications
- Author's contribution
- Polishing 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.

Questions? Please contact Suvi

Abstract
Language revision

How to make the thesis abstract?

- 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 templates from Unigrafia's web page (initial pages)

What should I know 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 about 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
- Read more here (Research ethics material in MyCourses, requires login).
- Read the guidelines of TENK about responsible conduct of research and the use of AI (opens to tenk.fi)

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 about required permissions.

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
→ general instructions

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

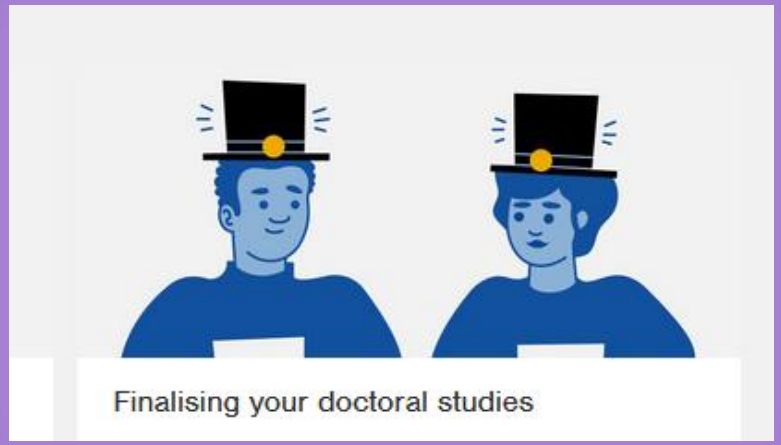
Why should I polish my thesis? The pre-examiners will ask for corrections anyway…

- 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

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 Doctoral Programme according to the meeting schedules

Permission process scheme

Decision types and guidelines for corrections

→ Permission granted by the DPC

NOTE:

- The defence should be arranged within 2 months (see next slide)
- 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 Miika Remahl.
- 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.

→ **See also the ELEC Info kit for defences, available here!**

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

You can start publishing your thesis and preparing for the public defence!

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

Contact information for questions

Pre-examination applications:

Suvi Katajamäki

Help with Sisu or MyStudies, questions concerning the defence:

Miika Remahl

Aalto University
School of Electrical
Engineering

Contact information

